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"MAKE IT AN INDIAN MASSACRE:"

THE SCAPEGOATING OF THE SOUTHERN PAIUTES

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“MAKE IT AN INDIAN MASSACRE:”
THE SCAPEGOATING OF THE SOUTHERN PAIUTES

A THESIS APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

BY

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To my encouraging study-buddy,
Heather

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ABSTRACT:

Overall, this project attempts to move dialogue beyond the cause of the Mountain Meadows Massacre to examine how and why Mormon perpetrators manipulated and covered their tracks in order to frame the Southern Paiutes. This thesis is mostly interested in the Latter-day Saints' relationship with the Southern Paiutes before, during, and after the massacre. And concludes that the Mormon decision to cover-up their role in the massacre by scapegoating the Southern Paiutes had disastrous results.

"MAKE IT AN INDIAN MASSACRE:"
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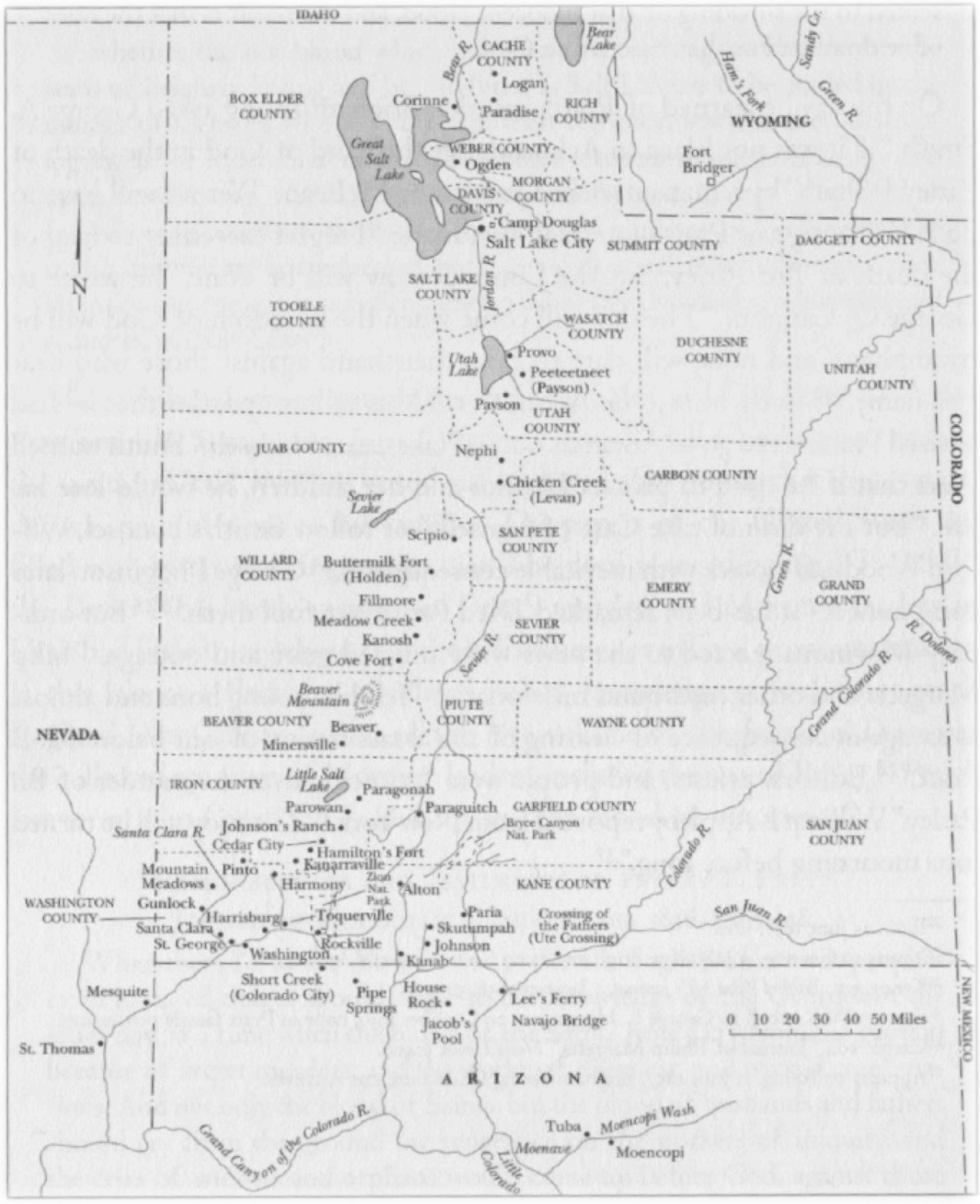

Frontpiece: "Utah Territory." In David L. Bigler and Will Bagley, eds., "Innocent Blood: Essential Narratives of the Mountain Meadows Massacre," Vol. 12 of *Kingdom in the West: The Mormons and the American Frontier* (Norman: Arthur H. Clark Co., 2008), 92.

INTRODUCTION:
THE MOUNTAIN MEADOWS MASSACRE

Among all the lies told about the massacre, the vast mythology related to Indian participation became the ugliest and most enduring falsehood. The attempts to shift responsibility to the Indians were untrue then, and to the extent that they continue, are even more shameful now.
-David L. Bigler and Will Bagley

In April 1857, an optimistic wagon train bound for California and comprised of about one thousand head of cattle, many horses, and large families departed Crooked Creek, Arkansas.[1] Alexander Fancher, John T. Baker, and his son George W. Baker, each a seasoned traveler, steered the orderly wagon company west. From Arkansas the company journeyed northwest along the Cherokee Trial, traveling through Indian, Kansas, and Nebraska territories. During the 1850s, most of the California bound Arkansas trains traversing the Cherokee Trail would have taken the shorter Santa Fe Trail in eastern Kansas Territory. Eventually the Santa Fe road led to the Northern Branch of the Old Spanish Trail and on to California. Alexander Fancher, however, had twice before moved livestock overland from Arkansas to California. During Fancher's previous trips, he opted to add more time and mileage to the trek by continuing northwest along the Cherokee Trail to join the more populated and better-watered Oregon Trail.[2] Due to the emigrants' large amount of livestock during their

[1] The Arkansas emigrants refer to a collection of several smaller parties that departed northwestern Arkansas. Also referred to as the "Baker-Fancher party," the "Fancher-Baker party," the "Fancher party," or "Baker's Company." This wagon train refers to closely interconnected families; the Bakers, Camerons, Dunlaps, Fanchers, Huffs, Joneses, Millers, Mitchells, Tackitss, and Woods. Similar to other wagon trains, the number of Arkansas emigrants in this company expanded and contracted as they spread-out along the trail. Smaller trains often joined larger wagon companies as they passed through hostile territory or to improve their general welfare.

[2] Will Bagley, *Blood of the Prophets: Brigham Young and the Massacre at Mountains Meadows* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002), 59.

1857 journey, Fancher characteristically traveled the extra distance to join the Oregon Trail near South Pass. The company then followed the Oregon Trail southwest and began their descent into the Great Basin. At Fort Bridger, the Arkansas train turned south off the Oregon Trail and onto the Mormon or California Trial—a tough road that cut through the steep Wasatch range passing through Great Salt Lake City then due west toward California.

After four months, the Arkansas emigrants reached Salt Lake City with most of their livestock in remarkably good health and with little trouble along the way.[3] The Mormon capital was a crucial supply post for eager emigrants ready to begin the second-half of their journey. But, days before the Arkansas emigrants arrived in Salt Lake, Territorial Governor, *ex-officio* Superintendent of Indian Affairs, and Mormon prophet, Brigham Young announced that President James Buchanan was sending an army west to crush a "Mormon rebellion." Buchanan had not intended to provoke a conflict with the Mormons, but he did plan to remove Young as governor and to assert federal authority over the rebellious territory. President Buchanan's ordering the U.S. Army to Utah became known as the "Utah War" or, perhaps more accurately, "Buchanan's Blunder."[4]

Fearing the approaching U.S. Army would drive Mormon settlers from their homes, Brigham Young mustered the territorial militia and ordered the construction of

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[3] Ronald W. Walker, Richard E. Turley Jr., and Glen M. Leonard, *Massacre at Mountain Meadows* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 85. See also Sally Denton, *American Massacre: The Tragedy at Mountain Meadows, September 1857* (New York: Knopf), 118.

[4] David L. Bigler and Will Bagley, *The Mormon Rebellion: America's First Civil War, 1857-1858* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2011), 3.

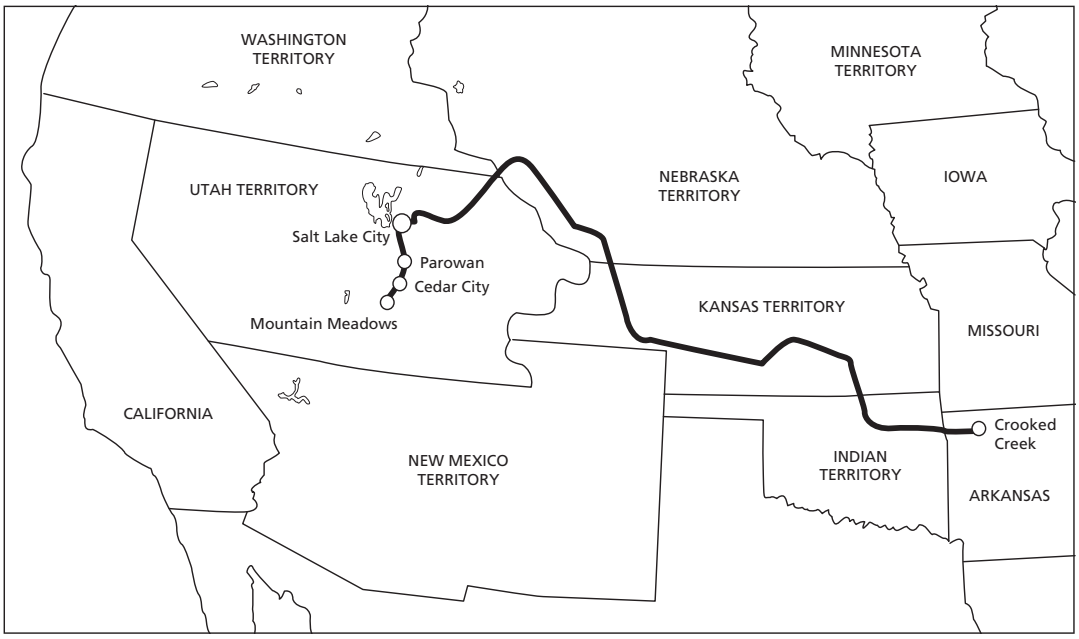

Figure 0.1: Fancher Party Route, in Richard E. Turley Jr., "Mountain Meadows Massacre," *Ensign* (September 2007), 14-21.

new fortifications. In a desperate attempt to preserve food, ammunitions, and other necessities of war, Young prohibited the selling of provisions to any passing emigrant train. Unable to obtain adequate supplies from Salt Lake merchants, Alexander Fancher and John T. Baker thought it too risky to take the more arid road due west across the Bonneville Salt Flats and along the typically dry Humboldt River. Similar to Fancher's earlier decision to connect with the Oregon Trail, the Southern Trail to California offered the Arkansas emigrants more opportunities to water and graze their livestock along with a chance to obtain supplies from other Mormon settlements that dotted the route.[5]

[5] Several families traveling with the Fancher train rejected the proposal of bearing south to California—choosing to continue their journey west along the "main road." Nine months pregnant and with three young children, Malinda Cameron Scott Thurston later testified that her husband, Henry D. Scott refused to follow her father, mother, four siblings, and cousin south. Malinda recalled that "my father said that he had heard there was good feed and plenty of water" along the Southern Trail. Malinda's small family, along with about eight other Arkansas emigrants, parted ways with the larger wagon train on August 5, 1857. See Bigler and Bagley, *Innocent Blood,* 95.

However, the specific actions of the Fancher company are unclear following their departure from Salt Lake City. Historian Will Bagley has noted, "Once the Fancher party left Salt Lake, it disappeared into a historical maze built of lies, folklore, popular myth, justifications, and few facts."[6] Due to the sheer number of Mountain Meadows' convoluted accounts and tales, historian William Palmer lamented, "No matter what point of view one takes," when researching the Mountain Meadows Massacre, there "seems to be an abundance of evidence to sustain it." Thus, the overwhelmed Palmer confessed, "I have never dared to go on record about the affair because there are so many to rise up and challenge whatever may be said."[7]

In general, Mountain Meadows historians typically agree that after the Arkansas emigrants departed Salt Lake City, attackers who appeared to be Indians ambushed the company while they camped at the Mountain Meadows. Sporadic volleys of gunfire subsequently pinned the party down for five days in the meadows. The attackers then stampeded the emigrants' large herd of cattle and horses while the group sat exposed in the lush valley. Hoping to thwart another assault, the isolated party of approximately 130 men, women, and children corralled and lowered their wagons into hastily dug pits. The emigrants' strategy proved successful, as they held-off two subsequent assaults. But the late summer's sun began to take its toll. In their barricade, the emigrants lacked water, ammunition was running low, and the wounded were dying. Presumed to be Indians, unidentifiable men crouched behind bushes and

[6] Will Bagley, *Blood of the Prophets, Brigham Young and the Massacre at Mountains Meadows* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002), 99.

[7] Wm. R. Palmer to Harold B. Lee, 26 January 1940, MS674 Box 80 fd. 7, Special Collections, Marriott Library, University of Utah.

hid in shallow ravines began to slowly pick-off the desperate company members attempting to retrieve water. But as the siege wore on, the emigrants realized that the men firing at them were not Indians.

On September 11, 1857, Mormon Militia Major John D. Lee rode under a white flag toward the besieged wagon train. Desperate and exhausted, the Arkansas emigrants finally agreed to the strange terms offered by John D. Lee and the Mormons. The Saints told the emigrants to leave all their belongings behind, including their weapons. In return, the Mormon militia would escort the party safely back to the LDS settlement of Cedar City.

Mormons loaded the wounded emigrants and young children into wagons. The Saints then separated the women and girls from the men and boys. In single file, the women and girls followed the two Mormon wagons north. Once the procession of women and girl were at a considerable distance, the Mormons marched the vulnerable men and boys in single file. Both groups marched approximately a mile north toward the end of the valley. Once the group had reached "the summit of a slight elevation," the Mormon militiamen unleashed their weapons on their unarmed hostages.[8] With the exception of seventeen children, the Mormons butchered the remaining men, women, and children. According to Nephi Johnson, a Mormon eyewitness, the murder of approximately 120 souls "lasted not over five minutes – not over three minutes."[9]

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[8] Abraham H. Cannon Journal, 11 June 1895, Vol. 19, MS 3, Manuscripts Division, Marriott Library, University of Utah. "Interview of Samuel R. Knight," republished in Bigler and Bagley, *Innocent Blood*, 419.

[9] John D. Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled* (St. Louis: M. E. Mason, 1891), 344. See also Bigler and Bagley, *Innocent Blood*, 409-410.

Historian Jared Farmer has recently observed that Mountain Meadows is a "worn" historical endeavor.[10] In many ways Farmer's assertion is correct—the Mountain Meadows Massacre is an exhausted topic with an abundance of histories that have analyzed the massacre. Currently, Mountain Meadows is included in every history of territorial Utah and early Mormon histories. Passages that address Mountain Meadows are littered throughout Utah and Arkansas high school textbooks. Every LDS Sunday school manual that addresses Church history contains a chapter dedicated to Mountain Meadows. In addition, there has been a plethora of sophisticated dissertations and theses from a variety of academic disciplines regarding the Mountain Meadows Massacre.[11]

Regardless of surplus, no previous history has focused on the Latter-day Saints' relationship with the Southern Paiutes before, during, and specifically after the massacre at Mountain Meadows.[12] The Southern Paiutes continued to suffer under Mormonism because of their coerced participation in the massacre. This complex

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[10] Jared Farmer, Review of Ronald W. Walker, Richard E. Turley Jr., and Glen M. Leonard's *Massacre at Mountain Meadows: An American Tragedy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), *BYU Studies* 47, no. 3 (2008), 175-179, 178. See also Jared Farmer, "Crossroads of the West," *Journal of Mormon History* 41, no. 1 (January 2015), 156-173.

[11] For example: Casey W. Olson, "The Evolution Of History: Changing Narratives of the Mountain Meadows Massacre in Utah's Public School Curricula" (Ph.D. dissertation: Utah State University, 2013); Jennifer Lindell, "Mormons and Native Americans in the Antebellum West," (Master's thesis: San Diego State University, 2011).

[12] Throughout the study, I use the terms "Southern Paiute" and "Paiute" synonymously or interchangeably to refer to the Southern Numic or Uto-Aztecan speakers. Mormons often called the Paiute "Pah Utaus" and "Piedes." Southern Paiute are more linguistically and culturally distinct from the Northern Paiute than they are to the Utes, which spoke a closely related form of Southern Numic. Ute bands occupied much of present-day Utah and Western Colorado. See Martha C. Knack, *Boundaries Between: The Southern Paiutes, 1775-1995* (Lincoln: Nebraska University Press, 2001), 13-14.

Furthermore, I use the terms "Mormons," "Saints," and "Latter-day Saints" synonymously or interchangeably to refer to members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Also, I regularly use "Church" or "LDS" to designate the administrative apparatus of the Utah based faith.

Mormon-led massacre devastated more than just the Arkansas emigrants. Most of the Mountain Meadows historiography attempts to address the cause of such a horrific event. This thesis, however, examines the damage the Mountain Meadows Massacre caused to the Southern Paiutes.

Overall, Mountain Meadows historians disagree over the motive for the massacre along with the degree to which Brigham Young coordinated the mass killing. Juanita Brooks' groundbreaking book, *The Mountain Meadows Massacre* became the first volume objectively to "present the truth" of the Mountain Meadows Massacre. "I feel sure," Brooks wrote, "that nothing but the truth can be good enough for the church to which I belong."[13] Previous historians of the massacre had framed their analysis as a continuation of the Mormon persecution narrative within single chapters or as small booklets.[14] Prior to Brooks, however, none had professionally argued that Mormons had perpetrated the massacre. Brooks confidently explained that in the years and decades following the massacre the Latter-day Saints "have tried to blot out the affair from our history." The Church led cover-up, Brooks continued, created an atmosphere in which the Mormon-led massacre would "not be referred to, much less discussed openly."[15] Remarking on Brooks' courage, Will Bagley has written that her actions

[13] Juanita Brooks, *The Mountain Meadows Massacre* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964), xx. See also Gary Topping, *Utah Historians and the Reconstruction of Western History* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2003), 177-226.

[14] Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Utah* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1889); Orson F. Whitney, *History of Utah* (Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon & Sons, 1892); Josiah F. Gibbs, The Mountain Meadows Massacre, (Salt Lake City: Salt Lake Tribune Publishing, 1910); Levi Edgar Young, *The Founding of Utah* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.1923); Leland Hargrave Creer, *Utah and the Nation* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1929); Nels Anderson, *Desert Saints: The Mormon Frontier in Utah* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1942).

[15] Brooks, *The Mountain Meadows Massacre*, xix.

made her "one of the West's best and bravest historians."[16] Brooks became the first professional and faithful historian not to excuse Brigham Young for his role in the massacre. Brigham Young and other Mormon leaders "did not specifically order the massacre," Brooks wrote, but "they did preach sermons and set up social conditions which made it possible."[17]

Nevertheless, Brooks' book does have a weakness—her admiration for Mormon Militia Major and Indian farmer John D. Lee. Brooks correctly argued that in 1877, Brigham Young and other Church authorities scapegoated Lee as the sole perpetrator of the massacre as a way to "lift the stigma from the church as a whole."[18] And for about a dozen pages, Brooks defends Lee as a sold-out victim of circumstance.[19] But to clear Lee's name, Brooks shifted the blame for the massacre onto the Southern Paiutes and often derogatorily refers to the Indians as "savages" or "red men."[20] Brooks purports that despite the violent intentions of the angry Paiutes, they were unsuccessful in massacring the emigrants. According to Brooks, the Paiutes felt that if Mormons would not assist them, "they would declare war against the Mormons and kill every one in the settlements."[21] Thus, John D. Lee and the

[16] Bagley, *Blood of the Prophets*, xiii

[17] Brooks, *The Mountain Meadows Massacre*, 219.

[18] Ibid., 220.

[19] Brooks went on to write John D. Lee's biography and co-edit Lee's personal journals. See Juanita Brooks, *John Doyle Lee: Zealot, Pioneer, Builder, Scapegoat* (Glendale: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1962); Juanita Brooks and Robert G. Cleland, eds., *Mormon Chronicle, the Diaries of John D. Lee, 1848-1876*, (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1955).

[20] Brooks, *The Mountain Meadows Massacre,* 94, 137.

[21] Ibid., 78.

"Mormons were brought in later when it became evident that the Indians alone could not commit the crime."[22] By vindicating Lee, Brooks condemned the Paiutes.

During the fifty-year interim—between Brooks' book and Will Bagley's *Blood of the Prophets*—only one book reassessed Brooks' conclusions. William Wise's, *Massacre at Mountain Meadows: An American Legend and a Monumental Crime,* strongly—though not carefully—blamed Brigham Young for the massacre. "Young's idea was simple enough," Wise wrote, "let most of the attackers be Indian braves, drawn from tribes loyal to the Church," then dress a handful of Mormon participants in "feathers, blankets and red paint."[23] Due to Wise's liberal interpretation of the available sources, his scholarship has been widely discredited. Nevertheless, Will Bagley would later substantiate many of Wise's claims.

