

# Loose in the Stacks: A Half-Century with the Utah War and Its Legacy

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*Can you point me to that portion of Scripture in which a man is said to have scattered arrows firebrands & death & then exclaims am I not the spirit. —President James Buchanan to Rev. Smith Pyne<sup>1</sup>*

## Introduction

With the Utah War's sesquicentennial commemoration now underway, it is appropriate to reexamine that campaign's origins, conduct, significance, and historiography. This article's purpose is to stimulate such probing. I hope to do so through the story of my own research and conclusions about the war over the past half-century—one-third of the period since President James Buchanan and Governor Brigham Young came into armed conflict during 1857–58.<sup>2</sup>

## The “Why” Question: A Personal Odyssey

Before moving to my conclusions about the Utah War, perhaps I should start with the more basic question people frequently ask. Why has a Presbyterian Air Force veteran from upstate New York spent his entire adult life, not only in solving business problems in the Midwest, but also in probing the history of a mid-nineteenth-century army campaign in Utah involving the Latter-day Saints? The answer follows.

Like Professor Jan Shipps's contemporaneous, long-term foray into Mormon history from the world of a Methodist housewife, my journey was unplanned if not accidental. Unlike her sojourn, which began with immersion in the Mormon culture of Logan's Utah State University, my

epiphany came in the non-LDS college world of New Haven, Connecticut, during 1958.<sup>3</sup> There, at the end of my sophomore year, amid Yale's Gothic spires, gargoyles, and moats, I chose a history honors major. I then needed a topic for my senior essay, a required paper that was to approach the character of a Ph.D. dissertation. In return for this commitment, Yale largely exempted me from attending my last two years of classes. A lot was at stake with this trade-off, including my very graduation.

Seeking advice on a topic, I turned to my hero and unofficial mentor at Yale. That man was Howard R. Lamar, then a young associate professor from Alabama, whose wildly popular frontier history course—dubbed “Cowboys and Indians”—would have a profound effect on me as it has on several generations of historians and others. Unknown to me then was a future in which Howard Lamar would become a lifelong friend and Yale's Sterling Professor of History, dean, and president as well as a founder of the Western History Association and authority on Utah's territorial period.<sup>4</sup> After I made several false starts on my own, Lamar suggested a topic, new but intriguing to me. It was one for which the library's manuscript collection had extensive, unexploited primary sources: the Utah War of 1857–58. This suggestion propelled me to the mother lode—the Yale Collection of Western Americana—where I introduced myself to its curator, Archibald Hanna Jr. Archie Hanna was a Massachusetts Yankee and a survivor of World War II's Pacific theater, then in the early stages of an extraordinary thirty-year run in making Yale the leading force that it is today in the study of Western Americana. As formidable as this archivist-marine then seemed to a teenager, Archie, too, was to become and remain a friend.<sup>5</sup>

After Hanna's guided tour through his Utah War materials—acquired in the 1940s as part of the enormous trove of Western Americana donated by William Robertson Coe—I concluded that this topic was indeed both fascinating and manageable. Once the Yale Department of History sanctioned this choice, I hurtled into the strange new world of the 1850s, territorial Utah, and antebellum Washington politics. Two years later I emerged from this daunting experience with a senior essay that won the Yale Library's Walter McClintock Prize while helping me to graduate with a B.A. degree in history magna cum laude and election to Phi Beta Kappa.<sup>6</sup>

Although still intrigued by Western Americana and the Utah War, for a variety of personal reasons I chose as my vocation business and fi-

nance. Accordingly I moved immediately from Yale to the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration in Boston to pursue an MBA degree. I barely realized that George Albert Smith, son of the LDS Church president and great-grandson of the Mormon apostle, both of the same name, then taught at the Harvard Business School. But from this base—on weekends—I mined Harvard College's own substantial manuscript collection across the Charles River at Houghton Library.

With Howard Lamar's long-distance encouragement, I also used precious spare time to convert part of my Yale senior essay into a journal article. During the winter of 1961–62 he urged me to submit this piece to his Salt Lake City friend, Everett L. Cooley, then director of the Utah State Historical Society and editor of its *Quarterly*. Although I did not know it until years later, the title of Everett Cooley's 1947 master's thesis at the University of Utah had been "The Utah War." He accepted my manuscript submission; and in the spring of 1963, the article—my first—appeared in *Utah Historical Quarterly*. In retrospect, the publication of this article was a key motivator for the life-long immersion in Utah War studies to follow.<sup>7</sup>