In Will Bagley's 2002 introduction of *Blood of the Prophets*, he wrote, "This book is not a revision but an extension of Brooks's [*sic*] labors." Bagley agreed with Brooks that the Mormons had created an atmosphere that permitted the massacre to occur. But Bagley pushed Brooks' argument a step further, claiming Mormonism and violence had always been inseparable. "Early Mormonism's peculiar obsession with blood and vengeance," Bagley wrote, "created the society that made the massacre possible if not inevitable." Bagley argued that due the discovery of new source material, he had "ample reason to take a new look at the subject;" and uncovering Dimick Huntington's Journal became Bagley's smoking gun.[24] Huntington's Journal

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[22] Ibid., 95.

[23] William Wise, *Massacre at Mountain Meadows: An American Legend and a Monumental Crime* (Crowell, 1976), 179-180.

[24] Bagley, *Blood of the Prophets*, 379.

described a meeting between Brigham Young and Paiute and Ute chiefs prior to the massacre. The Mountain Meadows Massacre, therefore, "was not a tragedy but a premeditated criminal act initiated in Great Salt Lake City."[25] Bagley concluded, "Dimick Huntington's journal reveals that Young...as Utah's Indian superintendent and territorial governor" had actively "encouraged his Indian allies to attack the Fancher party," as a clear warning to the approaching U.S. Army of "the cost of war with the Mormons."[26] If nothing else, Bagley's work powerfully argued that Brigham Young was fully responsible for the massacre at Mountain Meadows.

Additionally, Bagley became the first professional historian to include Paiute sources within his narrative. In fact, Bagley recognized several Paiute oral histories that claimed the Indians did not participate in the massacre. Though Bagley countered such claims by citing other Paiute sources that acknowledged limited Indian participation under Mormon directive. Bagley also argued that most of the Mormon participants during the final massacre disguised themselves as Indians. Countering Brooks, Bagley effectively demonstrated in *Blood of the Prophets* that Paiutes had been unjustifiably blamed. Bagley further chastised LDS historians for continuing to pin the responsibility for the massacre on the "vicious Paiutes."[27] Certainly Bagley must be credited for including the Paiutes' perspective and sources within his thorough history, even if the Paiutes' vindication was a byproduct of Brigham Young's incrimination.

[25] Ibid., 378.

[26] Ibid., 379.

[27] Ibid., 367.

Following Bagley, Sally Denton's *American Massacre: The Tragedy at Mountain Meadows, September 1857*, likewise argued that Brigham Young ordered the massacre. Denton reiterated past claims that fiery rhetoric mouthed by Brigham Young and others created a culture of violence in the territory during the late 1850s. But unlike Bagley and others LDS leaders, Denton concluded that the Paiutes were not responsible, nor were they involved in any way. Denton discounts any notion of Paiute involvement by characterizing the Southern Paiutes as "a notoriously complacent, peaceful, and generally unarmed tribe."[28] In Denton's discussion of the Mormon-led cover-up, she explained that Brigham Young meticulously schemed to blame the Paiutes for the massacre, even using "the term 'massacre,' one so often associated with Indian barbarity," that it became a significant element in the Mormon plan.[29] Though Denton's argument has particularly influenced this thesis, she does not push her argument far enough to explain the terrible physical consequences endured by the Paiutes during and following the Mormon-led massacre. Denton ends her work with the trial of John D. Lee in 1877. According to Denton, during Lee's trial Church leaders realized "that deflecting blame onto the Indians would no longer carry any credibility," and the Church "turned in earnest to laying total responsibility on one man: John Doyle Lee."[30]

In 2008, Ronald W. Walker, Richard E. Turley, and Glen M. Leonard compiled their widely understood *official* LDS reaction to both Bagley and Denton.

[28] Denton, *American Massacre*, 129.

[29] Ibid., 142.

[30] Ibid., 217.

Within the pages of *Massacre at Mountain Meadows,* however, the authors' deny their book counters past works, explaining they "would take a fresh approach based upon every primary source we could find" and let the sources and "events speak for themselves."[31] After passively refuting claims made by Bagley and Denton, the authors' strongly downplay Brigham Young's role in the massacre. Instead, the authors cite collective blame and appeal to "personal responsibility," arguing that "a single personal choice" could have altered the outcome of the massacre. Thus, both the participants and victims are to blame for the massacre. Walker, Turley, Lenard write:

> We believe errors were made by U.S. president James Buchanan, Brigham Young and other Mormon leaders, some of the Arkansas emigrants, some Paiutes, and most of all by settlers in southern Utah who set aside principles of their faith to commit an atrocity.[32]

Nonetheless, according to historian William Cronon, "Where one chooses to begin and end a story profoundly alters its shape and meaning."[33] *Massacre at Mountain Meadows* ends two days after the massacre, on September 13, 1857. Allowing Walker, Turley, and Leonard to avoid the more difficult problem—Young's blatant role in the cover-up; a cover-up, that caused the most vulnerable peoples under his governorship to suffer, the Southern Paiutes.

In an earlier Church publication, Ronald Walker again passively conceded that the Paiutes "suffered unjustly as others [Latter-day Saints] blamed them for the crime, calling them and their descendants 'wagon burners,' savages,' and 'hostiles.'"[34] But as

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[31] Walker, Turley, and Leonard, *Massacre at Mountain Meadows*, x, xv.

[32] Ibid., xiv.

[33] William Cronon, "A Place for Stories: Nature, History, & Narrative," in *Journal of American History* 78 (March 1992), 1347-1376, 1364.

[34] Richard E. Turley Jr., "Mountain Meadows Massacre," *Ensign* (September 2007), 20.

explored in the following pages, Mormon blame directed at the Southern Paiutes became far more catastrophic than simple name-calling.

The wider historiography of Native Americans and the American West has tended to engage lightly the Mountain Meadows Massacre. Ned Blackhawk's *Violence Over the Land: Indians and Empires in the American West* examines white settlement of the Great Basin and argued that colonialism, "violence, and American nationhood...progressed hand in hand."[35] Blackhawk highlights the trauma that many indigenous peoples experienced as Americans and Mormon pioneers invaded their land. Blackhawk condemns the Saints' militarized Indian policy and effectively shattered the image of Brigham Young's treatment of the Indians as benignly benevolent. Yet, Blackhawk never mentioned the Mountain Meadows Massacre—an omission that would have greatly reinforced his argument.

Historians Jared Farmer, Paul Reeve, and anthropologist Martha Knack have also contextualized the larger conversation concerning the effects of American settlement on the Great Basin's Indian populations.[36] In general, their collective scholarship disputes the notion that hundreds of Southern Paiutes were the driving force behind the slaughter. For example, Knack's work examines the creation and preservation of the Paiutes' ethnic boundaries. Knack considers the social, economic, and political relationships that tied Paiute and non-Indian communities together. She attributes the Paiutes' cultural flexibility for their ability to absorb new innovations

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[35] Ned Blackhawk, *Violence over the Land: Indians and Empires in the Early American West* (Harvard University Press, 2006), 9.

[36] Jared Farmer, *On Zion's Mount: Mormons, Indians, and the American Landscape* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008); W. Paul Reeve, *Making Space on the Western Frontier: Mormons, Miners, and Southern Paiutes* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006); Knack, *Boundaries Between.*

while still maintaining their own sense of identity.[37] Yet, as the Latter-day Saints continued to invade the Southern Paiutes' homeland, rather than retaliate, the "Paiutes learned that in violent confrontations with Mormons, they would lose."[38]

The goal of this thesis is to examine the larger questions surrounding the Southern Paiutes during and following the Mountain Meadows Massacre. Thus, I endeavor to look beyond much of the historical debate concerning the massacre itself. Because I indirectly address the much of the historiography, I would like to briefly clarify how my argument fits into the literature. Similar to the conclusions of Juanita Brooks, I have found that Brigham Young and other Church authorities created an atmosphere that authorized the massacre to occur. With that said, I do question the arguments proposed by Will Bagley and Sally Denton, which suggest that Brigham Young directly ordered the massacre. However, I do not excuse Church leadership. Although Young did not directly order the massacre, some of Young's closest affiliates—John D. Lee or Isaac C. Haight—confidently carried out the brutal massacre trusting that the Mormon prophet would sustain their violent endeavor. In the massacre's aftermath, Brigham Young not only supported the Mormon perpetrators, but also faithfully ratified their strategy—a more chilling and often neglected feature of the Mountain Meadows Massacre.

Furthermore, this thesis examines what the Mountain Meadows Massacre caused, recognizing that the Mormon-led atrocity devastated more than just the Arkansas emigrants. The aftermath of the Mormon-led cover-up that blamed the Paiutes for the massacre resulted in the rapid decline of the Southern Paiutes'

[37] Knack, 8.

[38] Knack, 86

population. The offense scrutinized here is the blatant deception, continued cover-up, and decades of scapegoating the Southern Paiutes at *every* level of the Mormon hierarchy. Church leadership knew the men that perpetrated the massacre, blatantly chose not to punish the murders, and actively assisted the participants by covering the evidence.

CHAPTER 1:
"BROTHER" OR "OTHER:"
THE SOUTHERN PAIUTES AND LATTER-DAY SAINTS

Ephraim is the battle ax of the Lord.
May we not have been sent to learn and know how to use this axe with skill?
-David Lewis, 1854

Despite Mormonism's theological claim of American Indians as being their glorified "brothers," Mormon settlers marginalized Indian peoples as condemned "others."[39] This chapter will explore how the LDS colonization of present-day southern Utah altered Mormon theology of native identity prior to the Mountain Meadows Massacre. This chapter will also explain how Mormon theology quickened cultural dominance and how theology established a pattern of colonial Indian displacement—specifically in regard to the Southern Paiutes.[40] Brief introductions of Paiute and Mormon histories will serve to contextualize the events leading up to the massacre. Preceding the massacre local Mormons intended to place the blame for the atrocity on the Southern Paiutes, and this premeditated offense was grounded in years of social interactions between the Latter-day Saints and Paiutes.

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[39] Jared Farmer, "Displaced from Zion: Mormons and Indians in the 19th Century," in *Historically Speaking* 10.1 (2009): 40-42. See also John-Charles Duffy, "The Use of 'Lamanite' in Official Church Discourse," *Journal of Mormon History* 31, no. 1 (Winter 2008), 118-167; Lindell explains it, "potential converts to difficult adversaries." In Jennifer Lindell, "Mormons and Native Americans in the Antebellum West," (Master's thesis: San Diego State University, 2011) v.

[40] In contrast to historians of the American West, historians of Mormonism interpret their bounty of sources concerning Mormon colonization literally. For example, most couch their narratives within a lengthy theological framework—trusting that every Latter-day Saints made each decision on faith alone. Thus, because of the Mormon pioneers' indisputable Christian character, Mormon historians have sought to, as Jared Farmer has asserted, "'prove' that Mormons behaved better than other American settlers in comparable frontier settings." Jared Farmer, "Crossroads of the West," in *The Journal of Mormon History* 41 (January 2015): 156-173, 164. See also, Howard A. Christy, "The Walker War: Defense and Conciliation as Strategy," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 47, no. 4 (1979), 395-419. Citing Christy's research, Ronald Walker, Richard Turley, and Glen Leonard rendered early colonization as merely a collection of "Indian skirmishes," removing Mormon or white guilt by emphasizing mass disruption of Mormon communities by aggressive Utes, Ronald W. Walker, Richard E. Turley, and Glen M. Leonard, *Massacre at Mountain Meadows* (Oxford University Press, 2008), 51, 63-64.

The Southern Paiutes called themselves *nüwü*, meaning "the people."[41] Their traditional homeland centered along the southern rim of the Great Basin, straddling the borders of present day Utah, Nevada, Arizona, and California (Figure 1.1). The Paiutes' terrain ranged from the Mojave Desert and stretched northeast through canyon country to the Colorado Plateau.[42] Small Paiute bands—typically consisting of three or ten families—peppered this arid region. In general, archaeologists, anthropologists, ethnographers, and historians have suggested that no fewer than thirty-five subgroups and approximately eight to sixteen larger Paiute bands inhabited this region during the mid-nineteenth century.[43] Although it is difficult to identify each band the Mormons coerced and later blamed for the massacre, the Paiute bands most affected by the massacre are: the UnkapaNukuints or Cedar Band living along Coal Creek near Cedar City, Utah; the Shivwits and Uinkarets located between the Virgin River and Colorado River in the northwest corner of Arizona; the Moapits Band along Muddy River near Las Vegas, Nevada; and—perhaps the largest group—the

[41] Martha C. Knack, *Boundaries Between: The Southern Paiutes, 1775-1995* (Nebraska University Press, 2001), 13. "The first definitely located and dated use [of Paiute] was by Franscisco Garcés, who recorded in 1776 that the Havasupai used a name he Hispanicized as Payuches for some people living north of the Colorado River." In Isabel T. Kelly and Catherine S. Fowler, "Southern Paiute." Warren L. D'Azenvedo, Warren L., vol. ed. *Handbook of North American Indians: Great Basin*, Volume 11 (Smithsonian Institution, 1986), 393.

[42] Kelly and Fowler, "Southern Paiute," 370.

[43] There is, however, a longstanding debate over how many small and large Paiute bands populated the region during the mid-nineteenth century. In 1859, Jacob Forney as Superintendent of Indian Affairs believed, "The Pi-ute Indians, living in the southern part of the Territory, are divided into ten bands, each band numbering from 60 to 150, which live and roam on and adjacent to the Southern California road." Jacob Forney to Kirk Anderson, 5 May 1859, in *The Valley Tan*, Kirk Anderson, ed., (Great Salt Lake City), 10 May 1859. This debate is well documented in, Ronald L. Holt, *Beneath These Red Cliffs: An Ethnohistory of the Utah Paiutes* (University of New Mexico Press, 1992), 7-11. Holt identifies eight Utah Paiute "Tribes": 1. Kwiumpus near Beaver, UT; 2. Paruguns near Parowan, UT; 3. UnkapaNukuints near Cedar City, UT; 4. Paspikaivats near Toquerville, UT; 5. Unkakaniguts within Long Valley, UT; 6. Paguits near Pagu or Fish Lake, UT; 7. Kaivavwits near Kanab, UT; 8. UaiNuints near St. George, UT.

Tonoquints (Yannawants) or St. George Band that lived along the Santa Clara River near St. George, Utah.[44] The Pahvant Band along Corn Creek south of Fillmore, Utah, should also be recognized. Although the Pahvants are mostly of Ute descent, they were heavily interconnected with many Paiute bands. For example, the first Southern Paiute reservation was at Corn Creek.[45]

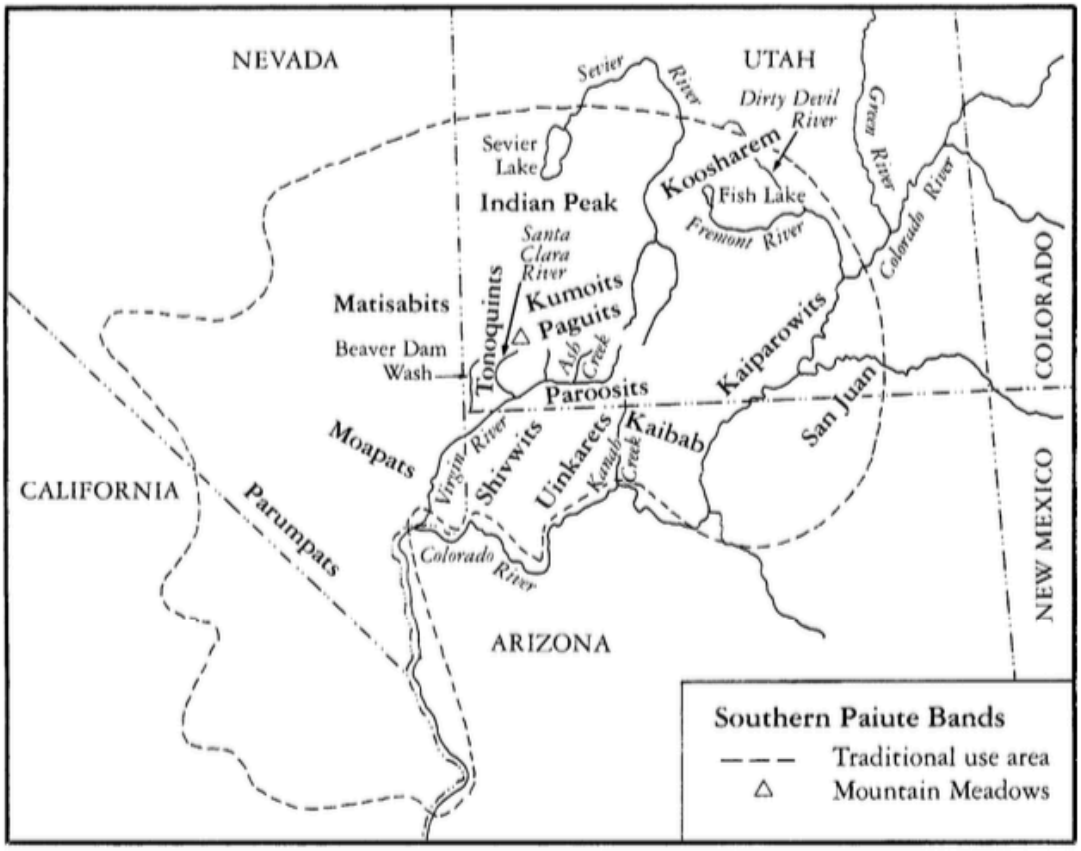

Figure 1.1: "Southern Paiute Bands," in Holt, *Beneath These Red Cliffs*, 2.

[44] Kelly and Fowler, "Southern Paiute," 394-396. See also Knack, *Boundaries Between*, 11; Holt, *Beneath These Red Cliffs*, 4-11; W. Paul Reeve, *Making Space on the Western Frontier: Mormons, Miners, and Southern Paiutes* (University of Illinois Press, 2006), 11; Catherine S. Fowler and Don D. Fowler, "Notes on the History of the Southern Paiutes and Western Shoshonis," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 39 (Spring 1971), 98-99; Gary Tom and Ronald Holt, "The Paiute Tribe of Utah," in *A History of Utah's American Indians*, ed. Forrest S. Cuch (Salt Lake City: Utah State Division of Indian Affairs/Utah State Division of History, 2000), 125-126.

[45] "The earliest reservation for Southern Paiute groups was at Corn Creek in central Utah." In Knack, 111. "The student of the Utah Paiutes must be careful to remember that the current Native American group designated as the Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah is an amalgamation of Pahvant, Ute/Paiute, and several remnant groups of Southern Paiutes. These amalgamated groups have historical identities that exacerbate cleavages within the tribe. The Utah Paiutes have never been a homogeneous nation." In Holt, *Beneath These Red Cliffs*, 43.

The first detailed account regarding the Southern Paiutes appeared in the expedition journal of Francisco Domínguez and Vélez de Escalante. During their 1776 journey through the Great Basin, Domínguez and Escalante called the Paiutes "Yuta Cobarde," meaning the timid Utes.[46] Near present-day Cedar City, Utah, while returning to Santa Fe, the Spanish stumbled upon a group of Paiute women gathering seeds along a creek bed. When the women noticed the strangers, they immediately fled. Tracking the Paiute women back to their camp, Domínguez and Escalante recorded that the Paiute headman was "so intimidated" by the Spanish arrivals, "that he appeared to be out of his mind." They additionally noted that, "any gesture or motion on our part startled him beyond measure."[47] According to the Franciscan friars, the Paiutes were more cautious and weary of the Spanish travelers than the bold equestrian Utes they met in the north.[48]

In addition to observing the Paiute's startled and timid behavior, the Domínguez-Escalante expedition further described the Paiutes' unique food sources, settlement patterns, and small-scale irrigation techniques.[49] For over a millennium, the Paiutes had adapted to the fragile balance of desert living—ingeniously exploiting "every available food source in their harsh homelands."[50] The Paiutes' diet was largely

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[46] *The Domínguez Escalante Journal: Their Expedition Through Colorado, Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico in 1776.* Edited by Ted J. Warner and Translated by Fray Angelico Chavez (University of Utah Press, 1995), 91-92.

[47] *Domínguez Escalante Journal,* 92.

[48] Knack, 32.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Will Bagley, *Blood of the Prophets: Brigham Young and the Massacre at Mountains Meadows* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002), 28.

dependent on gathering a surprising variety of nutritious seeds, roots, and berries.[51] Similar to other cultures, the Paiutes' limited food source helped shape their unique settlement patterns. Addressing the connection between diet and settlement, anthropologist Martha Knack has written, "Paiutes realized that too many people could not expect to live together, so their camp groups typically were as few as ten to as many as fifty people."[52] In addition to foraging in small family groups or bands, Paiutes were marginally supported by horticulture.[53] Many larger and some relatively smaller bands cultivated little gardens of corn, squash, melons, gourds, and sunflowers along reliable water sources—such as the Muddy, Virgin, and Santa Clara rivers. To irrigate larger gardens, Paiute women used wooden sticks to simply scratch small channels and divert water from the river and over their crops.[54]

Collectively, the Paiutes' unique food sources, settlement patterns, and small-scale irrigation techniques ensured Paiute mobility. Robert Holt has described that, "Mobility was crucial in order for the people [Paiutes] effectively to utilize the varied environments offered by the Colorado Plateau."[55] Over the course of a year, bands

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[51] For a specific list of flora, see Robert A. Bye Jr., "Ethnobotany of the Southern Paiute Indians in the 1870s, with a note on the early ethnobotanical contributions of Dr. Edward Palmer" in *Great Basin Cultural Ecology: A Symposium*, Ed. Don D. Fowler, Desert Research Institute Publications in the Social Sciences No. 8 (Reno: Desert Research Institute, 1972), 87–104. See also Isabel T. Kelly, *Southern Paiute Indians Ethnography* (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1976), 36-55. Tom and Holt have written, "They [Paiutes] used at least thirty-two families of flora encompassing some ninety-six species of edible plants. The list would be greatly expanded were it to include the equally impressive array of medicinal plants, many of which also had nutritional value." In Tom and Holt, "The Paiute Tribe of Utah," 124.