By 1963 I had graduated from Harvard, had been on active duty with the Air Force in Texas, and had started six years as a reservist in New York State while simultaneously working as a financial analyst in General Motors' Manhattan corporate treasurer's office. There, the reaction to the *Utah Historical Quarterly* article was quizzical. Thomas A. Murphy and Roger B. Smith—my young bosses, both of whom would become GM's chief executive officer and board chairman—asked why I was spending so much of my spare time on such an obscure subject.<sup>8</sup> Notwithstanding skepticism from the business types, but never from my bride, the former Ann T. Reed, I quietly pressed on with historical research at ragged intervals. To the extent that a grueling work style at General Motors permitted, I began to draft a unit history of the Utah Expedition's virtually unknown volunteer battalion.<sup>9</sup> Everett Cooley's earlier editorial confidence in my work as well as the subsequent use of my first article during the mid-1960s by Howard R. Lamar, Juanita L. Brooks, James B. Allen, and Glen M. Leonard was highly motivating.<sup>10</sup> On Saturdays I worked my way through the New York Public Library's wonderful manuscript collections as well as many of those in Washington at the National Archives and Library of Congress. With the invention of the Xerox 914 machine, I was able to extend my research range by obtaining photocopied materials by mail from

almost anywhere. Clearly I had fallen victim during the 1960s not only to the Utah War's powerful mystery, complexity, and color but also to the aptness of the comment by the late Dale L. Morgan, "I find the more I find out, the more I need to find out."<sup>11</sup>

Coincident with this civilian activity, the war in Vietnam welled up unexpectedly, then grew in ferocity. For years my air squadron—activated and assigned to Germany for the Berlin Wall crisis of 1961–62—prepared monthly to support jungle warfare in southeast Asia for which, mysteriously, we were never called. Instead we deployed to such far-flung but improbable operational locations as the sands of the Mojave Desert and Cape Cod, my ancestral ice-bound home in Newfoundland, and again to the lush, pastoral hilltops (radar sites) of southern Germany. I sometimes wondered what Brigham Young would have thought about this Catch-22-like federal military experience.<sup>12</sup> Soon after the 1968 Tet offensive, I was discharged from the reserves unscathed except for a minor encounter with a gasoline explosion.

The years turned into decades, and I continued to research and publish in a variety of journals throughout the West and even in England. After Everett Cooley moved to the University of Utah and its Marriott Library, my editor at the *Utah Historical Quarterly* became Stan Layton. He, like Everett, became a long-time friend. General Motors transferred me from New York to Detroit in 1972, I switched career fields from finance to human resources, and in 1982 I became a GM corporate vice president—a sort of managerial dean and advocate for the organization's 200,000-person salaried workforce during the stunningly turbulent leadership of Roger Smith and, briefly, of H. Ross Perot. In 1987 I left the company after twenty-five years to found my own management consulting firm, MacKinnon Associates. Although I did not think of my GM years in quite this way at the time, what I took with me included an intimate, valuable understanding of the leadership and travails of an organization that in some ways was as structured, sprawling, and complex as the U.S. Army and LDS Church, albeit one with a quite different mission.

Two years later, both my wife and her mother died of cancer, and I did my best to help our two children proceed through high school and college into adulthood. Partly to cope with this turmoil, I immersed myself not only in consulting work but in the design and organization of a conference in Pennsylvania to examine James Buchanan's presidency at the bicentennial of his birth.<sup>13</sup> At about the same time, I also embarked on



plans for a narrative history of the Utah War to be written collaboratively with friend Richard D. Poll, then a retired history professor and university administrator living in Provo. When Dick Poll died unexpectedly in 1994—another heavy blow—I shelved our narrative history project, although to honor him I did complete a journal article on the Utah War's origins which we had started together.<sup>14</sup> In 1993, I married again—fortunately to a very positive, supportive Patricia M. Hanley.

During 1996 I was remotivated with the serendipitous discovery that the Arthur H. Clark Company of Spokane was planning to commission a documentary history of the Utah War. This book was to be part of the firm's exciting, new, multi-volume series *KINGDOM IN THE WEST: The Mormons and the American Frontier*. A telephone call to Robert A. Clark, the firm's owner-president, established that the series had not yet identified either an author-editor or a title for its Utah War volume but was open to suggestions.<sup>15</sup> Although I had previously considered writing only a narrative history of the Utah War—a volume to build on Norman F. Furniss's classic 1960 study—the quite different challenge of an edited documentary compilation intrigued me. A book in this format struck me as a logical way-station for a subsequent narrative study of the type that I had originally planned with Dick Poll. Bob Clark liked the idea and urged me to introduce myself to William Grant Bagley, his *KINGDOM IN THE WEST* series editor and an independent Salt Lake City historian of whom I had virtually no prior awareness.<sup>16</sup>

From our first telephone call, Will and I hit it off immediately. After reexamining the Hafens' 1958 documentary history of the Utah Expedition—published by Bob Clark's father—I realized that there was indeed a need for a new such compilation. I submitted a formal proposal to Clark and Bagley, calling for a study that would use the Hafens' book as a point of departure rather than one to rehash or deconstruct it.<sup>17</sup> My intent was to take advantage of the intervening decades of scholarship and to present, through unexploited documents unknown to the Hafens, a complete, fair, and balanced account of the Utah War. They accepted this proposal. For the third time, I moved deeper into a commitment to the fascinating world of Utah War studies while juggling the other demands of my professional and personal life.

And so for nearly a half-century, one irresistible Utah War challenge has led me to another. Each of these challenges has been reinforced by a wonderful series of interconnected historical and documentary discover-

ies. For me these linkages are suggestive of the prophet Ezekiel's vision of the valley of the dry bones (Ezek. 37:1–10). Since 1958 the result of all this stimulating activity has been a steady flow of articles, essays, and book reviews for more than thirty journals and encyclopedias. Early in 2008, the first part of my two-volume study titled *At Sword's Point: A Documentary History of the Utah War of 1857–1858* will emerge from Arthur H. Clark Company and its new parent, the University of Oklahoma Press. The call of still other books and articles beckons once I complete this substantial current commitment. I am also engaged in the work of two other organizations: the Mormon History Association, on whose council I have been serving; and the Utah War Sesquicentennial executive committee, a group that I helped to establish in late 2004 to commemorate and honor the participants on both sides of the conflict while stimulating new knowledge about their experiences.<sup>18</sup>

### Lessons Learned

With this personal story as background, what observations do I have about the Utah War and its historiography? Nine conclusions strike me as the most important.

#### *The Unknown Utah War*

First and most basically, I must report that—alas—the Utah War is still shrouded in obscurity. Notwithstanding the passage of 150 years and the work of some talented historians, the conflict remains wholly unknown to all but an incredibly small percentage of the American public. Over the decades—even today—most friends and acquaintances react to the subject of my research and writing activities with the question: “Why didn’t I hear about this conflict in school?”<sup>19</sup> The relatively recent flow of narrative histories and novels about the Mountain Meadows Massacre—the Utah War’s worst tragedy—has generated substantial short-term heat about that disaster but varying degrees of light about the broader military campaign that spawned it.<sup>20</sup> For example, in June 2003 Professor Jean H. Baker, a respected historian of Maryland politics working under the editorial guidance of Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., brought out the most recent biography of President James Buchanan. In it, she dispatched the Utah War and Buchanan’s role in it with five muddled paragraphs supported by a single footnote.<sup>21</sup> Lost—or at least overlooked again—were decades of some fine but largely unknown scholarship on this subject. If

most American high school students do not know when the Civil War took place and why, I suppose that ignorance of the Utah War should not be wholly surprising. General Motors' Tom Murphy and Roger Smith have not been alone.<sup>22</sup>

A corollary to this finding is that, even among Utahns and Latter-day Saints, awareness of the Utah War is in a state that I would describe as incomplete to foggy. For many people, the label "Johnston's Army"—pervasive in Utah but unknown elsewhere—seems to say it all. As often used, this moniker telegraphs the story of another incident in the long litany of Mormon persecution, with the U.S. Army cast in the role of heartless oppressor, hapless giant, or both. If pressed for details, some Utahns might be able to recite an account of unwarranted federal intervention or colonialism, but such descriptions tend to take on the flavor of an expensive but bloodless David-versus-Goliath affair—an opera bouffé without casualties. Here James Buchanan often assumes the almost cartoonish image of a doddering bachelor bumbler, while the much-married Brigham Young is consistently cast as a crafty, homespun military genius playing the role of a nimble mountain Robin Hood to "Old Buck's" blundering Sheriff of Nottingham.<sup>23</sup> Utahns often remember the Nauvoo Legion roles of Major Lot Smith and Captain Porter Rockwell, but the sole federal name that the public has retained through the centuries is Johnston's. Like "Seward's Folly," the 1867 label devised to denigrate the federal acquisition of Alaska for \$7 million, "Johnston's Army" is employed dismissively even today. The Utah War was far from simple, trivial, or bloodless.

What accompanies such a limited perspective is what I call a "freezing in time," a belief that the war and the significance of the people involved ended on a single day, June 26, 1858, when the U.S. Army marched through the deserted streets of Salt Lake City. But for many of the people on both sides, the Utah War was a foundational experience, perhaps even an epiphany, which launched them into even more heroic and tragic adventures. In reality, the Utah War forms an exotic but largely unrecognized connection among rich, colorful, and fascinating personal stories involved with shaping post-1858 Mormonism, Utah, and the West. Lost in the process is an understanding of the war's complex, downstream impact on the lives of the participants on both sides after 1858.