[52] Knack, 20.

[53] Holt, *Beneath These Red Cliffs,* 5.

[54] Knack, 15. "During the 1840s virtually every traveler's diary mentioned Paiute horticulture. During the 1850s irrigated fields as large as ten acres were fairly common." Holt, *Beneath These Red Cliffs*, 6.

[55] Holt, *Beneath These Red Cliffs*, 5.

purposefully moved across region and elevation in accordance with the changing seasons. Rather than relying on small desert game—such as rabbit, sage grouse, desert tortoise, gopher, mouse, and chipmunk—the Paiutes cycled to areas with dependable wild and domestic harvests. In the spring, bands gathered in lower valleys, along small lakes and rivers to collect wild berries and to take advantage of spawning fish. Groups would also begin to plant small gardens and harvest rice grass or "Piede wheat," which typically ripened in April or May.[56] During the autumn harvest, Paiute bands en masse collected pine nuts in the higher elevations piñon forests. Groves of piñon pine produced large amounts of food for the Paiutes. According to Knack, "Piñon was the staple food that had to last people all winter long, so basket after basket load was roasted and carried from the high groves to the sheltered lowland winter camps."[57]

The Southern Paiutes ability to move unimpeded across this arid region was due to cooperation and reciprocation among other Paiute bands. Collectively the Paiutes neither defended their land, nor did they believe any person or group had ownership over the land.[58] Although individual bands were typically named after specific foods or water sources, such resources were not controlled or owned by any particular group—even if the food or water source were located within a band's core area.[59] All groups were welcome to share in a location's abundance. Therefore, it was

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[56] Floyd O'Neil and John R. Alley Jr., "The Southern Paiutes," in Papanikolas, ed., *The Peoples of Utah* (Salt Lake City: Utah Historical Society, 1976), 45.

[57] Knack, 16-17. See also "Table 1. Southern Paiute Campsite Seasonal Round" in Holt, *Beneath These Red Cliffs*, 6.

[58] Knack, 15.

[59] Tom and Holt, "The Paiute Tribe of Utah," 125. "This is true of the Cedar Band, one of whose aboriginal names is "Kumoits," referring to rabbits." In Holt, *Beneath These Red Cliffs*, 7.

more practical and functional for the Southern Paiutes to have permeable or flexible geographical boundaries due to the region's sparse resources. No single band could survive the desert individually, and private ownership made little sense to the Paiutes. Even a specific band's garden—although typically respected—could be used by other groups during genuine emergencies.[60]

Permeable geographical boundaries further influenced the Southern Paiutes' flexible ethnic boundaries. Social openness and intergroup reciprocity offered the Paiutes greater stability and security.[61] Marriage and other kinship relationships tied Paiute bands together, while also connecting them to external tribes. Large and small Paiute bands were continually shifting—simultaneously becoming absorbed and created. A band's name or geographical location often changed from one generation to the next. Notwithstanding this social fluidity, Southern Paiute society continued to included headmen and shamans to reinforce their customs and traditions. Richard Holt has observed that Paiute bands or "units were held together by the limited authority of leaders and by recognized, but highly flexible, membership rules."[62]

In short, the desert's limited recourses led the generally peaceful Paiutes to migrate seasonally, share resources communally, and tolerate accessible ethnic boundaries. But one important element was missing from Paiute society—warriors.[63] Martha Knack has written that, "War as an organized struggle of one community

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[60] Knack, 15.

[61] Ibid., 29.

[62] Holt, *Beneath These Red Cliffs*, 37.

[63] Knack, 27.

against another was extremely rare because there was very little apparent need for it in Paiute life."[64] Other researchers have arrived at similar conclusions: to Knack "the Southern Paiute were notably pacific."[65] During the late-1850s, the characteristically peaceful Southern Paiutes occasionally stampeded settlers' livestock for food, but had never violently attacked a passing wagon train.[66] Because the Paiutes lacked a warrior tradition, large-scale military action remained essentially nonexistent.[67]

In fact, Ronald Holt has determined that the Southern Paiutes' long-term survival was due in part to their "lack of military power and their limited corporate organization," making it difficult "to either assimilate or to annihilate them."[68] To be fair, just because Paiute society lacked warriors did not mean they were free from internal strife and external threats.[69] The overwhelming evidence does, however, suggest that a fundamental element of Paiute society was based on peaceful internal and external tribal relations.

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[64] Ibid., 26.

[65] Kelly and Fowler, "Southern Paiute," 381.

[66] Richard W. Stoffle and Michael J. Evans, *Kaibab Paiute History: The Early Years* (Fredonia: Kaibab Paiute Tribe, 1978), 57.

[67] As Knack argues, "The only other record of Paiutes digging trenches or engaging in long-term siege tactics against an organized wagon train was at the Colorado River crossing near Needles in August 1858. There, Chemehuevis joined Mohaves, a militaristic tribe that traditionally fought in tight, standing formations, to attack a train bogged down in the shoreline swamps in what was clearly a stock raid." In Knack, 79. See also Tom and Holt, "The Paiute Tribe of Utah," 138.

[68] Holt, *Beneath These Red Cliffs,* 12

[69] Great Basin peoples were generally peaceful prior to the European invasion. See Ned Blackhawk, *Violence over the Land: Indians and Empires in the Early American West* (Harvard University Press, 2006). Following the Mormon disruption of resources: "The Cedar bands mounted an expedition against the Muddy River Moapas in the summer of 1856. 'We endeavored to make peace,' Jacob Hamblin recalled, 'but blood had been spilled, and nothing but blood would satisfy them.' To avenge the killing of a Tonaquint woman, the Santa Clara band 'took a Moapats woman, fastened her to a tree, and burnt her.'" See Bagley, *Blood of the Prophets*, 35.

Between the Domínguez-Escalante expedition of 1776, and well after the Mormon arrival in 1847, the Spanish continued to visit the Great Basin "not only for furs, but to traffic in Indian slaves."[70] Many of these captured Indian slaves were Paiutes. Although the Domínguez-Escalante expedition did not directly affect the Southern Paiutes, the Paiutes certainly suffered on the fringe of Spain's colonial influence. After the Utes incorporated the horse in the final decade of the seventeenth century, they built an extensive trading network that stretched from the Great Basin east toward the Plains Indians, south to colonial New Spain, and west to California.[71] Child captives became the most valuable exchange commodity for the Utes, bringing the tribe a wealth of Euro-American goods. For a century the Utes captured, enslaved, and bartered Paiutes with Spanish colonies and other Indian tribes.[72] Although the mobile Utes captured and enslaved the nonequestrian Paiutes, there is no indication that the Paiutes enslaved other native peoples.[73] The mid-nineteenth century Mormon arrival into the Great Basin disrupted and eventually ended the Indian slave trade.

Typically, the colonization of the American West can be viewed as a random assortment of personal decisions that either pushed or pulled Americans across the

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[70] William Snow, "Brigham Young Opposes Indian Slavery," in *Utah Historical Quarterly* 2, no. 3 (July 1929), 81-82, quoted in Holt, 19.

[71] James F. Brooks, *Captives & Cousins: Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands* (University of North Carolina Press, 2002),15, 49; Pekka Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 25; Blackhawk, 23-26.

[72] For in-depth analysis of the Spanish and Ute alliance, see Blackhawk, 55-144. See also Knack, 35-36; Clifford Duncan, "The Northern Utes of Utah," in *A History of Utah's American Indians*, ed. Forrest S. Cuch (Salt Lake City: Utah State Division of Indian Affairs / Utah State Division of History, 2003), 180-181; L. R. Bailey, *Indian Slave Trade in the Southwest* (Los Angles: Westernlore Press, 1966).

[73] Knack, 36.

continent. One major exception, however, was the Latter-day Saints who moved in a unified mass under the direction of a centralized Church government.[74] Brigham Young—who guided Mormon refugees from western Illinois to colonize the Great Basin in 1846-1847—was the successor of Joseph Smith Jr., the founder of Mormonism.

According to LDS theology, Joseph Smith was privy to revelation, prophecy, and translation—like the prophets of the Old Testament. While living in upstate New York, Smith was guided to a deposit of gold plates that by 1830 he translated and published as the Book of Mormon. The original title page of the Book of Mormon purports that the volume was "an abridgment of the Record of the People of Nephi; and also of the Lamanites; written to the Lamanites, which are a remnant of the House of Israel."[75]

The Book of Mormon's intended audience, the "Lamanites," was believed to be the remaining indigenous population of North America. Accordingly, the Lamanites or American Indians were the descendants of Laman and Lemuel, the disobedient sons of Lehi. The chronicle of the Book of Mormon begins with Father Lehi fleeing with his family from Jerusalem to the Americas around 600 B.C.E. During the family's journey through the "wilderness" and their eventual voyage across the ocean, Laman—the oldest of Lehi's sons—continually rebelled against his father's sacred teachings and visions. Laman's opposition eventually led to a split between his followers, the Lamanites, and the followers of Lehi's youngest son Nephi, or

[74] Ibid., 51.

[75] *The Book of Mormon*, (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1981).

Nephites. Because the Lamanites "hardened their hearts against" the teachings of the Nephites they were "cut off" and cursed with "a skin of blackness." This curse made the Lamanites, "an idle people, full of mischief and subtlety, and [they] did seek in the wilderness for beasts of prey."[76] The one-thousand-year saga of the Book of Mormon is thus predicated upon the spiritual and physical conflict between the Nephite and Lamanite civilizations. By 400 C.E. the wicked Lamanites finally conquered the remaining Nephite civilization.

Because nineteenth-century Mormon converts both accepted the teachings and revelations of Joseph Smith and were socialized in American culture, they formulated a unique and precarious understanding of American Indian identity. Theologically, Mormons believed that American Indians were of Hebrew descent and would—upon hearing of their ancestors' lost record—quickly accept Mormonism and assimilate. Throughout his life, Joseph Smith continued to identify "our western Tribes of Indians" or "the Indians that now inhabit this country" as the descendants of the Lamanites.[77] Other revelations received by Smith reinforced and clarified the Lamanites' essential role in the last days. In one such revelation, Smith taught that Christ's second coming would not occur until the Lamanites repented and "blossom as the rose" by returning to Christ's church.[78] Other spiritual teaching explained that Lamanites were spiritual kin and would be restored to their traditional homeland,

[76] Ibid., 2 Nephi 5:20-25.

[77] Dean C. Jessee, ed., *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1984), 273

[78] *The Doctrine and Covenants of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: Containing Revelations Given to Joseph Smith, the Prophet, With Some Additions by His Successors in the Presidency of the Church*, (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1981)(hereafter cited D&C), 49:24.

assist in the building a New Jerusalem in the American West, and terrorize American "gentiles" if they hindered the rise of Israel.[79] Significantly, Latter-day Saints constructed notions of race on the tenets of doctrine, rather than science.[80]

Nevertheless, nineteenth-century Mormon theology adopted or reflected many popular antebellum folk stereotypes of the American Indians. Historian Robert Remini writes that the Book of Mormon "is a story that people of the Jacksonian era could easily relate to and understand because it is part of a very American tradition." Remini continues by describing that the Book of Mormon "radiates revivalist passion, frontier culture and folklore, popular concepts about Indians, and the democratic impulses and political movements of its time."[81] Mormonism, in other words, canonized popular American folklore into powerful theological beliefs regarding Indian identity. The Book of Mormon became a spiritual explanation for the existence of American Indians and a political answer for the era's Indian problem. In practice this canonization of popular American stereotypes accelerated an impatient effort by Mormon colonizers first to redeem and second to civilize the Great Basin's Indian population.[82]

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[79] According to LDS scripture: "And that the Lamanites might come to the knowledge of their fathers, and that they might know the promises of the Lord, and that they may believe the gospel and rely upon the merits of Jesus Christ, and be glorified through faith in his name, and that through their repentance they might be saved. Amen." D&C 3:20. See also, "Yea, and this was their faith—that my gospel, which I gave unto them that they might preach in their days, might come unto their brethren the Lamanites, and also all that had become Lamanites because of their dissensions." D&C 10:48

[80] James Brewer Stewart, "The Emergence of Racial Modernity and the Rise of the White North, 1790- 1840," *Journal of the Early Republic* 18, no. 2 (Summer 1998), 182.

[81] Robert V. Remini, *Joseph Smith* (Penguin, 2002), 72.

[82] Others have argued that antebellum popular religious themes, Joseph Smith's cultural surroundings, millennialism, America as a chosen nation, and Native Americans as the lost tribes of Israel, were consciously (or unconsciously) placed into the Book of Mormon. See also Richard Abanes, *One Nation Under Gods: A History of the Mormon Church* (New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 2003), 65; John L. Brooke, *The Refiner's Fire: The Making of Mormon Cosmology, 1644-1844* (Cambridge University Press, 1994), 142; Philip L. Barlow, "Before Mormonism: Joseph Smith's Use of the Bible, 1820-1829," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 57, no. 4 (Winter 1989), 761;

Leaving New York in the early 1830s, Joseph Smith and his followers began to first gather in Kirtland, Ohio. During this time Smith began to send missionaries further west to begin redeeming the Lamanites along the border of Indian Territory. In January 1838, Joseph Smith fled Ohio and gathered with his supporters to western Missouri. By the end of 1838, Smith was imprisoned in Missouri while his Church moved north to Commerce, Illinois. Located on the east bank of the Mississippi River, Commerce—later renamed Nauvoo—became the largest gathering of Latter-day Saints before their trek west. Nevertheless, despite the Mormons' ever-increasing power and influence within Illinois, their kingdom was once again displaced after the assassination of Joseph Smith in June 1844.

Following Smith's death and facing expulsion from Illinois, Mormon leadership scrambled to locate another refuge for the Latter-day Saints. Brigham Young—the President of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles—along with other selected leaders spent months pouring through maps and travel guides. They considered Oregon, California, Texas, and the Rocky Mountains.[83] With the aid of John C. Frémont's 1843 report, the Mormon hierarchy began planning a settlement in the "Great interior Basin"—specifically the Valley of the Great Salt Lake. Frémont's description of the Great Basin as "peopled…miserably and sparsely," was exactly what Young and the Latter-day Saints were searching for.[84]

D. Michael Quinn, *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1987), 165. For antebellum folk examples see Israel Worsley, *View of the American Indian*, 120; Ethan Smith, *View of the Hebrews; or the Tribes of Israel in American, 180.*

[83] For Mormon interests in the Republic of Texas, see Michael Scott Van Wagenen, *The Texas Republic and the Mormon Kingdom of God* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2002).

[84] John C. Frémont, *Narrative of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains* (Washington: Henry Polkinhorn, 1845), 260.

As Mormon wagons inched down the steep canyons of the Wasatch Mountains during the summer of 1847, Brigham Young asked Willard Richards to forward a message to the vanguard concerning the location of future settlement. Richards recorded that Young "felt inclined for the present not to crowd upon the Utes until we have a chance to get acquainted with them…The president [Brigham Young] thinks the Utes may feel a little tenacious about their choice lands on the Utah Lake, and had better keep further north toward the Salt Lake, which is more of a warlike or neutral ground." Richards concluded the letter, "by so doing we should be less likely to be disturbed and also have a chance to form an acquaintance with the Utes."[85] It was well known to Frémont and other explores that various bands of Utes, known as Timpanagos, or "Fish-Eaters," lived year round in the Utah Valley.[86] Earlier Mormon interactions with smaller Indian populations had been limited, peaceful, and temporary. But as Mormon wagons approached the Great Basin, many settlers became anxious and weary of living among the Indians.

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[85] Letter to Orson Pratt from Willard Richards, July 21, 1847, *Journal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Saints*, CR 100 137, Vol. 23, LDS Church History Library, Salt Lake City, UT, https://dcms.lds.org/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE3448320 (Accessed 1 March 2016)(Collection hereafter cited *Journal History*). LDS Journal History scrapbook consists of typed entries and Newspaper clippings from 1830 to the present. Ned Blackhawk has attributed the lack of initial violence in the Mormon's desert settlement to the fact that it was located in the disputed border area between Ute and Shoshone tribal groups. See Blackhawk, 227.

[86] It has been generally thought and accepted that there were no Native Americans living in the Salt Lake Valley in 1847. Several tribes lived in the Utah territory. The Shoshones lived north of the Salt Lake Valley; Goshutes lived in the west desert; the Paiutes occupied a large portion of southwestern Utah; the Navajo occupied the southeast; and the Utes occupied the largest area of present day Utah ranging from the area of Salt Lake and then south almost to the present border and then east into Colorado. Jared Farmer has challenged the popular perception that Salt Lake was empty. According to Farmer the Mormons—akin to other Euro-American populations—viewed unclaimed and unused land as unoccupied, but unoccupied did not mean unpopulated. See Jared Farmer, *On Zion's Mount: Mormons, Indians, and the American Landscape* (Harvard University Press, 2008), 13.

In the Salt Lake Valley, Mormon ideals regarding Lamanite or Native American identity began to adjust as the Church developed a clear Indian policy. Within days, the small religious colony was greeted by scores of Indians. Following a series of violent disputes between the Utes and Shoshone, each claiming the rights to sell the Salt Lake Valley to the Mormons, Church leadership immediately began regulating all trade with all Indians. Settlers began questioning the idea of Indians being of Hebrew descent and many Saints began to fall back on common American stereotypes. Fears of Indian theft and violence began to overshadow and alter theology.

In a sermon, Heber C. Kimball told settlers, "not to dispose of their guns and ammunition to the Indians, as some had already done, for they [the Indians] would use the weapons thus obtained for shooting the cattle of the settlers." Later that afternoon, Kimball proposed to build a "stockade or fort to keep out the Indians; that the women and children be treated properly, and the Indians let entirely alone."[87] George A. Smith recorded in his journal that the congregation "voted that we do not trade with, or take any notice of the Indians, when they come to our camp."[88] Another Mormon governing body, the Council of Fifty, also approved restrictive trading ordinances: "In harmony with the same philosophy the Council appointed a committee to do the community's trading with Indians," and "that all other persons should be prohibited

[87] *Journal History*, August 1, 1847.

[88] *Autobiographical Writings, Journal 1840-1847*, 359. In George A. Smith Papers, 1834-1875, folder 14, box 4, MS 1322, LDS Church History Library.

[from such trading] under fine."[89] By early August 1847, the belief that Indians deserved redemption and could be civilized was rapidly dissolving.

Mormons settled quickly throughout the Great Basin. By 1850, the Mormon population was approximately 11,000 and boomed to around 40,000 settlers by 1860.[90] Zion became not just one city—like Nauvoo, Illinois—but dozens of satellite

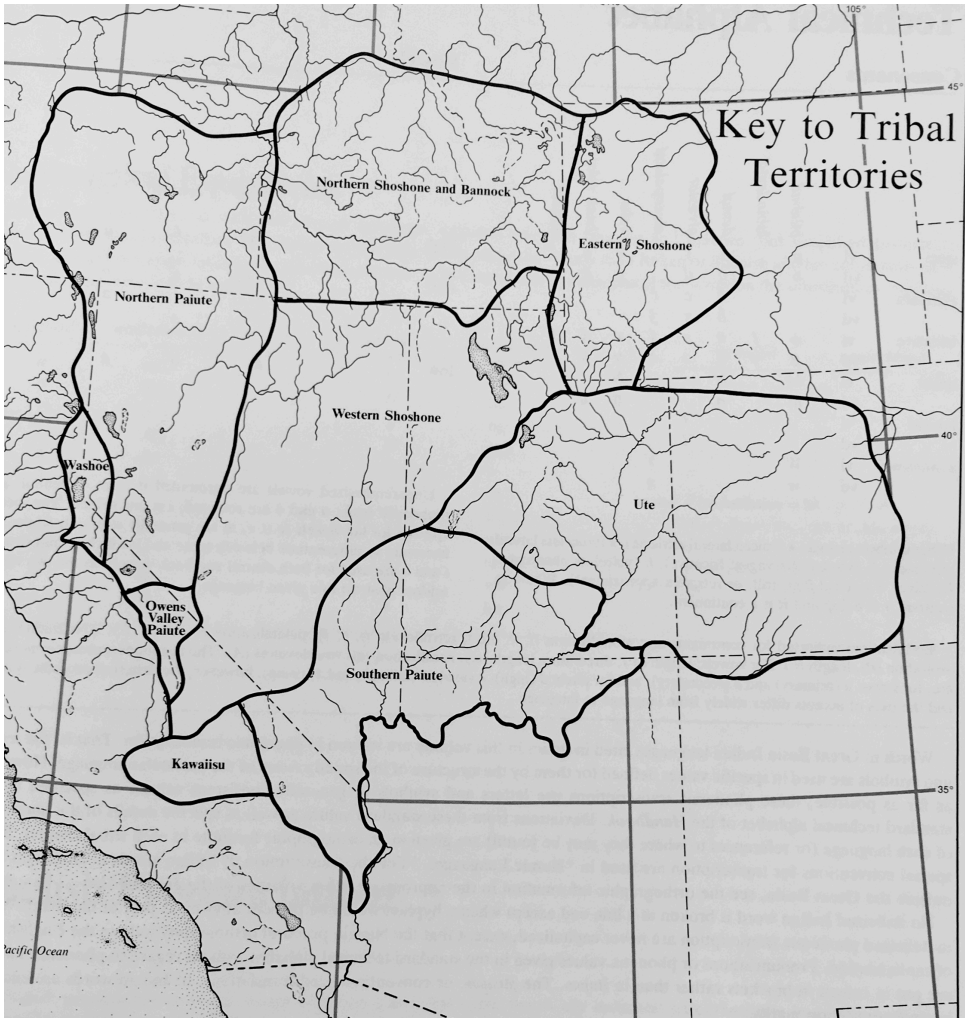

Figure 1.2: "Key to Tribal Territories," in Kelly and Fowler, "Southern Paiute," *ix*.