When I discovered that a very bright Mormon friend from Wisconsin had no idea that Albert Sidney Johnston later became the Confeder-

acy's leading general and had died a hero in 1862 at Shiloh, I started digging. From such research came the extraordinary, colorful, but neglected stories of hundreds of Utah War veterans. On the federal side alone appear such individuals as:

- Captain John Cleveland Robinson, Fifth U.S. Infantry, who became a Union major general, lost a leg, and was awarded the Medal of Honor for valor at Gettysburg. He went on to command the Grand Army of the Republic and to serve as New York's lieutenant governor.
- Private John Sobieski, Tenth U.S. Infantry, an immigrant claiming descent from a seventeenth-century Polish king, who served throughout the Civil War and became a colonel in the Mexican army.
- Second Lieutenant William H. F. ("Rooney") Lee, Sixth U.S. Infantry, who dropped out of Harvard in the spring of 1857 to serve in Utah against the wishes of his distinguished father, Robert E. Lee, before becoming the Confederacy's youngest major general.
- Private John Jerome ("Johnny") Healy, Second U.S. Dragoons, who became sheriff of Fort Benton, Montana, a co-founder of Alberta's whiskey-soaked Fort Whoop-Up, coiner of the Canadian Mounties' unofficial motto ("They always get their man"), an Alaskan gold-rush trading and transportation magnate for Chicago's Cudahy family, and the model for a central figure in Jack London's first novel.
- Benjamin Franklin Ficklin, a graduate of Virginia Military Institute, who served Albert Sidney Johnston as a civilian guide and acting U.S. marshal for Utah before becoming a Pony Express superintendent, a Confederate blockade-runner, and the Civil War owner of Thomas Jefferson's Monticello.
- George Sheppard and David Poole, Utah Expedition teamsters, who joined William C. Quantrill's Confederate guerrillas during the Civil War. Sheppard later rode with the Jesse James-Cole Younger gang of bank robbers.
- Corporal Myles Moylan, Second U.S. Dragoons, who was both commissioned and cashiered during the Civil War, reenlisted as a private under an alias, was commissioned again, transferred to the Seventh U.S. Cavalry, and retired as a major in 1893 after surviving the battle of the Little Big Horn in 1876 and receiving the Medal of Honor for his role in the 1877 campaign against the Nez Perce.

- Private Ben Clark, Bee's Battalion of U.S. Volunteers, who later became fluent in Cheyenne and served as chief scout and interpreter for Generals George Armstrong Custer, Philip H. Sheridan, William Tecumseh Sherman, and Nelson A. Miles during the post-war plains campaigns.

It is not surprising to me, then, that a Michigan friend, son of the late Governor George W. Romney, was aware that one of his great-grandfathers, Charles H. Wilcken, had deserted from the Utah Expedition's Fourth U.S. Artillery in 1857, but did not realize that, as a Mormon convert, Wilcken had become coachman, bodyguard, nurse, and pallbearer for LDS Church Presidents John Taylor and Wilford Woodruff as well as an adopted son of Apostle George Q. Cannon. What a story!

Lost along with an appreciation of these heroes, rogues, and solid citizens has been an understanding of the multiple political and cultural forces set in motion by the conflict—some of them unresolved to this day. Among such societal forces are a boom-bust volatility in Utah's economy, Russia's decision to sell Alaska, the English decision to form the province of British Columbia, the Anglo rediscovery of the Grand Canyon, the near-dismemberment of Utah politically in six territorial "bites," and a pervasive anti-federalism known in today's West as the Sagebrush Rebellion. Although few people realize it, the Utah War had individual, economic, political, geographic, and cultural consequences long after Albert Sidney Johnston marched through Salt Lake City.<sup>24</sup>

How does one explain this historical amnesia about the nation's most extensive and expensive military embroilment during the period between the Mexican and Civil wars? Although several factors have been in play over the past century and a half, my belief is that this benign neglect comes mainly from the overshadowing impact of the Civil War. Important as the Utah War is, it pales in all respects to the subsequent carnage, upheaval, cost, and consequences of the great national struggle from which Brigham Young and Utah essentially opted out. In many respects the two conflicts and their ensuing historical treatment resemble the relationship between the Spanish Civil War and World War II or that of the Allies' 1942 Dieppe raid to the massive Normandy invasion of 1944—the relationship of a soon-forgotten smaller conflict that was precursor to a monumental bloodbath.

An additional historiographical dynamic to consider is a more elu-

sive one that I call the "heartburn factor." Both the U.S. government and the LDS Church have had reasons—albeit quite different—for deemphasizing their activities during 1857–58.