[89] Leonard Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom: An Economic History of the Latter-day Saints, 1830-1900* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1958), 55.

[90] Walter Nugent, "The Mormons and America's Empires," *Journal of Mormon History* 36, no. 2 (Spring 2010): 10-11.

villages scattered throughout the Great Basin. By 1850, the Latter-day Saints had begun to colonize the Ute homeland in the Utah Valley. Colonizers in Utah Valley became very discouraged, however, when most of the Utes stubbornly clung to their traditional lifestyle and refused to integrate into Mormonism—further depleting the Saints' hopes of Lamanite redemption. It quickly became apparent that both cultures could not peacefully live side-by-side along the rich Provo River, and Mormon settlers began to clash openly with the Utes. Utah Valley settlers used alarming tactics ruthlessly to crush and remove the Utes. According to historian Robert Carter, Mormon settlers "resorted to methods not unlike those that non-Mormon settlers and the United States Army later employed to overwhelm Native Americans in the surrounding territories."[91] Redeemable natives were becoming a nuisance that needed to be removed or crushed.

By the early 1850s, newspaper accounts published in the Mormon-run *Deseret News*, were replete with reports of Indian depredations, altercations, and theft of LDS property. One such article stated that Indians "committed depredation on the grain in the Big Field" and the group "assumed a menacing attitude towards some of the citizens in that vicinity."[92] Another published account addressed to the editor of the *Deseret News*, described that the "Indians [around Mary's River] are very troublesome and hostile." Many of the Indians, the letter continued, were terrorizing the Saints' by

[91] D. Robert Carter, *Founding of Fort Utah: Provo's Native Inhabitants, Early Explorers, and First Year of Settlement* (Provo City Corporation, 2003), xiii.

[92] "Indian Depredations," *Deseret News*, October 19, 1850.

stampeding their livestock into the mountains. The account estimated that during the traveling season of 1850, the Indians stampeded over "1000 head of animals."[93]

Around 1851, a limited number of Mormon settlers began to invade Paiute territory, beginning with the establishment of the Iron Mission at Parowan and later Cedar City.[94] It was only after Mormons subdued Ute resistance in Utah Valley that they cleared the way for future Mormon settlement throughout the Great Basin. According to Mormon historians Ronald Walker, Richard Turley, and Glenn Leonard, the result of Mormon-Ute hostilities was Brigham Young's personal discovery that, "he and his church were not doing enough for the territory's Native peoples."[95] Whether it was out of the goodness of Young's heart or because he had devastated and displaced Ute competition, the conclusion of the conflict prompted Young to establish the Southern Utah Indian Mission. Indian missions became a place where Latter-day Saints could teach Indians English, western farming, and Mormonism—reattempting to rebut theological concepts and move Indians along the path of redemption.[96]

In the spring of 1854, Young "called" twenty-five young men as missionaries to settle among the Southern Paiutes. Mormons called the Paiutes, "Pah Utaus" and "Piedes." The missionaries first established the small colony of New Harmony, just southwest of Cedar City near the UnkapaNukuints or Cedar Band living along Coal

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[93] Joseph Cain to Dr. Willard Richards, *Deseret News*, 5 October 1850.

[94] W. Paul Reeve, *Making Space on the Western Frontier*, 15. See also Morris A. Shirts and Kathryn H. Shirts, *A Trial Furnace: Southern Utah's Iron Mission* (Provo: Brigham Young Press, 2001); Leonard J. Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, 87.

[95] Walker, Turley, and Leonard, *Massacre at Mountain Meadows*, 51, 63-64. See Christy, "The Walker War," 395-396, 405-408.

[96] Ronald Walker, "Seeking the Remnant: The Native American During the Joseph Smith Period," *Journal of Mormon History* 19, no. 1 (1993): 1-33.

Creek. Later the Indian mission headquarters moved further south to Santa Clara Creek to the heart of the Paiutes' homeland or "riverine core"—a zone of heavy Paiute occupation—near the Tonoquints or St. George band and close to the present-day Utah/Nevada border.[97] Within seven years the Santa Clara mission grew into the town of St. George, where Brigham Young established his winter home and seasonally brought the entire administrative apparatus of the Mormon Church.[98] In 1855, Young ordered yet another Indian mission be established in Las Vegas, near the Moapats band along the Muddy River.[99]

Unlike the Utes, the Southern Paiutes offered little armed resistance against Mormon invasion. In fact, early Mormon accounts suggest that during their initial encounters the Paiutes appeared to have actively welcomed Mormon settlements. Paiutes most likely accepted Mormon encroachment as a way to counter years of Ute dominance and slave raids. Initially, the Paiutes benefited from an alliance with the Saints. One early settler described the Paiutes' fear of the Utes when word came that, "Utah Indians were on their way to steal their children." A Paiute chief asked the Mormons to help fight off the advancing Utes. But when the slavers heard the Mormons would fight along side the Paiutes, the Utes canceled their raid.[100] "They

[97] Knack, 62. "Riverine core," see Tom and Holt, "The Paiute Tribe of Utah," 141.

[98] Ibid., 52.

[99] Ibid.

[100] "Jacob Hamblin to Editor," *Deseret News*, 4 April 1855, quoted in Knack, 54.

seemed to love us much," recorded Thomas D. Brown after briefly visiting a Paiute camp, "and regretted our leaving them."[101]

Revitalizing Lamanite theology, Mormon letters and journals described the Paiutes' tough work ethic, strong desire for material, and general interest in agriculture. John D. Lee, a leader of a Mormon exploring party wrote that the Paiute headmen south of Cedar City sought him out. Lee recorded, "They expressed great anxiety to have us settle among them, so they could 'manika' (work) for the Mormons, like the Pah Eeds at Parowan."[102] Similarly, an early Las Vegas settler wrote to his wife that a local Paiute chief stated, "he was glad that we was amoning [coming] to Live among them and Lern [*sic*] them…he wanted us to Com and Live with them and the Indans [*sic*] wood treat us well he said that his Hart was Warm for the mormons."[103] Another Las Vegas settler explained, "They [Paiutes] are anxious for us to settle the country, and are willing for our cattle to eat their grass, if we will employ them that they may have clothes to wear and food to eat when their grass seed is all used."[104]

Once Mormon Indian missionaries began working among the Paiutes, they too reinforced Lamanite theology. Thomas D. Brown described the Paiutes' redeemability along with their peaceful culture in a letter: "they are very industrious and simple as

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[101] Thomas D. Brown, *Journal of the Southern Indian Mission: Diary of Thomas D. Brown*, ed. Juanita Brooks (Utah State University Press, 1972), 68.

[102] "John D. Lee to Br. Richards," *Deseret News*, 4 September 1852.

[103] "Aroet Hale to 'Dear Companion,'" 12 June 1855, D3212 fd. 1, LDS Church History Library.

[104] "Anson Call to George A. Smith, 25 December 1864," *Deseret Weekly News*, January 18, 1865.

children—own but few guns and fewer horses, and many of them in trying to hold up a gun would put it to their left shoulder with the trigger upwards!"[105] In another letter Brown optimistically assumed if Paiute bands were furnished with farming implements, "their present salvation, and the foundation for the exaltation" would be ensured.[106] Jacob Hamblin recalled seeing a group of Santa Clara women "gathering a red, sweet berry, called 'opie;'" and observed the Paiutes' work ethic while "harvesting their wheat."[107]Other letters published in *Deseret News,* highlighted observations from Indian missionaries as confirmation that Mormons Indian relations were on the right track. Missionary Henry Lunt expressed his desire that "we may one and all be serviceable in rolling forth the great work" of saving the Paiute Indians.[108]

Certainly such statements could be self-justifications by a religious people striving to ease their own moral consciences. But, as Martha Knack has explained, "Paiutes may indeed have seen some benefits from the Mormon presence, even if those benefits were short-lived and their perceptions naively short-sighted."[109] As settlements expanded south across the Paiutes' homeland, Mormons confiscated many valuable and limited resources. Prior to white invasion, the region was already a delicate ecosystem and any disruption—manmade or otherwise—could lead to widespread famine. Notwithstanding, the Southern Indian Mission did establish close

[105] Brown, *Journal of the Southern Indian Mission,* 68.

[106] Thomas D. Brown to Brigham Young, "Extracts," *Deseret News*, 20 July 1854.

[107] James A. Little, ed., *Jacob Hamblin: A Narrative of His Personal Experience, as a Frontiersman, Missionary to the Indians, and Explorer*, 1881 (Deseret News, 1909), 34.

[108] "Letter from Elder Henry Lunt," *Deseret News*, 2 February 1854.

[109] Knack, 54.

relations with the Paiutes. The missions created a sense of trust and even dependence between both parties.[110]

Shortly after the missionaries arrived in southern Utah, Young visited the Indian mission and reminded the missionaries that they were "not sent to farm, build nice houses & fence fine fields, not to help white men, but to save the red ones." With the establishment of Indian missions and Indian farms, it now appeared that the Paiutes were on the verge of "blossoming as the rose." Thus, fulfilling their role in assisting in the building of a New Jerusalem in the American West. Once redeemed, the Paiutes were finally in a position to begin terrorizing the Gentiles if they inhibited Israel.

And the professed discovery of Lamanites—Mormondom's potential ally—could not have arrived at a better time. President James Buchanan had just ordered the army west to put down rumors of treason in the territory and to instate a new territorial governor. Fearing the invasion, Brigham Young began preparations either to fight the approaching army or dig in for a siege. Young distributed proclamations throughout the territory requesting that Latter-day Saints conserve all provisions, gather ammunitions, and restricted all trade—"Not a kernel of grain was to be wasted or sold to merchants or passing emigrants."[111] The Church simultaneously began to reinforce and establish a string of fortified towns through Paiute country that formed a corridor to the Pacific Ocean.

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[110] Walker, Turley, and Leonard, *Massacre at Mountain Meadows (Oxford University Press, 2008)*, 145.

[111] Richard E. Turley Jr., "Mountain Meadows Massacre," *Ensign* (September 2007), 17.

The Paiutes themselves also assumed greater significance during the crisis. Brigham Young wrote to the leader of the Southern Indian Mission, Jacob Hamblin: "Continue the conciliatory policy towards the Indians, which I have ever recommended, and seek by works of righteousness to obtain their love and confidence, for they must learn that they have either go to help us, or the United States will kill us both."[112] In September 1857, Young sent a letter to William Dame in Parowan and warned him of the incoming federal troops. Among other bits of advice and instruction, Young ordered that Dame "conciliate the Indians and make them our fast friends."[113] The Mormons' chief military commander Daniel Wells warned the southern settlements of the possibility of U.S. troops cutting through southern Utah on their march to Salt Lake City. Wells further urged the southern Mormon leaders to get the Paiutes on their side. He stated, "that our enemies are also their enemies."[114] John D. Lee—newly appointed federal Indian farmer by Brigham Young—explained to the Paiutes that the Americans intended to enter territory "and kill all of the Mormons and Indians in Utah Territory."[115] Likewise, William Dame informed local Paiutes, "they must be our friends and stick to us, for if our enemies kill us off, they will surely be cut off by the same parties."[116]

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[112] Republished in Juanita Brooks, *The Mountain Meadows Massacre* (Stanford University Press, 1950), 22.

[113] John D. Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled* (St. Louis: M. E. Mason, 1891), 315.

[114] Walker, Turley, and Leonard, *Massacre at Mountain Meadows*, 145.

[115] Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 233.

[116] Daniel H. Wells to William H. Dame, 13 August 1857, quoted in David L. Bigler, "'A Lion in the Path': Genesis of the Utah War, 1857-1858." *Utah Historical Quarterly* 76, no. 1 (Winter 2008): 4-21, 10.

Church apostle Wilford Woodruff predicted, "The gospel has begun to go to the Lamanites & the Lord is about to remember his Covenant with that people," and that "the Judgments of our God must now soon be poured out upon the Gentile world." The American Indians, Woodruff continued, "must go forth & fulfill their destiny & help build up Zion." David Lewis echoed Woodruff's sentiments by writing, "Ephraim is the battle ax of the Lord. May we not have been sent to learn and know how to use this axe with skill?"[117] Woodruff's frightening pronouncement became substantiated three days later with the arrival of Southern Paiute and Ute chiefs—Indians who had previously raided but never directly attacked Americans moving west.[118]

Preparing for the U.S. Army, twelve Indian Chiefs along with the Jacob Hamblin—the president of the Southern Indian Mission—met with Brigham Young in Salt Lake City on September 1, 1857. During the hour-long meeting, Young offered the two Ute Chiefs Kanosh and Ammon and the two Paiute Chiefs Tutseygubbit and Youngwads permission to raid all the "cattle that had gone to Cal[ifornia by] the southern rout." Dimick Huntington recorded in his journal that Young's words "made the Chiefs open their eyes." They replied, "You have told us not to steal." Young responded, "So I have but now they have come to fight us & you for when they kill us

[117] Brown, *Journal of the Southern Indian Mission,* 25.

[118] Brigham Young, "Remarks," September 13, 1857, *Deseret News*, 23 September 1857, quoted in David L. Bigler and Will Bagley, *The Mormon Rebellion: America's First Civil War 1857-1858* (University of Oklahoma, 2011), 143.

they will kill you." According to Huntington, the Chiefs replied that they "were afraid to fight the Americans & so would raise grain while the Mormon's fight."[119]

And while the chiefs met with Young there was quite a large herd of cattle moving through the territory on their way to California. A group of about 140 men, women, and children had recently passed through Salt Lake City. Because the wagon train had so much livestock the California-bound emigrants chose to take the southern and lusher route, rather than following the arid Humboldt River due west of Salt Lake City. The southern route to California ran straight through the Paiutes' homeland, and through the homeland of the people Young had just asked to begin raiding emigrant trains. The attack on the Arkansas emigrants, however, began days before the Ute and Paiute Chiefs had returned to their homeland.

[119] Dimick B. Huntington, Diary, Mountain Meadows Association, http://www.mtn-meadows-assoc.com/DepoJournals/Dimick/Dimick-2.htm (accessed 13 January 2016), 6-13.

CHAPTER 2:
BLAMING "COUSIN LEMUEL:"
THE MORMON-LED COVER-UP

At this point everyone knows that at first the Paiutes were blamed for the massacre, and that these lies, these stories live on today. People have got to understand the cover-up.
-Laura Tom, Paiute Chairwoman 2007

This chapter investigates the Mormon-led cover-up during and immediately after the Mountain Meadows Massacre—a cover-up that shifted blame for the Mormon-led atrocity onto the Southern Paiutes. For approximately twenty years, the Latter-day Saints officially and vehemently maintained that the massacre was strictly an Indian affair. The Church's strong posture only became nuanced after John D. Lee was executed for his role in 1877.[120] Even after Lee's death, however, many Mormons considered the Saints' involvement in the massacre a blundered intervention by "merciful men" sent to the meadows to protect the Arkansas emigrants from "blood-thirsty savages."[121] One Mormon participant inaccurately recalled, "Not even Lee himself" could control the Paiutes from attacking the wagon train, "they were like a lot

[120] John D. Lee was the only person convicted and executed for the massacre. While waiting for his impending execution and with nothing more to lose, Lee penned the grizzly details of the Mormon-directed massacre. Most of the massacres' details were published posthumously in Lee's final confession, *Mormonism Unveiled*. While Lee's personal perspectives were embellished, careful comparison with other eyewitness accounts suggest that large chunks of his 430-page confession were strikingly honest. In fact, much of *Mormonism Unveiled* directly contradicted Lee's earlier claims of innocence. And significantly, Lee's account offers a vital window into how the Southern Paiutes were roped into and later blamed for the massacre.

[121] Joel W. White, To Whomsoever It May Concern, 9 October 1896, MMM File, LDS Archives, republished in Bigler and Bagley, *Innocent Blood*, 417. "The confusion and frenzy of these painted blood-thirst Indians was terrible to behold; centered at that place [Mountain Meadows] were four to six hundred wild Indians engaged." "Isaac C. Haight hearing of it [the massacre], sent word to Colonel Dame who at once sent an Express to Lee to do all he could to pacify the Indians, to let the Company go, and [make] the Indians go back to their own homes." See John Mount Higbee, Statement, 15 June 1896, MMM File, LDS Archives (Hereafter cited, "Higbee Statement"), republished in Bigler and Bagley, *Innocent Blood*, 415.

of infuriated wolves."[122] The linchpin for understanding the development of the Mormon-led cover-up is the institutionalization of specific myths that blamed the Paiutes.[123]

Cedar City was the last major settlement on the road to California in which the Arkansas emigrants could grind grain and purchase needed supplies. During their three-hundred-mile journey south from Salt Lake City to Cedar City, Mormon settlement after settlement repeatedly refused to supply the emigrants. Following Young's orders to conserve food because of the approaching U.S. Army, Isaac C. Haight likewise encouraged the residents of Cedar City to refrain from selling provisions to the Arkansas emigrants. Tensions between Cedar City settlers and the passing emigrant train erupted when the local miller—following "the counsel of I C Haight"—charged the company an entire cow to grind about fifty bushels of wheat. Offended and desperate, some of the emigrants began to swear and curse at the Mormons. Some even suggested, "that they had helped to Kill Joseph Smith…and other Mormons at Nauvoo & Missouri." Others emigrants' played into the locals' fears by warning that, they "would go on to the Mountain Meadows, and wait there until the arrival of the said troops into the Territory and would then return to Cedar…and carry out their threats."[124]

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[122] "Higbee Statement"

[123] Myth is a narrative that possesses both *authority* and *credibility*. Myths then are normative or appear to be simple or natural. Myths serve to challenge the court or ivory tower histories (i.e. documented narratives connecting human actors to a specific time and location). See Bruce Lincoln, *Theorizing Myth: Narrative, Ideology, and Scholarship* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

[124] George Kirkman Bowering, Journal, 1842–75, 230, MS 6117, CHL, quoted in Walker, Turley, and Leonard, *Massacre at Mountain Meadows*, 133.

Overreacting to mere threats, Haight ordered the town marshal John M. Higbee to arrest the offenders for "profanity and disorderly conduct."[125] When Higbee attempted to apprehend one of the emigrants, "he refused to be taken, and his companions stood by him, and dared the 'Mormons' to arrest any of them."[126] In the context of the impending Utah War, idle threats and defying Higbee's arrest became enough for the leaders of Cedar City to seek revenge.

Seeking retribution for the emigrants' threats, Haight first tried to muster the Mormon militia. He sent a message to his district commander, William Dame in the neighboring town of Parowan, asking permission to assemble the men. Dame's reply stated, "all possible means should be used to keep the peace until the emigrants should leave and proceed upon their journey."[127] Unsatisfied, Haight along with other Cedar City leaders rejected Dame's council. Incapable of mustering the militia, Haight began to consider alternative means to discipline the "rough and abusive" emigrant train.[128] According to John D. Lee, while the Arkansas emigrants camped south of Cedar City, Haight met with Lee to begin formulating a plan of attack. Both men held equal rank in the Mormon militia as majors. But Haight outranked Lee as the mayor of Cedar City, manager of the Desert Iron Company, and in Church governance as a stake

[125] Walker, Turley, and Leonard, *Massacre at Mountain Meadows,* 134.

[126] Richard E. Turley and Ronald W. Walker, eds., *Mountain Meadows Massacre: The Andrew Jenson and David H. Morris Collections* (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 2009), 253.

[127] Quoted in Walker, Turley, and Leonard, *Massacre at Mountain Meadows,* 136. On Mormons and Indian farms see William G. Hartley, *My Best for the Kingdom: History and Autobiography of John Lowe Butler, a Mormon Frontiersman* (Aspen Books, 1995), 314-323.

[128] Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 219.

president.[129] Lee was, however, an Indian farmer near the Southern Indian Mission and was known to have "much influence" over the Paiutes.[130] The plan, Lee later explained, was not to send the Mormon militia but "to arm the Indians, give them provisions and ammunition, and send them after the emigrants." The Paiutes would then give the emigrant train "a *brush,*" by stealing their livestock, "and if they [the Paiutes] killed part or all of them, so much the better."[131]

Haight and Lee's plan "intended that the Indians should kill the emigrants, and make it *an Indian massacre*…it was to be all done by the Indians." If the massacre were ever questioned by federal authorities, blame "could be laid to them"—the Paiutes.[132] From beginning to end, the Latter-day Saints always intended to hold the Indians fully culpable for the massacre at Mountain Meadows. And in many ways the Saints succeeded in doing so. "The orders to lay it all to the Indians," Lee explained, "were just as positive as they were to keep it all secret."[133] The goal was to tempt and persuade the Paiutes to attack the emigrant train without Mormon interference—no Mormons were to be near the meadows.