From the federal side, both General Winfield Scott and President James Buchanan gave the campaign short shrift in publishing their memoirs.<sup>25</sup> This deemphasis probably stemmed from their preoccupation with defending their controversial Civil War roles. No doubt these two federal leaders were also aware of the extent to which, even in the 1860s, the public perceived the Utah Expedition as an enormously expensive misjudgment that did little to help the nation during its disastrous slide toward disunion. Buchanan's three most recent biographers have devoted fewer than ten paragraphs each to the Utah War.<sup>26</sup> With the army flummoxed by poor planning, late decisions, the Nauvoo Legion, and severe weather, the government that Buchanan led could bring itself to brevet only one officer for his role in the campaign.<sup>27</sup>

Until 1988 the U.S. Army's most significant discussion of what it long called the "Mormon rebellion" was a 1903, four-paragraph account sandwiched into a review of the multiple civil disturbances since 1787 in which regulars had been committed to restore order elsewhere in the United States. Almost twenty years ago, this description was updated with a competent, twenty-five-page summary of the Utah Expedition that relied heavily on Furniss's 1960 book and took solace in his judgment that at least the expedition had accomplished two things: installation of a genteel governor and the establishment of a sizeable army garrison in Utah.<sup>28</sup> Over the decades, then, the army in effect relegated the Utah Expedition to an obscurity that it shares with the story of the U.S. military intervention in northern Russia during 1919.<sup>29</sup>

My intuitive sense is that part of the army's early reticence about the Utah Expedition was attributable to its *de facto* loss of the post-war public relations battle. With the outbreak of the Civil War and the development of senior Confederate roles for many of Buchanan's cabinet officers as well as Albert Sidney Johnston, Brigham Young seized the moral high ground. He and his proxies asserted that the Utah Expedition was essentially the result of early proto-Confederate conspiracies in Buchanan's cabinet to scatter the army, bankrupt the federal treasury, or enrich commercial contracting friends of the administration. Unable or unwilling to defend the 1857 actions of cabinet and military officers subsequently vilified as traitors, the institutional army remained mute about the Utah War



while Mormon leadership assailed the patriotism and motives of the Buchanan cabinet, if not the army's own hierarchy. Mormon behavior was akin to the successful post-war effort by Confederate leaders to forge the myth of the "Lost Cause" while virtually canonizing Robert E. Lee.<sup>30</sup>

Aggravating this neglect has been the pursuit of the so-called New Western History with its shift from traditional military history to a focus on the stories of women, minority groups, and the more exploitive aspects of frontier development. Although historian Sherry L. Smith detects something of a return swing to the historiographical pendulum, it is significant to me that her expectation of a greater interest in military affairs is limited to a renewed interest in the army's engagement in Indian matters. In her provocative journal article on this subject, Smith is mute on the possibility of probing army-Mormon relations, and she provides no hint that she and other historians are even aware of the Utah War, let alone likely to view it as a subject worth exploring.<sup>31</sup>

One hopeful sign for change among the army's professional historians has been their willingness to participate in conferences commemorating the Utah War's sesquicentennial and to include this subject on symposia programs.<sup>32</sup> Sustained progress on this front, with related changes to the curricula of the military's professional service schools, may improve the undesirable situation in which the army has been nearly as uninformed as the general public about the Utah War, its causes, and conduct.

With respect to the Mormon perspective, although many Latter-day Saints view the Nauvoo Legion's exploits during 1857-58 with pride, this positive view is often muted by acute awareness that the Mormon military organization that successfully harassed the Utah Expedition during the fall of 1857 had also committed atrocities such as Mountain Meadows. Mormon military action during the Utah War, then, has cut both ways.<sup>33</sup> These historiographical cross-currents—pride mixed with institutional heartburn—together with the U.S. Army's own reticence, have had a severe deadening impact on pursuit of a clear, full understanding of the Utah War.

#### *The War's Origins and Accountabilities*

In the course of understanding that the Utah War did not end on a single day, I also came to realize that it did not simply spring up on May 28, 1857, with the release of Brevet Lieutenant General Winfield Scott's



general circular to army staff bureaus organizing the Utah Expedition.<sup>34</sup> So when and how did the Utah War start?

In many respects, the Utah War was a conflict in the making for nearly ten years, a long period during which Mormon-federal relations—already poor in Missouri and Illinois—deteriorated in Utah a year at a time beginning in 1849.<sup>35</sup> The conflicts involved a wide range of secular issues—the quality of mail service, administration of criminal justice, land surveys and ownership, the treatment of emigrants crossing Utah, the behavior of U.S. troops, responsibility for the 1853 Gunnison massacre, Indian relations and allegiances, Governor Young's handling of territorial finances and congressional appropriations, the accuracy of Utah's 1856 census, and the competence as well as character of Utah's federal appointees. Surrounding and compounding these bitterly contested federal-territorial issues were a series of even more volatile religious matters: plural marriage, the doctrine of blood atonement, and Brigham Young's vision of Utah as a theocratic kingdom (anticipating the Second Coming of Christ) rather than a conventional federal territory functioning through republican principles of government.<sup>36</sup> Small wonder that, during 1854–55, U.S. President Franklin Pierce schemed actively but ineffectually to replace Young as governor. Nor is it surprising that, by the summer of 1856 when the new Republican Party adopted an anti-polygamy campaign platform plank, a violent struggle of some sort might unfold.<sup>37</sup>

Since early in the twentieth century, the accepted theory of many historians has been that the catalyst for the Utah War—the match in this powder keg of federal-territorial animosity—was the impact on the newly inaugurated Buchanan administration of three letters written by some of Brigham Young's harshest critics: W. M. F. Magraw, the disgruntled former mail contractor on the route between Salt Lake City and Independence, Missouri; Thomas S. Twiss, the alarmed U.S. Indian agent for the Upper Platte agency; and W. W. Drummond, the venomous, debauched associate justice of the Utah supreme court.<sup>38</sup> Not so.

Although Magraw's letter of October 3, 1856, was written to the president of the United States, the recipient was President Pierce rather than private citizen James Buchanan. Inflammatory as Magraw's letter was, there is no indication that Buchanan—elected November 4, 1856—was even aware of it until January 1858 when it surfaced from State Department files.<sup>39</sup> Twiss's letter, dated July 13, 1857, did not reach the U.S. Commissioner of Indian Affairs, James W. Denver, until well after the Bu-

chanan administration had decided to intervene militarily in Utah. Judge Drummond's volcanic letter of resignation, written to Attorney General Jeremiah S. Black and dated at New Orleans on March 30, 1857, was indeed a bombshell that touched off a furor once it received national press distribution a few days later, thanks to telegraphic dispatches.<sup>40</sup>

But the real catalyst for the change in the administration's priorities and its decisions about Utah was not Drummond's incendiary letter. Rather it was the substance and rhetoric in at least three other sets of material received quietly but in rapid succession in Washington during the third week of March 1857, weeks before the awareness in early April of Drummond's resignation. This largely unpublished material, combined with the cumulative impact of nearly ten years of unrelenting tension and the anti-polygamy backwash from the 1856 presidential election campaign, motivated Buchanan's cabinet to make two related decisions: to replace Brigham Young as governor, and to provide his unidentified successor with a large but undefined army escort.

To assess the dynamics of Buchanan's decision making during this critical period, then, one needs to understand the cumulative private-public effect of all of this material and its sequencing. Drummond's resignation letter alone represents only part of the complex story that unfolded first in Washington and then nationally.

The full story of these catalytic documents and their text will soon appear in my documentary history of the Utah War. In summary, though, the first set of material consisted of two memorials and accompanying resolutions dealing with federal appointments adopted by Utah's legislative assembly on January 6, 1857. Upon adoption, these documents were sent from Salt Lake City to Territorial Delegate John M. Bernhisel via the San Bernardino-Panama mail. This material arrived in Washington on March 17 simultaneously with a *New York Herald* editorial urging: "The Utah Mormon excrescence call[s] for immediate and decisive action. That infamous beast, that impudent and blustering imposter, Brigham Young, and his abominable pack of saintly officials, should be kicked out without delay and without ceremony."<sup>41</sup>

Because of the relevance of the Utah memorials to the appointments process then preoccupying the new administration, Bernhisel presented these documents in person to Buchanan on March 18. Exhausted by the demands of filling the federal patronage as well as by his own serious gastro-intestinal illness, Buchanan chose not to examine these docu-

ments in Bernhisel's presence. Instead he urged the territorial delegate to deliver them to one of his chief cabinet officers, Secretary of the Interior Jacob Thompson. Bernhisel did so later that same day. When he called again on Thompson the next day, March 19, Bernhisel found that the provocative language of one of the documents had alarmed the secretary (and presumably the cabinet) to a point that both memorials were interpreted to be a *de facto* Mormon declaration of war.