Lee then began to solicit local Paiutes to make the attack on the Arkansas emigrants.[134] Two other Mormon Indian interpreters were ordered to begin gathering

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[129] Walker, Turley, and Leonard, *Massacre at Mountain Meadows*, 133.

[130] Republished in Bigler and Bagley, *Innocent Blood*, 413.

[131] Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 219. Italics in original.

[132] Ibid., 220. Italics in original.

[133] Ibid., 250.

[134] "Indian recruitment for the massacre was local, not influenced by the September 1 meeting, and it built on trust that southern Utah leaders had already developed with Paiutes." In Walker, Turley, and Leonard, *Massacre at Mountain Meadows*, 147.

the Paiute Bands. Carl Shirts went south to the Paiutes living along the Santa Clara (Tonoquints—later know as the St. George Band), and Nephi Johnson was ordered north to gather the Cedar Band (UnkapaNukuints). Lee recalled passing "a large band" of Cedar Paiutes headed south toward the Mountain Meadows. Two of the Paiute leaders, Moquetas and Big Bill allegedly plead with Lee to help "command their forces" at the meadows. Supposedly following the original plan of no Mormons in the meadows, Lee declined to command the Paiutes in battle. Explaining that he would only rendezvous with the Cedar Band after gathering a larger Indian force. According to Lee, however, the Cedar Paiutes then coerced him to lead the attack. As ransom, "They wanted me to send my little Indian boy, Clem [short for Lemuel], with them," to guarantee Lee's return and assistance. Lee supposedly consented and promised his leadership in the attack.[135]

But the chiefs of the Cedar Band and other local Mormons remembered Lee's involvement rather differently. The Cedar headmen, Moquetas later stated that he and his band hesitated getting involved, citing, "I have not guns or powder enough." Moquetas' statement is more inline with the notably pacifist Paiute culture.[136] To entice Moquetas, Lee and possibly other Indian interpreters bribed the Cedar Band with guns, ammunitions, and a cut of the plunder. Moquetas recalled that the

[135] Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 226. Clem or "Lem" was not as near and dear to Lee as purported, 7 May 1858, "This morning Lemuel, my Indian Boy, took one of my rifles guns & went off among the Indians." In Robert Glass Gleland and Juanita Brooks, ed., *A Mormon Chronicle: The Diaries of John D. Lee, 1848-1876*, (Huntington Library Press, 2003), 162.

[136] Kelly and Fowler, "Southern Paiute," 381; Holt, *Beneath These Red Cliffs,* 12; Knack, 26-27.

Mormons further persuaded him with, "Clothing, all the guns and horses [of the emigrants], and some of the cattle to eat" in exchange for his band's participation.[137]

John Chatterly, a Mormon passing through New Harmony, later recalled seeing Lee the day before the attack. Lee was "fixed up as much like a military officer as he could," with "a red sash around his waist, and a sword in his right hand." Dressed for the part, Lee "marched around the inside of the fort [Harmony], at the head of about 40 or 50 Indians." Calling to his ragtag Lamanite army, "All that wish success to Israel say 'Amen.'" When only two or three Paiutes inaudibly replied, Lee rallied the Indians for a louder response. According the Chatterly, the Paiutes replied in "very faint voices." Peter Shirts also remembered seeing Lee, "with about 45 Indians mustered in, in military style." Shirts also reported see Lee "returned with the same Indians," the following Sunday.[138] "John D. Lee went with the Indians," Chatterly later stated, "and made an attack on their camp, but the emigrants repulsed them."[139]

Historians continue to debate the number of Paiutes—if any—that participated in the massacre. Particularly after considering that many of the most influential Paiute chiefs were still returning south after their September 1 meeting with Brigham Young. The number of Southern Paiutes present at the massacre is also complicated by the

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[137] "The Lee Trial: What the Chief [of] the Beaver Indians Has To Say About It," *Los Angeles Star*, 4 August 1875. See also, "Mountain Meadows: A Review of the Story of the Massacre of the Emigrants," *Sand Francisco Daily Bulletin Supplement*, 24 March 1877.

[138] [Peter Shirts], Statement, ca. 1876. Manuscript 3141, Smithsonian Institution. National Anthropological Archives, Suitland, MD, quoted in Brooks, *The Mountain Meadows Massacre*, xx.

[139] John Chatterly Letter to Andrew Jenson, 18 September 1919, republished in Turley and Walker, *Mountain Meadows Massacre*, 278-289. "Critics also point out that it is highly unlikely that Mormons would supply the Indians with firearms and ammunition when their own supplies of both were limited and they were facing the threat of federal action." Tom, "The Paiute Tribe of Utah," 139.

large number of Paiute bands away in the distant mountains collecting piñon nuts for the winter. The September piñon harvest was the busiest time of the year for the Paiutes.[140] Nevertheless even after the Paiutes were rounded-up, armed, and marched to Mountain Meadows, their involvement during the attack was limited.

Lee commandeered approximately 40 or 50 Paiutes to attack the wagon train of about 140 emigrants. To better their odds, the Mormons planned to surprise "the emigrant party before daylight when they would be in the most profound slumber, and to massacre them before they could awake and arm themselves." For unknown reasons, the Paiutes apparently delayed the early morning attack until after dawn. The emigrants' dogs "got to barking" giving the secluded Indians away. Lacking the element of surprise, the Paiutes began shooting sporadically at the wagon train. Lee later stated, "one fool Indian off the hill fired his gun, and spoilt the whole plan."[141]

After exchanging erratic volleys of gunfire the emigrants were rapidly gaining a defensive upper hand. The Paiutes began a confused and uneven charge, rushing across the meadows toward the encampment. The emigrants quickly repelled the unprepared Paiutes. After the failed assault, "the Indians…retreated to the brush-covered hillside and sought safety behind the huge rocks there." Scattered and now some distance away from the emigrants, the Paiutes could offer only aimless or "desultory" fire at the emigrant camp.[142] Three of the Paiutes were wounded during

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[140] Knack, 79.

[141] "Interview with Jno. D. Lee of Mountain Meadows Notoriety," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 29 July 1872.

[142] Quoted in Ralph R. Rea, "The Mountain Meadows Massacre and Its Completion as a Historic Episode," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 16 (Spring 1857), 28-45. See also Elizabeth Baker Terry, "I Survived the Mountain Meadow Massacre," *True Story Magazine.*

this first charge. Lee later reported that "two of the chiefs from Cedar," Moquetas and Bill were "shot through the legs, breaking a leg for each of them."[143] Beaverite, chief of the Paiute band near Beaver, Utah, was not at the massacre but reported that Moquetas died a year after the massacre due to his leg wound.[144] Many of the Paiutes had never used a gun and a greater number of them had never engaged in such a hostile attack.

Almost immediately the attack became a drawn-out siege. Lee remembered, "We knew that the original plan was for the Indians to do all the work, and the whites to do nothing, only to stay back and plan for them, and encourage them to do the work." But when the emigrants repulsed the Paiutes after the first charge, Lee now understood "the Indians could not do the work, and we were in a sad fix."[145] Another Mormon settler recalled that the Arkansas emigrants had hastily "built up the dirt inside their [wagon] corral, so it was impossible to do any damage to the emigrants."[146] In a bind, Lee began asking for local Mormon settlers to join in the massacre—Dame would dispatch the Mormon militia after all.

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[143] "Lee's Confession," *Sacramento Daily Record-Union*, 24 March 1877. See also "Lee's Last Confession," *San Francisco Daily Bulletin Supplement*, 24 March 1877. "One [Paiute] was lightly wounded in the shoulder, and two were shot in the left thigh [Moquetas and Bill]. There was not an inch difference in the location of the wounds of the last two. The bones were crushed to splinters, and both Indians died, Prior to their death, they were conveyed to the camp near Cedar, and Bishop Higbee annointed [*sic*] their wounds with consecrated oil!" "DIABOLISM," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 6 January 1875. Most likely quoting from, [Peter Shirts], Statement.

[144] "Mountain Meadows: A Review of the Story of the Massacre of the Emigrants," *San Francisco Daily Bulletin Supplement*, 24 March 1877.

[145] Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 228.

[146] "John Chatterley Letter to Andrew Jenson" 18 September 1919, republished in Turley and Walker, *Mountain Meadows Massacre*, 281.

The Paiutes became disenchanted after the first day of fighting. When Paiute reinforcements arrived from Santa Clara, the Mormons called for another Paiute charge on the entrenched emigrants. Once again, the corralled emigrants rebuffed the Paiutes and killed one of the Santa Clara reinforcements. Chief Jackson later explained that his brother died during the charge: "by a shot from the corral at a distance of two hundred yards, as he was running across the meadow."[147] With one dead and three wounded, the Santa Clara reinforcements became so enraged, "that they left for home that day and drove off quite a number of [the emigrants'] cattle with them."[148] For the Santa Clara, the attack on the emigrants was strictly a Mormon affair. They had no reason to continue the fight.

The remaining Paiutes became angry with Lee who had also left the scene—leaving the Indians alone with their dead and wounded. Abandoned, the Paiutes demanded that two Mormon Indian interpreters, Ellott Wilden and Joseph T. Clews, "put on Indian attire and run unarmed past the emigrant camp," within range of the defenders' rifles. The Indians insisted this strange request as proof of an earlier statement made by Lee that, "the bullets of the emigrants would not hurt" the Paiutes or Mormons in this righteous cause. If the interpreters died, the Paiutes had an excuse to depart immediately. But if the two men survived it would prove Lee's assertion and would remain. Despite the "bullets [that] flew thick and fast around them," Wilden

[147] James Henry Carleton, *Report on the Subject of the Massacre at the Mountain Meadows, in Utah Territory, in September, 1857, of One Hundred and Twenty Men, Women and Children, Who Were from Arkansas* (Little Rock: True Democrat Press, 1860)(hereafter cited as "Utah Territory), 19-21.

[148] Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 230-231.

and Clews survived their mad dash.[149] Still, the Paiutes' support was slipping and the men's courageous run was not enough to convince all of the bands to stick around. Nephi Johnson also remembered the Paiutes' frustrations. The Paiutes dispatched a runner to Johnson, calling him to the meadows, "for they were tired of Lee[']s Indian boy interpeter [*sic*][as] he lied to them so much."[150] And by the second or third day a majority of the Paiutes decamped.

The Paiutes that remained were seen wondering about Mormon wagons, while other Paiutes rested in the brush and shade. The Mormon plan was now contingent on finding a way to entice the Fancher Party from the safety of the wagon corral. Nephi Johnson later recalled the plan: the emigrants were "to be decoyed out and destroyed with the exception of the small children," who were "too young to tell tales." Using Johnson as an Indian interpreter, Lee explained the final plan to the remaining Paiutes. The Mormons "would try and get the emigrants out of their camp as well as giving up their arms after which they would kill them." At first, Nephi Johnson resisted translating the dreadful message, stating that Lee "wanted me to talk to the Indians in a way I didn't want to." In the end, however, Johnson explained the Mormon plan to the remaining Paiutes and some "agreed to assist in killing the emigrants."[151]

From the beginning of the attack, the number of Paiutes at Mountain Meadows continued to fluctuate. Like the Santa Clara Band, many Paiute groups had come and

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[149] Joseph T. Clewes Statement, 7 April 1877, republished in Turley and Walker, *Mountain Meadows Massacre*, 182-183.

[150] Nephi Johnson to Anthon Lund, March 1910, MMM File, LDS Archives, republished in Bigler and Bagley, *Innocent Blood*, 410.

[151] Nephi Johnson, Testimony, Second John D. Lee Trial, Lee Trial Transcripts, W.L. Cooke Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, quoted in Walker, Turley, and Leonard, *Massacre at Mountain Meadows*, 187.

gone and likely abandoned the fight before the final massacre on Friday, September 11. Many Paiutes later reported that their people did not participate in the massacre, and if any Indians were present they merely watched the atrocity from the surrounding hills. Yet, other Paiute accounts acknowledged limited Indian participation.[152] One Paiute who knew a massacre participant recalled, "All the Indians there were not more than one hundred."[153] Another Paiute questioned Indian involvement and motive by stating, "No Indians in Utah had any animosity against the whites."[154]

The number of Paiute participates is further complicated by the number of Mormons that dressed as Indians during the final massacre. One of the surviving children remembered seeing "a lot of the Mormons down at the creek after it was all over, washing paint off their faces, and some of them at least had disguised themselves as Indians."[155] Another child similarly noticed, "quite a number of white men washing the paint from their faces."[156] And just eight months after the massacre, a Los Angeles' newspaper concluded, "there were no Indians engaged in the affair," and that the Indians involved were actually "Mormons in disguise."[157] Santa Clara Chief

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[152] Walker, Turley, and Leonard, *Massacre at Mountain Meadows*, 192.

[153] "The Lee Trial: What the Chief [of] the Beaver Indians Has To Say About It," *Los Angeles Star*, 4 August 1875.

[154] "Mountain Meadows: A Review of the Story of the Massacre of the Emigrants," *San Francisco Daily Bulletin Supplement*, 24 March 1877.

[155] Sallie [Sarah Francis] Baker Gladden Mitchell, "The Mountain Meadows Massacre—An Episode on the Road to Zion," *The American Weekly*, 25 August 1940, Utah State Historical Society, PAM 16316, republished in Bigler and Bagley, *Innocent Blood*, 437.

[156] Rebecca Dunlap, "Mountain Meadow Massacre: The Butchery of a Train of Arkansas by Mormon and Indians While on their Way to California," *Fort Smith Elevator*, 20 August 1897.

[157] "The Federal Government and Utah," *Southern Vineyard*, 29 May 1858. Historian Paul Reeve has noted, "This may be the first post-massacre account of Mormons dressed as Indians." In Paul Reeve, *Religion of a Different Color: Race and the Mormon Struggle for Whiteness* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 292 n84.

Jackson stated, "That they [60 Mormons led by John D. Lee and Haight] were all painted and disguised as Indians. That this painting and disguising was done at a spring in a canyon about a mile northeast of the spring where the emigrants were encamped."[158]

The Mormon disguise did not fool the surviving emigrant children, and many of the Paiutes told the same story. One young girl, Nancy Cates whose sister and four brothers were killed, was placed in the home of John Willis. During the year that Cates lived with Willis, he tried to make her believe it was the Indians who perpetrated the murders. But Cates resisted Willis' version of events because she remembered seeing "Willis during the massacre; he carried me off from the spot; I could not be mistaken."[159] Nephi Johnson later admitted that, "white men did most of the killing," even recalling seeing "something like paint around Lee's hair" after the massacre—a statement that undercuts the Mormon narrative that "the Indians made us do it."[160] Nevertheless, the story that Indians alone committed the crime persisted well after the children were distributed to Mormon homes.

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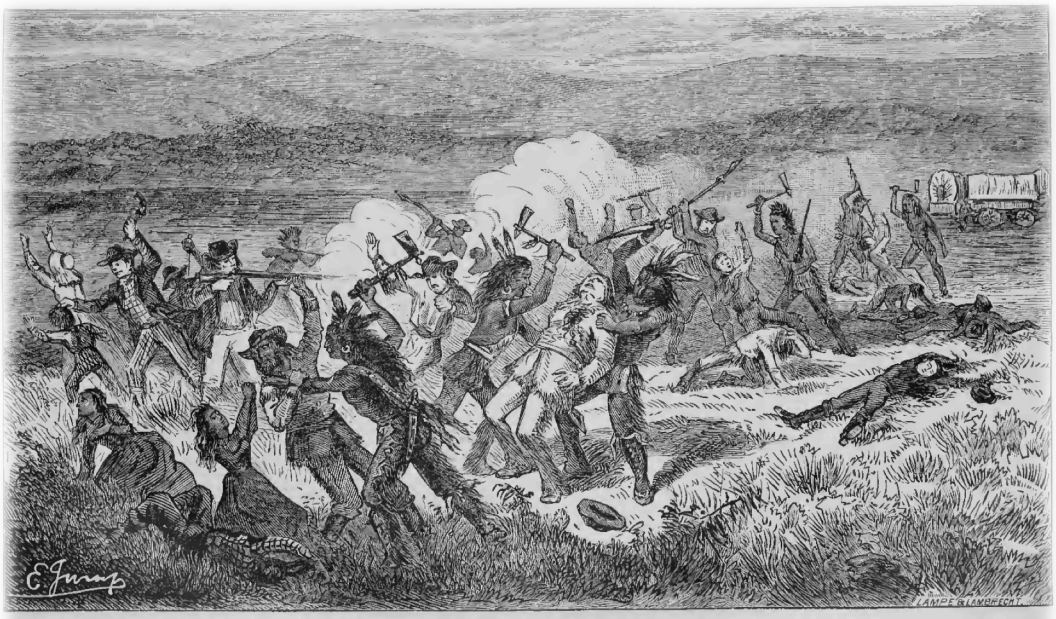
[158] James Henry Carleton, *Special Report on the Massacre at the Mountain Meadows, by J.H. Carleton, Brevet Major, United States Army, Captin, First Dragoons*. 57th Cong., 1st sess., 19-20. House Exec. Doc. 605, Serial 4377. Accn 1937 Bx. 27 Fd. 3, Special Collections, Marriott Library, University of Utah, (hereafter cited "Special Report"). Carleton was most likely quoting John Cradlebaugh: "Upon the way from the meadows, a young Indian pointed out to me the place where the Mormons painted and disguised themselves." In John Cradlebaugh, *Utah and the Mormons: Speech of Hon. John Cradlebaugh, of Nevada, on the Admission of Utah as a State. Delivered in the House of Representatives, February 7, 1863* (Privately printed, 1863)(hereafter cited "Utah and the Mormons"), 19.

[159] Bigler and Bagley, *Innocent Blood*, 427.

[160] Francis M. Lyman, Diary Excerpt, 19, 21 September 1895, First Presidency Vault, LDS Church, republished in Bigler and Bagley, *Innocent Blood*, 411. "[M]aking it [Nephi Johnson account] the single most significant piece of new evidence about the massacre to appear since Juanita Brooks' groundbreaking work in 1950." In Bigler and Bagley, *Innocent Blood*, 411. See also "Mountain Meadows: A Review of the Story of the Massacre of the Emigrants," *San Francisco Daily Bulletin Supplement*, 24 March 1877.



THE MOUNTAIN MEADOWS MASSACRE.

Figure 2.1: "The Mountain Meadow Massacre," in Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 240.

Likewise, the initial published accounts of the massacre support the Southern Paiutes' and the surviving emigrant children's claims. The southern route to California was a major artery in the American West and although the Arkansas emigrants were the largest company moving across the trail in the late summer of 1857, they certainly were not the only ones. Despite the meadows' isolation, news of the terrible atrocity traveled quickly. By October 3, 1857, the *Los Angeles Star* published the first "rumor" of a massacre of emigrants on the plains.[161] The newspaper account noted that Judge Brown of San Bernardino had just informed the publication, "that a whole train of emigrants from Salt Lake City, for San Bernardino…had been cruelly massacred."

[161] "Rumored Massacre on the Plains," *Los Angles Star*, Vol. 7 No. 21, Pg. 2, October 3, 1857. The "rumor" was later confirmed in the following publication on October 10, 1857. Juanita Brooks wrote, "The Los Angeles Star, October 9, 1857, made the first published report. See Brooks, *The Mountain Meadow Massacre*, 118, n5. Newspapers in Utah Territory long neglected to publish anything concerning the Mountain Meadows Massacre, "And let me ask (my conjugal friend,) the delegate from Utah, why it was that the Deseret News [sic], the Church organ and only paper published in the Territory, for months after failed to notice the massacre, even after it was well known in the States, and when it did so, only did to say, the Mormons were not engaged in it." John Cradlebaugh, *Utah and the Mormons*, 57.

The paper estimated that the wagon train was comprised of twenty-five families or approximately ninety-five souls. It was also rumored the emigrant's property had been "carried off," and that some children were discovered alive at the massacre site and were currently en route to southern California. Notably, the paper's initial report did not speculate as to whom "cruelly massacred" the wagon train. It merely noted, "No further particulars are known, nor any names given." The newspaper soberly concluded the report by lamenting: "Although the rumor was generally believed in San Bernardino, we confess our unwillingness to credit such a wholesale massacre."[162]

The following week, October 10, 1857, the *Los Angeles Star* confirmed the rumors pouring out of San Bernardino. "There is no reason to doubt the facts," the article stated, "we have them from different parties, and all agree in placing the number of the slain at over one hundred souls, men, women, and children."[163] The first confirmation came from two Mormons, Sidney Tanner and William Matthews, who ran a regular freighting business and carried mail between Salt Lake City and San Bernardino. According to their published statement, the Fancher Party placed poison in the body of one of their fallen ox and in the surrounding watering holes, with the intent of killing some of the nearby Pahvant band. Allegedly, several Indians were

[162] "Rumored Massacre." It remains unclear as to who carried the initial report of the massacre to Judge Brown of San Bernardino. Juanita Brooks in The Mountain Meadows Massacre, reports a 1932 letter signed by Mrs. Frances Haynes, which asked for the names of "the eleven miners or plainsmen who rode into Los Angeles in the fall of 1857 and reported the murder of the Emigrants at Mountain Meadows in Utah." In the letter, Haynes claimed to be the daughter of Zebulon P. Fawcett, one of the eleven plainsmen. Zebulon P. Fawcett had crossed with the Fancher Party, but he along with a few others chose not to camp with the main body at Mountain Meadows. Instead the small group pressed on with the agreement that the main group would "overtake them in a few days." It remains unclear, however, as to what exactly these eleven men knew about the massacre or how they would have known about the massacre without returning to the massacre site. The letter was address to the Bancroft Library, from Mrs. Frances Haynes of Riverside, California, 17 July 1932. See Brooks, *The Mountain Meadows Massacre*, xxi.