What may well have shaped Thompson's fateful comments to Bernhisel on March 19 was a letter from Drummond to an unidentified cabinet officer received on the same day. Drummond had presumably written this letter (not to be confused with his resignation letter written on March 30 from New Orleans) before boarding ship in California. After reciting a list of what he considered to be Mormon abuses, Drummond grew prescriptive: "Let all, then, take hold and crush out one of the most treasonable organizations in America."<sup>42</sup>

Stunned by Thompson's unanticipated reaction, Bernhisel made what seems, with hindsight, to have been both a strange and fateful decision. Instead of swinging into action in an attempt to moderate the administration's reaction, Bernhisel withdrew from the fray, left Washington to rest and to visit relatives in Pennsylvania, wrote a discouraging report to Brigham Young on April 2, and took his seat on the early May Salt Lake-bound mail stage from Independence, Missouri.<sup>43</sup>

The day after Thompson informed Bernhisel of the cabinet's explosive reaction, another shoe dropped in Washington—this time in the form of a letter written to Jeremiah Black, the U.S. Attorney General, by Utah's chief justice, John F. Kinney. This missive was the third wave of Utah-related materials received by the administration that week.

In his March 20 letter, written in Washington and presumably hand-delivered, Kinney reviewed the condition of affairs in Utah. This letter was remarkably like the one Drummond was then formulating aboard ship in the Gulf of Mexico, and it urged Black to share Kinney's views with the president and his cabinet just as Drummond's California letter, received on March 19, had done. It is not known whether Kinney wrote spontaneously or whether Black asked for his assessment of Utah affairs after reading Drummond's letter and after Bernhisel had delivered his memorials of January 6 to Thompson. Kinney not only recited examples of what he believed to be Brigham Young's perversion of Utah's judicial

system but also urged his removal from office and the establishment of a one-regiment U.S. Army garrison in the territory.<sup>44</sup>

From the cabinet's viewpoint, Kinney's inputs must have carried substantial credibility at face value. Prior to his appointment to Utah's bench in 1854, Kinney had been a justice on Iowa's supreme court. His experience in Utah was relatively long and recent, credentials that Kinney believed qualified him to comment about the territory "advisedly." Both the U.S. Department of State and the office of the U.S. Attorney General had "confidential" files amassed during President Pierce's administration and bulging with Kinney reports criticizing Brigham Young's influence on Utah's judicial and law enforcement systems as well as the indignities suffered by Kinney personally while in Utah. Probably unknown to the cabinet in March 1857 was Kinney's 1855 indictment in Salt Lake City's probate court on gambling charges and the extent to which he had boldly but unsuccessfully maneuvered for appointment as Utah's governor two years earlier in the event that Colonel E. J. Steptoe declined the gubernatorial commission.

Who, then, was to blame for the onset of the Utah War: James Buchanan or Brigham Young? I believe that both leaders bore a large measure of the responsibility and accountability for the affair. I am not calling down a plague on both the White House and the Lion House, but I am arguing that each leader, neither of whom had significant military experience, shared culpability for what happened, albeit in quite different ways and with debatable degrees of responsibility.

For his part, Brigham Young's actions and inflammatory, violent language—acceptable as they might have been for a private citizen, though questionable for a religious leader—were wholly inappropriate for a man who was a federally sworn and paid territorial governor, Indian superintendent, and militia commander.<sup>45</sup> For example, Young's five-week absence from Utah during April–May 1857 with a large entourage to visit Fort Limhi in southern Oregon Territory (now Idaho) without notification to the U.S. Secretary of State, Oregon's governor, or the superintendent of Indian affairs for Washington-Oregon was a Church-motivated mission sharply in conflict with his civil responsibilities. Feeling and acting the way he did, I believe that Young should have resigned his federal positions rather than exploit them financially while attacking U.S. Army units and allowing killings to take place uninvestigated, let alone unpunished. In accepting a governor's commission and taking the oath of office

to uphold the Constitution, Brigham Young had tacitly accepted the responsibility to serve the interests of the federal government. He should have done so or resigned, not used the office for other, unrelated ends.<sup>46</sup> Not well known is the fact that in 1857, 1858, and 1871, Young was indicted by federal grand juries for treason as well as for the October 1857 murder of Utah War ammunition trader Richard E. Yates—hardly a chain of events about which any governor should be proud.<sup>47</sup>

Buchanan, for his part, was within his rights to appoint a new governor and to assign U.S. troops wherever in the country he deemed necessary. But he went about doing so ineptly—first in haste, then with delay, and then with more haste—an appalling display of indecision if not incompetence. Upon taking office, Buchanan had a wholly inadequate understanding of the Utah scene, and he failed to seek well-informed, unbiased advisors. He made no move to establish a dialogue with Brigham Young and rebuffed Thomas L. Kane's offer in March 1857 to discuss Utah affairs. The president also neglected to consult even the U.S. Army and Winfield Scott, its general in chief.<sup>48</sup>

In effect, this commander in chief, who had never served in uniform, substituted his political judgment for their potential military advice. (During the War of 1812, he had ridden briefly with a pick-up detachment of young gentlemen-volunteers intent on protecting Baltimore from British regulars; for the Mexican War Buchanan served in President James K. Polk's war cabinet as secretary of state.) Secretary of War John B. Floyd had no military experience other than what he had absorbed earlier as Virginia's governor and militia chief, a background similar to Brigham Young's. In Illinois, Young had held a largely ceremonial position as the Nauvoo Legion's lieutenant general; but unlike Floyd, he had an extraordinary ability to organize and lead large numbers of people over rugged western terrain. Buchanan and his cabinet proceeded to move on Utah with a total lack of communication with the public and Congress, as well as with Brigham Young. Mormon intelligence gathering, communications, and coordinating capabilities were superb; the U.S. government's were primitive to nonexistent.