[163] "Mormons*," Los Angles Star*, October 10, 1857.

subsequently poisoned and died. In retaliation, the Indians mustered a force to attack and murder the Arkansas emigrants. According to Tanner and Matthews, the Pahvant rallied the Paiutes in the region, caught up with the Arkansas train, pinned the emigrants in a canyon along the trail, and shot them down as they came out from behind their wagons for water. The paper also confirmed an earlier rumor that Indians captured about fifteen children, which they sold off in the Mormon settlement of Cedar City. The reported concluded that, "The Indians state that they made but one charge on the party."[164]

A great deal of misinformation concerning the massacre began to spread following these initial Mormon accounts. Some aspects of the published accounts proved to be credible, while others points were not. Two misconceptions are the creation of the poisoned ox and the embellished emphasis concerning Indian involvement. The earliest reports by Mormons from the Utah Territory offered the American public simple, plausible, and credible justifications for the massacre of 120 people by shifting the blame on the Indians.

Two non-Mormons were also traveling with Tanner and Matthews and each left a detailed description of their journey through southern Utah just days after the massacre. Both first-hand accounts help clarify and contextualize the early Mormon reports published in the *Los Angeles Star*. The first non-Mormon account originated from George Powers of Little Rock, Arkansas, who was traveling in a small train of three wagons. Powers departed Salt Lake City about ten days after the Fancher Party and hoped to catch-up with the main train before they reached California. The second

[164] Ibid.

account comes from another non-Mormon, Philetus M. Warn of Bergen, New York. Living for a time in Salt Lake, Warn had made prior preparations to travel with Tanner and Matthews across the Utah Territory to San Bernardino. Arriving in the small Mormon settlement of Beaver, the local Mormon bishop warned Powers that because of the Indians the trail ahead was too dangerous for such a small company. And after a few days of waiting for the road ahead to clear, Powers joined the larger LDS operated Tanner-Matthews company, which included P.M. Warn.

After departing Salt Lake City, and prior to joining Tanner and Matthews in Beaver, Powers reported that settlement after settlement was "greatly enraged" by the previous wagon train that had passed through just a few days before. Powers reported that the inhabitants near Fort Holden—present day Holden, Utah—openly refused to sell any provisions to the Fancher Party. The Mormon settlers claimed that the emigrants "abused" the local women by shouting obscenities and badgered the local men. Because of Brigham Young's proclamation, even Powers' three-wagon train failed to acquire limited supplies from the small settlement. For example, while Powers was attempting to buy some butter, a group of Mormon men came rushing in and "swore we should not have it, nor anything else, as we had misused them." In need of supplies, the small group decided to camp only one night at Fort Holden, hoping to replenish at the Corn Creek Indian Farm. Powers reported to have found the Indians at Corn Creek to be "all peaceable and friendly." While camped near the Indian Farm the small party "learned nothing [Fancher] train, only that it had passed a few days before."[165] In contrast to Powers' reception at Fort Holden, the Indians did

[165] "The Late Horrible Massacre," *Los Angles Star,* October 17, 1857.

not demonstrate any hostility toward his wagon train, nor did the Indians express any resentment toward the much larger Arkansas train which had passed just a few days prior.

At the LDS settlement of Beaver, some 230 miles south of Salt Lake City, Powers first learned from the Saints of Indian troubles on the trail ahead. Obtaining more information from the Mormon settlers, Powers learned the fate of the larger group he was attempting to catch-up with. The Mormons at Beaver told Powers that while the Fancher Party camped near the Indian Farm at Corn Creek—the site where Powers noted the Indians to be "peaceable and friendly"—an ox had died and the Indians asked for the fallen animal for food. Before the emigrants exchanged the ox with the Indians, however, a Mormon in Beaver reported to Powers, "that he saw an emigrant go to the carcass and cut it with his knife, and as he did so, would pour some liquid into the cut from a vial."[166] The Indians then consumed the toxic ox meat, and as reported to Powers, three Indians died from ingesting the meat and several others at Corn Creek were sick. Powers' three-wagon company was thus stalled at Beaver due to reports of outraged and hostile Indians seeking revenge for the poisoning along the southern route between Beaver and Las Vegas.

Anxiously waiting for the trail to once again open, Powers asked an Indian in Beaver about the reported poisoning. The Indian replied in English that "he did not know," or he was unclear as to what had transpired at Corn Creek. All he knew was that a few Indians had died and that some others were sick. The Indian then speculated that he thought it was a batch of watermelons that made the Indians sick and suspected

[166] Ibid.

the Mormons were behind the Corn Creek poisoning.[167] Yet, according to Powers, he did not hear the rumors of the poisoning until he reached Beaver. He also did not hear of the poisoning from the Natives themselves—even after explicitly inquiring. Powers had heard it first from Mormons once the massacre at Mountain Meadows was well underway. It is more likely, then, that the Mormon-led massacre initiated the poisoning myth to justify a Paiutes motive and excuse the Latter-day Saints of any wrongdoing. Nevertheless, for Powers the open hostility displayed by Mormon settlers towards his vulnerable three-wagon train was enough for him to question the Saints' intent and role in the massacre.

Traveling along the same route and approximately ten days behind Powers' small company was Philetus M. Warn, a member of the Tanner and Matthews' train. Like Powers, Warn also described the Mormon settlers' still raw "threats of vengeance" toward Arkansas emigrants. Warn also portrayed the Indians at Corn Creek as "not only friendly, but cordial." However, rather than hearing of the poisoned ox further south in Beaver—like Powers—Warn heard of the poisoning during a conversation at Corn Creek from a Mormon Indian Agent, George W. Armstrong.[168] Armstrong explained that "six Indians had died," and "others were sick and would die" from the poison. After speaking with the Armstrong, Warn asked the Indian "war

[167] Ibid.

[168] There is a discrepancy as to the identity of this "Indian Agent." According to Walker, Turley, and Leonard, "Stephen B. Honea, traveling with the Dukes train, learned more from a man 'who represented himself as the Indian agent'—undoubtedly Peter Boyce, a government employee at the Indian farm a few miles southeast of the Corn Creek campsite." On the same page, "Boyce told Warn" of the poison. See Walker, Turley, and Leonard, *Massacre at Mountain Meadows*, 120. David Bigler and Will Bagley note that the agent was probably George W. Armstrong. They write, "If this man was a government agent, he was probably George W. Armstrong, a Mormon hired by Brigham Young." Bigler and Bagley, *Innocent Blood*, 38, n7.

chief" Ammon about "how many of his tribe had died from eating the poisoned animal." Ammon, who had just returned following the September 1 meeting with Brigham Young, replied that none of the Indians at Corn Creek had died and only a few were sick.[169] According to Warn, Ammon "did not attribute the sickness to poison, nor did he give a reason for it."[170] Nevertheless, Warn perspective offers similar conclusions as Powers and is invaluable record. If nothing else, their accounts complicate the Mormon story.

In Beaver, the Saints told Powers that he could join Warn in the larger Tanner-Matthews train under certain conditions. Mormon leadership insisted that while "passing through the Indian country," Powers recalled, "it might be necessary for me to be laid flat in the wagon and covered with blankets, for two or three days, as the Indians were deadly hostile to all Americans." This agreement became a way for Mormons to hide the horrific carnage at the massacre site. But it also reinforced the lie of dangerous *savages* still roaming the road ahead.

As the Tanner-Matthews train was carefully making its way along the southern route, Lee was already well on his way north to meet Brigham Young. John D. Lee's and the other massacre participants' first hurdle was to convince their fellow Saints that the Paiutes had alone massacred the Arkansas emigrants. According to one of Lee's wives, Lee began his journey to the Mormon capital on September 20, 1857, indicating that Lee had the opportunity to "clarify" the massacre with the Tanner-

[169] Brooks, *The Mountain Meadows Massacre,* 41.

[170] At one point during Warn's account he simply failed to offer his own version of the Tanner-Matthews train from Corn Creek to Cedar City—some of the days were before he had met Powers in Beaver, Utah. For example: "From Corn Creek, nothing of importance occurred more than is related by Mr. Powers, until we arrived at Cedar City." See "The Late Horrible Massacre"

Matthews company before they arrived in Beaver.[171] Most likely, Lee would have passed Tanner-Matthews before the company reached the Corn Creek Indian Farm, which explains how the Saints at Beaver and Indian Agent George W. Armstrong might have heard of the alleged poisoning story.

Lee's journey north was a propaganda campaign. Just days after the massacre of the Arkansas emigrant train, Lee passed the Indian missionaries Jacob Hamblin and Thales Haskell in Fillmore as the men were returning from the September 1 meeting with Brigham Young.[172] According to Hamblin's autobiography, Lee confirmed the whirling rumors of an Indian massacre. Aside from minimal Mormon involvement, Lee explained to Hamblin, "the Arkansas company of emigrants had been destroyed at the Mountain Meadows, by the Indians" alone.[173]

Lee continued on to Provo on Sunday, September 27, 1857, where he addressed the public service of the Utah Stake of Zion. He seized the moment to publicize the essential myths surround the massacre. After being introduced by Utah [Valley] Stake President James Snow, Lee stood and first began to develop a story that would become part of the "evil emigrant" lore.[174] "There was some Emigrants passd [*sic*] through & boasted very much & they killed an ox & poisoned it for the Indians," Lee misleadingly declared. As the emigrants passed through Mormon settlements they

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[171] Rachel Woolsey Lee, Diary, Mormon File, HM 26338, The Huntington Library, republished in Bigler and Bagley, *Innocent Blood*, 130.

[172] James A. Little, ed., *Jacob Hamblin: A Narrative of His Personal Experience, as a Frontiersman, Missionary to the Indians, and Explorer*, 1881 (Deseret News, 1909), 49.

[173] Little, 49.

[174] Quoted in Bigler and Bagley, *Innocent Blood*, 131, n1. See Utah Stake Minutes, 27 September 1857, LDS Archives, 945-46.

continued to harass the settlers by shouting "where is your Damd [*sic*] Bishop & such like conduct"—suggesting the emigrants deserved their fate. Furthermore, Lee embellished the number of dead Indians from the poisoned ox, suggesting the number had increased to around four or five and the body count now included a Mormon boy.[175] The boy, Proctor Robison, had passed away nearly a month after the Arkansas wagons departed Fillmore and lived about twenty or more miles north of the alleged poisoned ox.

In retribution, Lee thundered "Cousin Lemuel" chased the emigrants down and "they killd [*sic*] all but three that got away in the night." Lee then explained that of the three emigrants that had escaped, one had been found and killed and the other two were in the process of facing a similar fate. Stake President James Snow concluded the Sunday service by reinforcing the Latter-day Saints' general animosity toward the Fancher Party: "I was in hopes that Every Damd [*sic*] shit ass had left the territory."[176]

Once in Salt Lake City, John D. Lee explained every detail of the massacre to Brigham Young. The two conflicting accounts of this significant meeting derive from the journal of Church apostle Wilford Woodruff, and from John D. Lee's published confession some twenty years after the meeting. Notably, Lee's later confession was in direct contradiction to his earlier claims of innocence and counters his initial reports of significant Indian motivation and participation in the massacre. "When I arrived in the city I went to the President's house and gave to Brigham Young a full, detailed statement of the whole affair, from first to last," Lee recalled, "In fact I gave him *all*

[175] The four or five dead Indians Lee was referring to could have been those Paiutes killed during the first assault.

[176] Bigler and Bagley, *Innocent Blood,* 131.

the information there was to give." Lee later admitted to have originally embellished his role in the massacre: "only I took rather more on myself than I had done"—possibly in an effort to improve his standing with the Mormon prophet or as an expression of innocence.[177] According to Lee, he told Young every particular even describing how he, with the assistance of Brother McMurdy and Brother Knight "killed the wounded men in the wagons, with the assistance of the Indians."[178] The simple statement that the Indians assisted the Mormons during the massacre debunks the myth of the poisoned ox. Furthermore, Lee's later admission matches earlier the reports from non-Mormon Powers and Warn—that the Indians had not heard of anyone being poisoned.

Young continued to ask Lee many questions and at times told Lee "to keep quiet" as people passed through the residence. Lee further explained that there was no innocent blood in the entire party "for they were a set of murderers, robbers and thieves." At the conclusion of the meeting, Young responded, "This is the most unfortunate affair that ever befell the Church. I am afraid of the treachery among the brethren that were there."[179] Young then ordered Lee, "You are *never* to tell this again, not even to Heber C. Kimball. It *must* be kept a secret among ourselves." Young then commissioned Lee to return to his home in Harmony, and to "write a long letter, and

[177] This statement is certainly a way to gain sympathy during Lee's trial. But could also be interpreted as an attempt by Lee to gain approval or recognition for exterminating the "murderers, robbers and thieves." Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled,* 257. Italics in original.

[178] Ibid., 252.

[179] Denton suggests this statement signaled to "Lee that Young had in fact not ordered the attack." Denton, *American Massacre*, 162. Another passage with a similar ending seem to better distance Young from directly ordering the attack: "The brethren acted from pure motives. The only trouble is they acted a *little prematurely*; they were a little ahead of time. I *sustain you* [John D. Lee] and all of the brethren for what they did. All that I fear is treachery on the part of some one who took a part with you, but we will look to that." Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled* 253-254.

give me an account of the affair, charging it to the Indians." Crucially, Young conspired that Lee must "sign the letter as a Farmer to the Indians, and direct it to me as Indian Agent." Young explained, "I can then make use of such a letter to keep off all damaging and troublesome enquires."[180] Thus, Brigham Young became complicit in the wholesale slaughter of 120 men, women, and children. If Young did not give the official order to begin the massacre, he now played an essential role in the Mormon-led cover-up. Governor Young became entirely responsible for the decline of territories most vulnerable population, the Southern Paiutes.

Lee followed Young's directive and sent a letter north to "His Excellency, Gov. B. Young, Ex-Offcio and Superintendent of Indian Affairs," dated November 20, 1857. Lee's report categorically attempted to frame the Paiutes as the soul protagonists in the bloody massacre. Lee's letter argued that the safety of other wagon trains currently spread across the territory could only be guaranteed through the benevolent assistance of Mormon Indian interpreters and by the Mormon-controlled protective military force—a cost of $2,200.[181] According to Lee, there was nothing that the Office of Indian Affairs, the U.S. Interior Department, or the U.S. Army could do for the region. The Mormons had everything along the southern route to California conveniently under control. "Friendly feelings yet remain between the natives and the

[180] Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 252-253. Italics in original.

[181] Lee requested federal reimbursement for cattle and wagons used to safeguard passing immigrants by himself, William Dame, Jacob Hamblin, and Philip Klingensmith. See Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 256.

settlers," Lee concluded his report, "and I have no hesitancy in saying that it will increase so long as we treat them kindly, and deal honestly toward them."[182]

Lee's letter as Indian farmer substantiates another primary account of his meeting with Young—Wilford Woodruff's journal entry. Under the direction of Young, both Lee and Woodruff began a narrative that would blame the Southern Paiutes for the massacre. Both men officially explained how the Arkansas train poisoned the ox meat in an attempt to kill the Indians living near Corn Creek. The poisoning raised a fury of revenge that swept through the southern tribes—"all hell" could not restrain the Indians from "killing" or "at least robbing" the emigrants.[183] The Fancher party then fell victim to the vengeful Indians near Mountain Meadows. Woodruff recorded, that the Indians surrounded the exposed company on the open prairie and that "the emigrants formed a bulwark of their wagons, and dug an entrenchment up to the hubs of their wagons, but the Indians fought them five days until they had killed all the men." With only the women and children remaining, the Indians "rushed into the corral and cut the throats of the women and children."[184]

Unlike Woodruff, Lee failed to mention the poisoning and death of the young Proctor Robinson in his official letter to Brigham Young—a significant omission. But Woodruff's journal entry notes, "several Saints died" due to the poisoned spring. Woodruff also mentioned that the emigrants were "mobbers" from Missouri and Illinois and when they traveled through the territory they continued "damning

[182] Letter to Brigham Young from John D. Lee, 30 September 1857, republished in Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 256.

[183] Carleton is quoting Jacob Hamblin's testimony of events. See Carleton, "Utah Territory," 7.

[184] Woodruff's journal entry is quoted in Brooks, *Mountain Meadow Massacre*, 141. See also Scott J. Kenney, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, vol. 5, 102.

Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball and the heads of the Church; saying that Joseph Smith ought to have been shot a long time before he was." Woodruff had inadvertently perpetuated Lee's assertion that there was no innocent blood among the emigrant camp. Woodruff's statement unintentionally uncovered Mormon involvement in the massacre. If the guilt lay squarely on the Paiutes, the Mormons had no reason to justify the unforgivable sin of shedding innocent blood. It would have been the Paiutes' sin to bear.[185] Lee's letter makes no such mention of the emigrants' harassment. Nor does Lee mention the seventeen surviving children that were allegedly brought to Cedar City by the Indians to be sold to the Mormons. Lee's Indian agent letter makes it clear that there was no animosity between the Arkansas emigrants and Mormon settlers. Unlike Woodruff, Lee offered the authorities no motive that could indivertibly connect the Saints to the massacre.

While Church officials began producing their own evidence to frame the Southern Paiutes, Indian subagent Garland Hurt conducted his own investigation. Garland Hurt had received a federal appointment and served as Indian Agent under Brigham Young.[186] Hurt became the guiding force behind the establishment of Indian farms throughout the Great Basin. Within days of the massacre, however, Hurt's Indian informants provided a complete account of the Mormon-led atrocity. By September 17 the news "had become so much the subject of conversation," Hurt sent a young Indian named Pete south via a secret route to investigate the massacre. Within a week Pete returned to report that the Paiutes had joined in the massacre, but John D.

[185] Bigler and Bagley, *Innocent Blood*, 136.

[186] Will Bagley, ed., *Confessions of a Revisionist Historian: David L. Bigler on the Mormons and the West* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Tanner Trust Fund, 2015), 81.

Lee and "the Mormons had persuaded them into it." Pete confirmed that the Mormons had "cut all of their throats but a few that started to run off, and the Piedes shot them!"[187]

Later, Hurt's official report of the massacre declared, "The Indians insisted that Mormons, and not Indians, had killed the Americans."[188] Hurt's testimony matches other Paiute accounts. Chief Beaverite "denied emphatically the Mormon story of the poisoned ox, the poisoned spring and the poisoned Indians." Beaverite continued, "no Corn Creek, Pahvants nor Beaver Indians went to Mountain Meadows."[189] Beaverite then succinctly stated: "I know all these Indians. I know all Indian traditions. I know what I tell is true. I tell it because they [Mormons] are cowards, and had tried to throw all the blame on the Indians."[190]

By the end of September 1857, however, Garland Hurt had uncovered too much. While meeting with some Ute chiefs in the Uinta Valley, six Utes abruptly dashed into Hurt's office. "Friend! friend!" the Indians yelled, "The Mormons will kill you!" From the office window, Hurt could see some one hundred mounted troops about one mile out and moving quickly towards him. Determined "to extricate [himself] from the dilemma, or die in the attempt," Hurt rushed to collect his papers while the excited Indians hastily packed his other belongings. Barely escaping, Hurt

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[187] Garland Hurt to Jacob Forney, 4 December 1857, in James Buchanan, *The Utah Expedition. Message of the President of the United States, Transmitting Reports from the Secretaries of War, or the Interior, and of the Attorney General, relative to the military expedition ordered into the Territory of Utah,* 35th cong., 1st sess., House Exes. Doc. 71, Serial 956 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1858), 95-96.

[188] Hurt, 24 October 1857, in Buchanan, *The Utah Expedition*, 206-208.

[189] "Mountain Meadows: A Review of the Story of the Massacre of the Emigrants," *San Francisco Daily Bulletin Supplement*, 24 March 1877.

[190] "Interview with the Chief of the Beavers," in *San Francisco Morning Call*, 4 August 1875.

spent the remainder of the summer surviving off roots and berries in a desperate attempt to find refuge with the approaching U.S. Army.

Garland Hurt, George Powers, Philetus M. Warn, and many of the Paiutes offered immediate and personal accounts of the events following the massacre at Mountain Meadows. Their statements help uncover how the Latter-day Saints strategically tried to cover-up their involvement in the massacre by blaming the Southern Paiutes. Additionally, accounts provided by Latter-day Saints themselves expose their deception through inconsistencies in both private and public settings. Beginning with the massacre's earliest accounts and in filed reports, Mormons continually embellished the myth of the poisoned ox—a myth central in comprehending how the Latter-day Saints' scapegoated the Southern Paiutes.

CHAPTER 3:
"THEY DIED OFF SO FAST:"
THE SOUTHERN PAIUTE AFTER
THE MOUTAIN MEADOWS MASSACRE

These Indians have evidently degenerated very rapidly during the last twelve years, or since white men have got among them.
-Jacob Forney, Federal Indian Agent

For generations, the massacre at Mountain Meadows continued to plague the Southern Paiutes. The lingering myth of an Indian massacre transmitted by Church officials, like Brigham Young, Wilford Woodruff, and John D. Lee offered the Mormon community validation first to marginalize and then disregard the Southern Paiutes. Prior to the massacre, Mormonism celebrated the Paiutes as glorified "brothers," but in the massacre's wake the Saints branded the Paiutes as condemned "others."[191] Opposing voices, such as George Powers, Philetus M. Warn, and Indian agent Garland Hurt, powerfully questioned the Paiutes' role in the massacre. Mormons, however, hastily discredited such claims as either anti-Mormon rhetoric or misguided criticism of territorial politics. This chapter, then, examines the devastating aftermath of the Mormon-led cover-up, which intentionally blamed the Paiutes for the massacre at Mountain Meadows and resulted in the rapid decline of the Southern Paiute population.

Following the massacre, Latter-day Saints immediately began to distance themselves from the Southern Paiute Indian missions and Utah's Indian farms. Established in the mid-1850s, Utah Territory's Indian missions and farms were relatively short-lived programs and many sites were abandoned or in disarray by the

[191] Farmer, "Displaced from Zion," 40-42.

end of the decade.[192] One Mormon historian recently attributed the decline of Indian missions and farms—along with the overall displacement and the decline of the Paiute populations—due to increased federal presence following the Mountain Meadows Massacre and Utah War. "When gentiles [non-Mormon federal officials] took control of Indian affairs…in 1858," John Petersen explains, "the [Indian] farms and missions almost immediately plunged into disarray, and hungry Indians turned to nearby Mormon settlements for food."[193] Once federal officials entered the territory they did, in fact wrestle Indian affairs away from Mormon control. Contrary to Peterson's statement, however, such a transition did not automatically plunge an already federally funded program into "disarray." Nor did the Paiutes' population decline correlate with dysfunctional federal Indian agents—especially after considering Garland Hurt and Jacob Forney's tenure among the Paiutes.

Distancing the Church from the Southern Paiutes and hoping to avoid a federal investigation into the massacre, Brigham Young chose Church apostle and confidante George A. Smith to conduct the territory's inquiry into the atrocity. Smith was a trusted first cousin of the movement's founder Joseph Smith. He was also one of the first Mormons to establish a colony in Paiute territory—near the Little Salt Lake, later named Parowan. The Southern Paiutes called Smith *Non-choko-wicher* ("takes himself apart"). And the name apparently stuck after a group of Paiutes watched Smith remove

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[192] Dale L. Morgan, "The Administration of Indian Affairs in Utah, 1851-1858," *Pacific Historical Review* 17, no. 4 (November 1948), 383-409.

[193] Peterson quotes Territorial legislation in 1864. "Memorial for the Vacation of Indian Reservations to His Excellency Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States from the Utah Territorial Legislature, approved 11January 1864, in Amos Reed to John F. Kinny, 13 January 1864, BIA, M234." In John A. Peterson, *Utah's Black Hawk War* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1998), 115 n127.

his false teeth, glasses, and most amusing of all, his oversized red wig to mop his sweaty brow.[194]

Before George A. Smith commenced the investigation, Jacob Hamblin recalled that Smith actively lobbied the newly appointed territorial officials, insisting "that the crime was exclusively personal in character, and had nothing to do with 'Mormons' as a people, or with the general officers of the territory." The massacre, according to Smith, was strictly a conflict between the Arkansan emigrants and the Paiutes. Such arrogant claims led Hamblin reasonably to bluff that the massacre of the emigrant train "was a fit subject for an investigation before the United States courts."[195] In the end, Smith's 1858 investigation not only satisfied Mormon authorities, but it also temporarily appeased federal officials and the territory's newly appointed governor, Alfred Cumming.

Figure 3.1: "George A. Smith," "John D. Lee," and "Brigham Young," in Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 224, ii, 202.

[194] Walker, Turley, and Leonard, *Massacre at Mountain Meadows*, 51.

[195] Little, *Jacob Hamblin*, 61.

During this period of Smith's investigation, Ann Gordge Lee, a wife of John D. Lee, remembered a meeting between her husband and other massacre participants. The gathering was held near the massacre site at Jacob Hamblin's ranch. Ann recalled overhearing a whispered conversation between her husband, Isaac Haight, John M. Higbee, Jacob Hamblin, and George A. Smith concerning the "Mountain Meadows Affair." Ann listened as the men discussed how the bodies of the 120 men, women, and children were mutilated, "with their privates cut off." The men confided in Smith that such measures were taken to leave "the impression that the Indians had committed this dastardly and most revolting deed." At the conversation's conclusion, George A. Smith told the men that Brigham Young would soon arrive in the southern Mormon colonies to divide the emigrants' property. "I supposed you have got it [the property] safe," Smith asked; and each of the men "answered yes."[196]

Knowing the intricate details of the Mormon-led massacre, Smith titled his findings, "The Emigrant and Indian War at Mountain Meadows." Smith had created yet another carefully crafted manuscript to implicate the Paiutes for entire massacre. According to Smith's report, the Paiutes had a "determination to exterminate the emigrants," due to the poisoned ox which the Fancher Party had supposedly sold to them at Corn Creek. Smith described how the Paiutes accused the Mormons "of being friendly to the emigrants or 'Mericats' as they called them." If the Saints tried to protect a single emigrant the Paiutes would "kill every one" of the Mormon settlers. Endeavoring only "to put a stop to the fight," Smith reasoned, William Dame and Isaac Haight finally dispatched the Church militia. In the territorial report, the

[196] Ann Gordge Lee Autobiography, Accn 2636 Box 19 Fd. 2, Special Collections, Marriott Library, University of Utah.

militiamen stated that fewer than 200 Indians "had killed the entire company, with the exception of a few small children." When the men arrived to the bloody scene the meadow were still apparently swarming with "pillaging and destroying" Indians, chaotically driving off the emigrants' livestock "in ever direction." The Paiutes, Smith wrote, scavenged the wreckage "without respect to each others rights," each Indian "endeavoring to get to himself the most plunder." The Paiutes were purportedly seen rushing to each of the dead bodies "scattered" throughout the meadows. Like vultures, the Indians "stripped" each person of all their earthly possessions—"till everything was cached."[197]

George A. Smith touted his completed findings as compiled from, "the most authentic sources."[198] However, Smith never interviewed any of the so-called "blood-thirsty" Paiutes or a single surviving emigrant child.[199] His thorough investigation was strictly comprised of inaccurate Mormon perspectives. Historian Juanita Brooks concluded that Smith's report was "a deliberate attempt to befog the affair and direct attention away from any possibility of Mormon implications."[200] Likewise, Will Bagley noted that, "Rather than search for the truth, Smith wanted to determine who could be blamed for the massacre, and his several hearings demonstrated that no one in southern Utah wanted to shoulder the responsibility."[201] Smith and presumably his

[197] *Journal History*, 11 September 1857, CR 100 137 Vol. 45, CHL.

[198] Ibid.

[199] "Higbee Statement"

[200] Brooks, *The Mountain Meadows Massacre*, 181.

[201] Bagley, *Blood of the Prophets*, 214.

interviewees, however, had no problem implicating the Southern Paiute as responsible for committing the massacre—a serious accusation with damaging effects.

Contradicting nearly every prior independent telling of the massacre, George A. Smith's *faithful* investigation satisfied the territory's responsibility. Likewise, many Americans originally accepted Smith's findings because of their racial understandings of Indian hostility. "We have advices from Salt Lake," proclaimed the *Massachusetts Spy,* "The Indians in the vicinity of Santa Clara" were responsible for massacring the emigrant train. Informed by the Smith report, newly appointed Governor Cumming, "had made a requisition upon Gen. [Albert Sidney] Johnston for troops to chastise them [the Santa Clara Paiute]."[202] The Governor then ordered military stations built through Paiute territory to "secure the emigration and other travelers from Indian hostilities."[203] The Baltimore *Sun* carried an almost identical account regarding Paiute hostilities. But the *Sun* published the news from Utah Territory within a much larger article, which summarized Indian hostility that stretched from Missouri to California.[204] Before entering the territory, even Superintendent of Indian Affairs Jacob Forney believed the Paiutes were guilty: "The Pi-ute tribe of Indians have been, and are charged with" the massacre at Mountain Meadows.[205] Because of Smith's report, Americans now widely denounced the peaceful Paiute as the perpetrators of the deadliest Indian led massacre along the overland trail.

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[202] "From Salt Lake," *Massachusetts Spy*, 30 March 1859.

[203] *Valley Tan*, 15 February 1859.

[204] "Overland Mail," *The Sun*, 28 March 1859.

[205] Jacob Forney to Kirk Anderson, 5 May 1859, in *The Valley Tan*, Kirk Anderson, ed., 10 May 1859.

The Church had successfully carried out what John D. Lee and Isaac Haight had originally conspired to do—make the affair resemble "*an Indian massacre*."[206] The Mormon Church had set a deadly precedence that justified sending the U.S. Army into Paiute territory. When General Johnston arrived in southern Utah in early 1860, a group of "two hundred and fifty" Paiutes "largely armed with guns, the rest with bows & arrows" blocked the road. As Major Fitz-John Porter gazed into the crowd of Paiutes, he noticed a "few white men" dispersed among the group of Indians. The men's faces were "discolored," but Porter could identify the men because of their "hair & features." Porter recorded that the white men exerted "no influence" over the Paiutes, "if they had any." The Paiutes explained to General Johnston that "without their permission we could not travel" any further. Outnumbered, with the Paiutes threatening "extermination," Johnston demanded the Indians, "to go their homes & be quiet." If the Indians interfered with the army, Johnston threated to "treat them as enemies and shoot them." The Paiutes "scattered," Porter wrote, and the army continued "undisturbed."[207]

Porter's abnormal account offers a window into the relationship between Mormons and Paiutes. For centuries, the "notoriously complacent, peaceful, and generally unarmed" Paiutes maintained open ethnic and territorial boundaries, as Denton explained.[208] They continually allowed outsiders to travel across their homeland, making it all the more difficult to imagine why the Paiutes—armed to the

[206] Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 220. Italics in original.

[207] Fitz-John Porter Papers, "Extracts from the Diary of Maj. Fitz-John Porter," Accn 1937 Bx. 27 Fd. 3, Special Collections, Marriott Library, University of Utah.

[208] Denton, *American Massacre*, 129.

teeth—attempted to prevent the army's travel. Moreover, the Paiutes outnumbered the intruders, yet simply "scattered" when Johnston told them to move. Like the massacre, Mormon men once again disguised themselves to blend-in with the Indians. Though the Mormons appeared to have "no influence" over the Paiutes, they clearly did. Even John D. Lee recorded the odd encounter in his journal. Guiltless, Lee "conceald [*sic*]" when notified that General Johnston was in the area. Lee in fact concealed himself within "quite a No." of Paiutes, "which collectd [*sic*] to defend Me."[209]

Nevertheless, throughout the Mormon Kingdom, Smith's territorial report complicated the Saints' spiritual ideals of Lamanite and Indian identity. Excusing their religion and religious leader's role in the massacre, many Saints began to fall back on long-practiced American racial prejudice of Indian identity. Most Latter-day Saints flatly denied the plausibility of their loved ones producing such carnage. Mormon settler Nancy Tracy recalled in her autobiography that the Indians "according to their savage natures, turned upon the emigrants and massacred men, women, and children." Tracy also rejected any claims that accused her religious leaders of participating in the massacre—especially Brigham Young. Defending the Latter-day prophet, Tracy conveyed Young "as innocent as a child unborn," testifying that it "was not in his nature to be the instigator of such an atrocious act."[210] Akin to Tracy's account, other faithful Latter-day Saints likewise found it easier to believe that "blood-thirsty Indians" had independently performed the attack.[211]

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[209] Brooks and Cleland, *A Mormon Chronicle*, 242.

[210] Nancy Naomi Alexander Tracy, *Autobiography (1816-1846)*, Typescript, HBLL also a Holograph Autobiography in Bancroft Library: http://www.boap.org/LDS/Early-Saints/NTracy.html (accessed 6 January 2016).

[211] "Higbee, Statement"

To validate George A. Smith's fabricated findings, Brigham Young began to shift the focus of the southern Indian missions to the southeast, away from the *hostile* Paiutes and towards the Pueblo and Navajo peoples. In a separate letter written to Young, Smith ambiguously described the state of the Southern Paiutes missions and farms. Smith explained that the once redeemable Paiutes' had evidently relapsed:

> I have been told that, since this transaction [massacre], many of the Indians who had previously learned to labor have evinced a determination not to work, and that the moral influence of the event [massacre] upon the civilization of the Indians has been very prejudicial.[212]

The harmful "moral influence" of participating in or fully committing the massacre offered Young a reason why the Paiutes had abandoned the mission. Furthermore, Smith's odd account contradicted John D. Lee's initial reporting to Young: "Friendly feelings yet remain between the natives and the settlers."[213] Smith's vague account claimed either that the barbaric Paiutes became so blood-thirsty after the massacre that they rejected civilized practices; or more likely, the Paiutes felt betrayed and alarmed by the terribly violent Mormon-led massacre. As the Latter-day Saints continued to condemn and marginalize the Paiutes, the Church began closing or simply vacating Indian farms and missions and missionaries began searching for other potential Lamanites.

Before the newly appointed federal officials arrived in Utah Territory, nearly every missionary called by Brigham Young to farm near the Moapits band had either

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[212] George A. Smith to Brigham Young, 17 August 1859, republished in Brooks, *Mountain Meadows Massacre*, 246.

[213] John D. Lee to Brigham Young, 30 September 1857, republished in Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 256.

relocated or simply departed the mission following the massacre. Abandoned for months, Brigham Young officially closed the Moapits or Las Vegas Indian Mission on September 26, 1858.[214] Similar to Las Vegas, Mormons began left other Indian missions like the Southern Indian Mission in comparable disrepair—all well before the federal appointees arrived in Utah.

Correspondingly, Mormon settlers drove Paiutes at the Corn Creek Indian farm into chaos. Following Garland Hurt's brave escape, local Mormons began to pillage the Indian farm. The Saints stole eight acres of potatoes and ten acres of corn from the Indian's fields. Settlers additionally commandeered about forty-nine head of cattle; each branded ID ("Indian Department"). One Springville bishop recalled that the Corn Creek Indian farm "seemed a perfect scene of waste and confusion."[215] Safe in the protection of the U.S. Army at Fort Bridger, Garland Hurt wrote to Jacob Forney still making his way west. The "Indians who claim the lands [of Corn Creek]," Hurt explained, had made it known that the Indian farm was "now occupied by the white settlements."[216]

The 1858 harvest at Corn Creek substantiates the Indians' letters funneling to Garland Hurt. Because the Mormons had stolen the Indians' fall crop, subagent Peter Boyce noted that through the winter and into the spring, "the Indians are nearly in a State of Starvation" and "there wheat is all gon[e]."[217] Trying to avoid another harsh

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[214] Bigler and Bagley, *Innocent Blood*, 409

[215] Lyndon W. Cook, ed., *Aaron Johnson Correspondence* (Center for Research of Mormon Origins, 1990), 83, quoted in Farmer, *On Zion's Mount*, 96-97.

[216] Garland Hurt to Jacob Forney, 4 December 1857, in Buchanan, *The Utah Expedition,* 95-96

[217] Peter Boyce to Jacob Forney, 20 March 1859, quoted in Knack, 112.

winter, Boyce and the Paiutes began replanting the farm's desolate fields. By autumn, however, grasshoppers had decimated the Indians' crops. Anticipating another winter without food, "the indians [*sic*] appear to be discouraged," Boyce reported Forney. Few Paiutes chose to remain at Corn Creek, but most left to hunt for food.[218] Because of the failed harvest, Boyce attempted to obtain wheat from the surrounding Mormon settlements. Rather than prevent the Lamanites from starving through yet another winter, Mormons required the excessive price of two dollars per bushel of wheat. The winter of 1859 was decimating. In spring 1860, Boyce once again tried to plant at Corn Creek, but farming supplies and seed were limited due to national funding constraints. By 1861, the series of failures at Corn Creek forced the Indian agents to liquidate the remaining farming equipment.

Suffering through three terrible winters, virtually no Paiutes remained at the Corn Creek Indian farm after 1861. The Mormon-led cover-up had marginalized and displaced the Paiutes. Because of the Indians perceived wicked and fallen state following the massacre, the Latter-day Saints felt justified in pillaging Corn Creek's first harvest after the massacre. The following year the Saints continued to refuse the Indians' pleas for food after their crop failure. Destroyed by years of Mormon influence, the Paiutes living at Corn Creek fell into disarray.

In general, the reduction of federal troops, oversight, and spending on Indian affairs during the 1860s did result in the influx of militia and vigilante violence toward native peoples. Such violent interventions have been well documented. For example, the Dakota War of 1862; the Bear River Massacre, 1863; the Sand Creek Massacre, 1864; the Long Walk of the Navajos, 1864, and the Washita Massacre, 1868. The

[218] Ibid.

Southern Paiutes were not isolated from this alarming national pattern. Like other American Indians living in close proximity to white settlement, life for the Paiutes correspondingly worsened during the Civil War. Nevertheless, the aggressive tactics used by the Church to scapegoat and marginalize the Paiutes compounded their problems. Acknowledging the general decline of Indian affairs after 1860, moreover, hardly explains the Mormon disregard of the Southern Paiutes. The mistreatment and neglect of Paiutes cannot be attributed to federal oversight after 1858.

Similar to Corn Creek, Mormons marginalized and disregarded the Paiutes living near Indian missions. During the autumn of 1858, the President of the Southern Indian Mission, Jacob Hamblin, "received instructions from President Brigham Young to take a company of men and visit the Moquis (Pueblo)[Hopi], or town Indians, on the east side of the Colorado River."[219] After visiting with the Moquis, Hamblin invited three of their elders to travel with him back to Salt Lake City. After they met with Brigham Young, Hamblin toured the Indians through the city's modern amenities hoping to inspire the Moquis to adopt white customs. Perhaps as a way to rebuff the Saints' advances of acculturation, one of the Indian elders spoke up to explain the Moquis' "forefathers had the arts of reading, writing, making books, etc." Astonished, Hamblin and other Church brethren reflected on what they had just heard. "As Lehi had promised," Hamblin rejoiced, "his seed should not be destroyed."[220] For Hamblin and other Latter-day Saints, the Moquis had fulfilled a Book of Mormon prophecy. The Moquis appeared to be the genuine descendants of the Lamanites—the literal

[219] Little, *Jacob Hamblin,* 62.

[220] Ibid., 86.

children of the Book of Mormon's Hebrew compilers. And once again, this time following the Paiutes' choreographed fall from grace, a new group of Indians revitalized Lamanite theology.

Above all, the report filed by George A. Smith offered the Mormon community validation to marginalize and chastise the Southern Paiutes. If the Church truly wanted to lay blame on the Indians, LDS authorities had to act the part. Accordingly Mormon newspapers, which had originally praised the hospitable Paiutes, quickly changed their tone. One newspaper overtly linked the Paiutes to the Mountain Meadows Massacre by claiming the Santa Clara Paiutes were "again creating another disturbance." The paper then recommended, "Nothing short of a good DRAGOONING will ever do these fellows any good."[221] Even Jacob Hamblin admitted in the wake of Mountain Meadows, "Our people had manifested as much hostility as the Indians, having killed two of their number."[222] It appeared that the Utah Territory along with the nation believed the Mormon-spun tale and turned their backs on the Southern Paiutes.

But the massacre's Mormon organizers along with George A. Smith underestimated one critical part of their conspiracy—the surviving emigrant children. From the beginning, Haight and Lee agreed that if federal authorities ever questioned the massacre, blame "could be laid to them"—the Paiutes. Attributing the massacre to Paiutes offered the American public a simple, plausible, and credible explanation. But the surviving children's testimonies would become the Church's Achilles' heel.

[221] *The Valley Tan*, Kirk Anderson, ed., 1 March 1859.

[222] Little, *Jacob Hamblin*, 96.

"*Three or four of the eldest recollect and relate all the incidents of the massacre,*" a later investigation revealed, "*corroborating the statement of the Indians*."[223]

The Mormon plan began to unravel, however, with the arrival of federal officials in 1858, and Dr. Jacob Forney replaced Brigham Young as Superintendent of Indian affairs in Utah. Forney immediately traveled south to secure the captured emigrant children. Because the children were rumored to be in Paiute custody, Charles E. Mix commissioned Superintendent Forney "to use every effort to get possession of" the children.[224] However, after discussing the details of the massacre with the rescued children and Paiute chiefs, Forney became skeptical of Mormon accounts. "None of the children," Forney plainly wrote, "were claimed by or were living with or among the Indians."[225] Despite Mormon declarations that the "children were in the hands of the Indians" and had been purchased by the Saints "for rifles, blankets, etc.," not a single child recalled living with the Indians. Dr. Forney found every surviving child in Mormon custody.[226]

The Latter-day Saints that housed one or two of the emigrant children charged Indian Affairs between two to four hundred dollars for their return. Mormons charged for the original cost of buying the children from the Indians, nursing the wounded,

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[223] John Cradlebaugh, *Utah and the Mormons*, 20. Italics in original.

[224] Charles E. Mix to Jacob Forney, Mar. 4, 1858, in U.S. Congress, Senate, *Message of the President of the United States, Communicating, in Compliance with a Resolution of the Senate, Information in Relation to the Massacre at Mountain Meadows, and Other Massacres in Utah Territory*, 36th Cong., 1st sess., 1860. S. Doc. 42, (hereafter, "Message of the President"), 58

[225] Jacob Forney to Alfred B. Greenwood, August 1859, in "Message of the President," 79.

[226] John Cradlebaugh, "Utah and the Mormons," 20.

feeding, clothing, and a surcharge for raising the infants.[227] John D. Lee even billed Dr. Forney for the cost of a horse purportedly bartered to the Indians to secure one of the emigrant boys. On March 2, Lee recorded in his journal, "Jacob Hamblin by Order of [Jacob] Forney, Superintendant [*sic*] of Indian affairs, took from my house Chas Fancher, one of the children of the unfortunate company that was massacred by the Indians." Lee falsely penned that the Indians demanded "1 Horse, saddle & Brdle & Blanket," for the captured boy. Lee then described how he had forwarded $150 notice to the government for his acquisition of Chas Fancher, along with an addition charge of $96 for 48 weeks of "Boarding, clothing & schooling" the child—a rate of $2 a week—an exuberant price considering the state in which Superintendent Forney found the children.[228] They were discovered in the "most wretched condition, half starved, half naked, filthy, infested with vermin," one witness described, "and their eyes diseased from the cruel neglect to which they had been exposed."[229]

Because of the Saints' fraudulent reimbursement requests for housing the children, Superintendent Forney began to question other Mormon expenditures made to the Paiutes. Suspecting Lee and other Mormons were overcharging for supplies designated to the Paiutes, the Office of Indian Affairs too began scrutinizing all funds dispensed under Brigham Young's tenure. Most damning of all was a charge made by John D. Lee as "Farmer to the Indians" for belongings collected from the massacred

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[227] Carleton, "Utah Territory," 15.

[228] Gleland and Brooks, *A Mormon Chronicle,* 199.

[229] Lynch, *San Francisco Bulletin*, 31 May 1859. One of the surviving children, Sarah Dunlap who later married James Lynch, was blind following the Mountain Meadows massacre. Sarah was likely the child described as, "eyes diseased from the cruel neglect." See Bigler and Bagley, *Innocent Blood*, 439.

Fancher Party. It appeared that Lee intended to line his own pockets with the emigrants' stolen property rather than circulate the contraband among the Paiute. The voucher that Lee submitted on September 30, 1857—a mere nineteen days after the massacre—was for "articles furnished sundry bands of Indians near Mountain Meadows (320 miles south of Salt Lake City) on superintendent's [Brigham Young's] order."[230] This single request proved to be catastrophic for the Sothern Paiutes. Not because Lee likely never distributed the emigrants' wealth among the Indians, but because the fraudulent voucher soon interrupted future federal support for the Southern Paiutes.

Of all the vouchers submitted by Utah's Indian agents in 1857, John D. Lee's claim was by far the most expensive. According to Brigham Young's clerk, Levi Stewart, Lee's invoice amounted to $3,527.43. By contrast, Young himself filed the second most expensive voucher of 1857 on behalf of the Shoshone for $2,150.25. In total Utah's Indian agents submitted 109 vouchers that year, with the average voucher being for $242.77, and the most common amount was approximately $150.[231] Historian Juanita Brooks calculated that Lee claimed to have distributed, "171 pairs of pants, 135 shirts, 566 pipes, 39½ pounds of powder, 109 pounds of lead, 14,000 firing caps, and many other things," to the Southern Paiute.[232] Dimick B. Huntington and John D. Lee both signed that they "were present, and saw the articles mentioned in this

[230] Caleb B. Smith, *Accounts of Brigham Young, Superintendent of Indian Affairs in Utah Territory*, 37th Congress, 2nd Session, House Exec. Doc. 29, 1862, Serial 1128 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1862)(hereafter "Accounts of Brigham Young," 101-102.

[231] Total voucher submitted for Utah Territory in 1857 was $26,462.42. See Smith, "Accounts of Brigham Young," 46-111.

[232] Juanita Brooks, *John Doyle Lee*, 224. Brooks gave no source for this information, but her accounting was most likely tallied from Smith, "Accounts of Brigham Young," 101-102.

voucher distributed to the following Indians: Tat-se-gobbits and band, Non-cap-in and band, Mo-quee-tus and band, Chick-eroo and band, Quo-na-rah and band, Young-quick and band, Jackson and band, and Agra-pootes and band."[233] Nevertheless, like most official Mormon accounts of the massacre, Lee and Huntington's statement contradicted versions offered by the Paiutes, federal officials, and the surviving emigrant children.

Nancy Huff Cates, a survivor and witness of the massacre and its aftermath, succinctly stated, "The Mormons got all the plunder." Like other survivors, Nancy recalled seeing her Mormon captors using, "bed clothes, clothing, and many other things that I recognized as having belonged to my mother."[234] While searching for the emigrants' stolen property, Dr. Forney asked a band of Moapats living along the Muddy River to explain their role in the massacre. The Moapats acknowledged, "that they know the Mormons had charged them with the massacre." If they were guilty, the frustrated Paiutes reasoned, "Where are the wagons, the cattle, the clothing, the rifles, and other property belonging to the train?" Such wealth would have difficult for the small band of nonequestrian Paiutes to maneuver after spotting an approaching Indian agent. You will "find all these things in the hands of the Mormons," the Moapats told Dr. Forney.[235]

Returning from his expedition empty-handed, Dr. Forney later bemoaned, "not one particle" of the emigrants' loot had been discovered. Departing the superintendent

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[233] Ibid., 102.

[234] Nancy Huff Cates, "The Mountain Meadow Massacre: Statement of one of the Few Survivors," *Daily Arkansas Gazette*, 1 September 1875.

[235] Carleton, "Utah Territory," 12-13.

speculated that because of the sheer amount of goods stolen from the murdered emigrants, the property was most likely "distributed among the white inhabitants who participated in this affair."[236] Summarizing his findings in private letters, Forney concluded, "And after strict enquiry I cannot learn that even one Pah-Vant Indian was present at the Massacre."[237] Forney realized that the massacre had been "concocted by white men," and possibly "consummated by whites and Indians."[238] In another letter written by Forney in the spring of 1859, he had unveiled the Mormon-led cover-up. "I know the Indians are bad enough;" Forney wrote to J.W. Denver, "I am aware, also, that it is, and especially has been, exceedingly convenient to implicate the Indians in all such cases."[239]

In early May 1859, a Salt Lake City newspaper noted Dr. Forney's triumphant return with the surviving children from the southern corner of the territory. The account chronicled Dr. Forney's heroic escapade through hostile Indian country as he endeavored to rescue the sixteen-orphaned children from the grasp of barbarism. "The Doctor looks well and is in good health." Now mindful of the Mormon cover-up, Forney used the report publically to challenge the findings authored by Church apostle George A. Smith. Forney affirmed that, "the Indians in that vicinity as peaceable."[240] The superintendent came to this conclusion after visiting every Paiute band in the

[236] Extract from Superintendent Forney's annual report, of September 29. 1859.

[237] Forney to Greenwood, in Senate "Message of the President," 79.

[238] Jacob Forney to Alexander Wilson, Aug. 10, 1859, in Editorial, *Valley Tan*, June 29

[239] Jacob Forney to General J.W. Denver, 18 March 1859, quoted in Ray W. Irwin, "The Mountain Meadows Massacre," *The Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 9, no. 1 (Spring 1950), 21-22.

[240] *Valley Tan*, Kirk Anderson, 5 May 1859.

Figure 3.2: Paiute Wickiups, from http://luonnonkansat.livejournal.com/18317.html (accessed 12 January 2016).

region; "I saw all the chiefs," Forney wrote.[241] Not only did the children's version of the massacre substantiate many of the Paiutes' claims, but their heroic rescue also helped shift the national blame away from the Paiutes—especially following the Indian agents' testimonies of Paiute innocence.

Tragically for the Paiutes, however, the damage had already been done due to the Mormon-led cover-up. The federal investigation into the massacre stalled as a result of the impending Civil War and federal support came only in gradual waves due to fraudulent claims filed by John D. Lee and other Mormon Indian agents. Continued Mormon displacement and funding constraints left the Paiutes to starve. Prior to the massacre, Forney stated that the Paiutes had been "receiving considerable assistance

[241] *The Valley Tan*, 10 May 1859.

from the whites."[242] But after visiting individual bands across the arid region, Forney described the Paiutes' dire situation. The Paiutes are currently, "Begging among the whites," Dr. Forney explained, "merely [to] sustain life"[243]

Growing Mormon settlements had, for years, continued to disrupt the Paiutes' fragile food supply. Following the massacre, Mormons continued to disregard the Southern Paiutes and drove many bands further from the fertile regions the Indians once autonomously farmed and foraged. In 1861, Mormons established the town of St. George—named in honor of George A. Smith—over the ruins of the Southern Indian Mission headquarters at Santa Clara. "At this time," Jacob Hamblin would later remember, "a considerable change had taken place in the spirit and feelings of the Indians of Southern Utah."[244]

Practically overnight, St. George became the largest settlement in southern Utah. Approximately four hundred individual families invaded the fragile environment during the first year. Brigham Young directed another two hundred families to settle in St. George the following year. Rather than redeeming the Lamanites, the settlers were instructed to focus on agriculture and stock raising. Because of the Civil War raging in the east, Brigham Young feared a cotton shortage and ordered the new Mormon colony to begin cultivating cotton. Cotton's excessive water demands required the Mormons to settle along the Paiutes' limited water sources—the Virgin and Santa Clara rivers, the Paiutes' riverine core. Both the Virgin and Santa Clara, however,

[242] Forney to Greenwood, in Senate "Message of the President," 79.

[243] *The Valley Tan*, 3 May 1859.

[244] Little, *Jacob Hamblin*, 94.

were more creeks than rivers. Other than during the spring season or an occasional flash flood, both creeks typically remained dry.

As Mormons began to marginalize the so-called "blood-thirsty" Paiutes, many bands—especially the Tonoquints or St. George Band—forced to scavenge for substance on the fringe of the new Mormon settlements. The lack of water to nurture small Paiute gardens along the deserts creek beds, and the overgrazing of Mormon livestock roaming through the Paiutes' homeland pushed the many bands to starvation. When Jacob Hamblin first settled near the Santa Clara River, he "herd [*sic*] a white man bost [boast] of fattening his horses on seeds taken from an Indian cache."[245] The Mormon departure of Indian missions along with the 1861 Mormon invasion into Paiutes' territory pushed many of the "the women & children [to] set at the door of the white man," to beg for food. "Lank hunger and other influences," including displacement and blame for the massacre, sent the desperate Paiute to raid Mormon cattle, gardens, and "to commit many depredations."[246]

In early 1861, one St. George settler, John Stucki recalled that when he first arrived in the southern Mormon colony, the Paiutes "had their Wigwams along the sides of the South hill and the edge of the Santa Clara Bench." Following a death, the Paiute community would ritually burn the wickiup that housed the body. Living in the region for only a few months, Stucki remember seeing the Paiutes' burn their wickiups everyday for long periods of time. "They [Santa Clara Paiutes] died off so fast,"

[245] Jacob Hamblin to Brigham Young, 19 September 1873, quoted in Todd M. Compton, *Frontier Life, Jacob Hamblin, Explorer and Indian Missionary* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2013), 253.

[246] Little, *Jacob Hamblin*, 95.

Stucki wrote, "that there were hardly any left in a short time and the white brethren went in mass one day to bury dead Indians."[247]

The Paiutes who survived the Mormon-led cover-up and invasion of St. George became absorbed into other bands like the Shivwits, Kaibab, and Cedar City groups. Long practiced social openness and intergroup reciprocity continued to offer the Paiutes greater stability and security. "About seventy-five miles west of St. George," Hamblin later describe, "a band of Paiutes had confederated with a band of Indians that had been driven out of California." Desperately trying to survive Mormon advances, many Paiutes simply abandoned their traditional homeland; "they had left their corn fields to dry up, and gone to the mountains."[248] Nevertheless, the Southern Paiutes would survive.

Even as other investigations began to uncover the truth, Smith's report remained the official position of the Church well into the 1870s, with lingering consequence to the present. But contrary to past histories, the transition of Mormon to federal control of Indian affairs in Utah Territory did not automatically plunge the Paiute into "disarray." The devastating aftermath of the Mormon-led cover-up, which intentionally blamed the Paiutes for the massacre at Mountain Meadows, resulted in the rapid decline of the Southern Paiute population—especially after examining the larger shift of Mormon Indian policy and the Church's active attempts to marginalize

[247] John S. Stucki, "Biography of John S. Stucki: 'Pioneer and Settler.'" An autobiography. Typescript, MSS A 5074. Utah State Historical Society. P. 36. For a chronology of disease, see Richard W. Stoffle, Kristine L. Jones, and Henry F. Dobyns, "Direct European Immigrant Transmission of Old World Pathogens to Numic Indians during the Nineteenth Century," *American Indian Quarterly* 19, no. 2 (Spring 1995): 181-203.

[248] Little, *Jacob Hamblin*, 96.

and disregard the Southern Paiutes. Mormon neglect—not federal—led to the disregard of "hungry" Paiutes and is far more disturbing than the national trend.

CONCLUSION:
"MAKE IT AN INDIAN MASSACRE"

I wasn't even involved, but I can still fell like they are blaming me. I feel that now. Now, nobody'd listen to an Indian anyway. The whites, they won that story.
-Eleanor Tom, 2010

In 2007, Paiute Chairwoman Laura Tom spoke at the 150-year commemoration of the Mountain Meadows Massacre. She became the first Paiute representative to voice the Indian's perspective during a dedication or commemoration held at the massacre site.[249] "For most of the 150 years," Tom explained, "no one had asked us for our account." Addressing a century of Paiute persecution—the aftermath of Mountain Meadows, removal, the Circleville Massacre, and Termination—Laura Tom explained that no one had asked for the Paiutes' testimony of the massacre because "they wanted us to believe, to believe a cover-up, that I believe was not even a good cover-up, at all."[250] The Mormon-led massacre and premeditated cover-up continued to affect the Southern Paiutes for generations. Addressed here, however, has been the relationship between the Latter-day Saint's and Southern Paiutes before, during, and after the Mountain Meadows Massacre. And has highlighted the immediate displacement and disregard of the Southern Paiutes following the massacre.

Scrutinizing the Mormon violence and doubletalk, this thesis has argued that the Mormon-led crime; the blatant deception, continued cover-up, and years of scapegoating the Southern Paiutes permeated every level of the Mormon hierarchy. Church leadership knew the Mormon men that perpetrated the massacre, blatantly

[249] Another Paiute spiritual leader and tribal elder Clifford Jake offered a traditional Paiute prayer at the 1999 rededication of the grave marker.

[250] Lora Tom, "Lora Tom Chairwoman of the Paiute Tribe Speak Out," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hhO_hnmbzSk (accessed 16 January 2016).

chose not to punish the murders, and actively assisted the participants by hiding the evidence.

Prior to the massacre, Mormonism claimed the Southern Paiutes as glorified "brothers." When Brigham Young directed the Latter-day Saints to colonize southern Utah, Mormon settlers were hopeful they had found the actual Lamanites. Encouraged by their theology along with the peaceful Paiutes' welcoming culture, Mormon settlers like Thomas D. Brown described the Paiutes as, "very industrious and simple as children—own but few guns and fewer horses, and many of them in trying to hold up a gun would put it to their left shoulder with the trigger upwards!"[251] Other Latter-day Saints' shared Brown's sentiments for the potential of Paiute redemption, which revitalized Lamanite theology. Many settlers' journals articulated the Paiutes' tough work ethic, strong desire for material, and general interest in agriculture.

With the initiation of the Utah War, the Latter-day Saints' placed an even greater significance on the Southern Paiutes. Because the Mormons perceived the Paiutes as Lamanites, the Southern Paiutes were expected to assist the Saints by terrorizing the approaching U.S. Army. Brigham Young wrote to the leader of the Southern Indian Mission, Jacob Hamblin and explained that the Paiutes "must learn that they have either go to help us, or the United States will kill us both."[252] Brigham Young and Jacob Hamblin's September 1, 1857, meeting with twelve Indian chiefs offers further evidence of the Latter-day Saints' trust in Laminate theology. During the hour-long meeting, Young offered the Indian chiefs all the "cattle that had gone to

[251] Brown, *Journal of the Southern Indian Mission,* 68.

[252] Republished in Juanita Brooks, *The Mountain Meadows Massacre*, 22.

Cal[ifornia by] the southern rout." Dimick Huntington recorded in his journal that Young's words "made the Chiefs open their eyes."[253] But the Mormon relationship with the Southern Paiutes was not one-sided.

Mormon association initially offered the Paiutes new and beneficial trading networks along with the added protection from raiding Ute bands. Anthropologist Martha Knack has explained, "Paiutes may indeed have seen some benefits from the Mormon presence, even if those benefits were short-lived and their perceptions naively short-sighted."[254]As settlements expanded south across the Paiutes' homeland, Mormons confiscated many valuable and limited resources. Prior to Mormon invasion, the region was already a delicate ecosystem and any disruption could lead to widespread famine. Notwithstanding, the Southern Indian Mission did establish close relations with the Paiutes and created a sense of trust and dependence between both parties.[255]

Nevertheless, following the Mountain Meadows Massacre the relationship between the Mormons and Paiutes became strained and the emphasis on Lamanite theology waned. Mormon organizers of the massacre originally intended to entice the Southern Paiutes to carry out an attack that never materialized. The Southern Paiutes' failure to fulfill their perceived millennial role consequently altered their position within Mormon theology. And Mormon leadership held fast to the organizers' original

[253] Dimick B. Huntington, Diary, Mountain Meadows Association, http://www.mtn-meadows-assoc.com/DepoJournals/Dimick/Dimick-2.htm (accessed 13 January 2016), 6-13.

[254] Knack, 54.

[255] Walker, Turley, and Leonard, *Massacre at Mountain Meadows*, 145.

plan to "*make it an Indian massacre*"—thus, blaming and subsequently marginalizing the Paiute peoples as condemned "others."[256]

Immediately following the massacre, the Mormon Church created and embellished an alibi that centered on the myth of the so-called "poisoned ox." The myth duly functioned as an explanation for a Paiute-led massacre. Recently, Paiute chairwoman, Laura Tom has underscored that, "People have got to understand the cover-up."[257] The linchpin to the development of the Mormon-led cover-up is the Church-wide implementation of the poisoned ox myth, which explicitly blamed the Paiutes for the massacre.

Testimony offered by Garland Hurt, Jacob Forney, George Powers, Philetus M. Warn, and Paiute accounts specifically contradicted the poisoned ox myth and uncovered how the Latter-day Saints strategically tried to cover-up their involvement by blaming the Southern Paiutes. Likewise, accounts provided by John D. Lee, Wilford Woodruff, Brigham Young, and George A. Smith have further exposed the Church-sanctioned deception through inconsistencies in both private and public settings. Tracing the development of the myths is central in comprehending how the Latter-day Saints' scapegoated the Southern Paiutes. And without the poison myth, the credibility of Indian hostility towards the emigrants loses credibility. To cite one example, a Cedar City old-timer commented after confronted by the lack of evidence to support the myth of a Paiute-led massacre, "But for some reason anyway, it is true

[256] Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 220. Emphasis in original. See also, Jared Farmer, "Displaced from Zion," 40.

[257] "Lora Tom Chairwoman of the Paiute Tribe Speak Out,"

that the Indians were incensed and were following the company to some vantage point where they intended to make an attack."[258]

Additionally, the examination of the Mormon-led cover-up complicates Brigham Young's role during and following the massacre. After outlining how the Church blatantly shifted the responsibility of the massacre onto the Paiutes, it becomes of little consequence—at least from the Paiutes' perspective—to connect Brigham Young as giving the official order to exterminate the Arkansas emigrants.[259] Brigham Young became complicit in the wholesale slaughter of 120 men, women, and children. If Young did not give the official order to begin the massacre, he certainly played an essential role in the Mormon-led cover-up. Governor Young became entirely responsible for the decline of territory's most vulnerable population, the Southern Paiutes.

Acting on the rumors of the poisoned ox, the Latter-day Saints immediately began to distance themselves from the Southern Paiute Indian missions and Utah's Indian farms. Prior to federal appointments after the Utah War, Brigham Young directed the closings and disbanding of Indian farms and missions. Mormon Indian missionaries like Jacob Hamblin abandoned hopes of Paiute redemption and began searching for other potential Lamanites.

Mormon scapegoating dramatically altered not only perceptions of blame, but also had a tremendously detrimental impact on the Southern Paiutes. The Mormon departure of Indian missions and farms along with an increase of Mormon settlements

[258] Wm. R. Palmer Letter to Harold B. Lee, 26 January 1940. MS674 Box 80 fd. 7, Special Collections, Marriott Library, University of Utah.

[259] See Bagley, *Blood of the Prophets*; Denton, *American Massacre*.

in Paiute territory pushed many of the "the women & children [to] set at the door of the white man," to beg for food. "Lank hunger and other influences," including displacement and blame for the massacre, sent the desperate Paiute to raid Mormon cattle, gardens, and "to commit many depredations."[260] The devastating transition away from the Southern Paiutes due to the Mormon-led cover-up of the massacre at Mountain Meadows, resulted in the rapid decline of the Paiute population, and ultimately had a disastrous impact on their fortunes.

[260] Little, *Jacob Hamblin*, 95.

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