Small wonder that in July 1857—after the Utah Expedition had been launched—an apprehensive Secretary of War sent a secret agent to the expedition's commander in Kansas to determine such fundamental but unprobed issues as: "What is likely to be the reception the troops will meet with in Utah? . . . [Is there] any reliable information concerning the

condition of the Mormons, their dispositions, &c [?]"<sup>49</sup> In July 1857, after already launching the military expedition, Buchanan appointed Alfred Cumming, superintendent of Indian affairs in St. Louis for the Upper Missouri Agency, to replace Young as governor. It was an appointment that defied common sense. Cumming was a four-hundred-pound alcoholic without substantial executive experience who took an immediate and almost visceral dislike for Albert Sidney Johnston—the dynamics for disaster.

Aside from blame or accountability, given these circumstances was the Utah War avoidable? Technically, I believe that it was preventable. But to avoid a clash would have required a near superhuman, mutual effort on the part of its leaders and far better communications. With the substantial momentum underway and their personal limitations, the leaders involved were not up to overcoming ten years of corrosive federal-territorial conflict, inflammatory rhetoric, fervid millennial beliefs, and intensely hostile politics. The telegraph line ended at Boonville, Missouri, in 1857; and during the winter, mail to and from the Salt Lake Valley across the plains could be in transit for up to four months.<sup>50</sup> Brigham Young did not leave Utah after 1848 except for his five-week trip to Fort Limhi on the very eve of the Utah War—and then he went north for Church reasons, not east to Washington, D.C., to resolve governmental problems.

In my view, a peaceful resolution would have required something like the Camp David meetings of 1978, in which President Jimmy Carter and a very focused, facilitated problem-solving process were used to bring the leaders of Egypt and Israel together in person to forge common political understandings. Such modern processes for conflict resolution were not understood, let alone used, during the mid-nineteenth century. Buchanan, for example, was unable to resolve the anxieties of the southern states during the so-called Secession Winter of 1860–61. The Washington conference convened by others during the opening months of 1861 to stave off secession and armed conflict failed. During the war that followed, even a leader as wise as Abraham Lincoln could not engineer a peace during his shipboard meeting with the Confederacy off Hampton Roads, Virginia.

Historian David L. Bigler, a long-time student of the religious and cultural background of the Utah War, argues that the conflict was inevitable given the irreconcilable Mormon millennial beliefs that drove Brigham Young, while he was governor, to establish a theocracy—the LDS



Kingdom of God—within and eventually independent of the American federal republic.<sup>51</sup>

This matter of inevitability versus preventability is an intriguing imponderable. It is fascinating to me that both Buchanan and Young were physically ailing while confronting major decisions, if not crises, in the early spring of 1857. In my opinion neither leader was physically or psychologically up to handling well the demands at that critical juncture.<sup>52</sup> A complicating factor was Bernhisel's almost fatalistic acceptance of the deteriorating situation and his ill-timed departure from Washington during the spring of 1857. Bernhisel's withdrawal, combined with Thomas L. Kane's coincidental resolve to detach himself from Mormon affairs for personal reasons, meant that there was no one to plead the Mormon case in Washington. It created a lobbying vacuum just when effective representation was essential. Another source of "what-if" debates was Young's prolonged, unauthorized absence from Utah, a move that kept him incommunicado while events moved rapidly in the spring of 1857.<sup>53</sup>

#### *The Myth of a Bloodless Conflict*

My third major conclusion responds to the widely held view that the Utah War was "bloodless"—without casualties—as so many Church, traditional, and even army narratives have described the conflict over the decades. As recently as 1998, I also loosely characterized the war as "largely bloodless," but upon reflection I have concluded that this was hardly the case.<sup>54</sup>

There were, of course, shooting fatalities among the troops of both the Utah Expedition and the Nauvoo Legion attributable to accidents and, in the case of the former organization, a few duels or incidents of drunken gun play. I am not referring to these deaths but rather to operational casualties for which leaders of both the Nauvoo Legion and Utah Expedition bear responsibility. For those who still view the Utah War as bloodless, I invite them to consider that the conflict's casualties during 1857–58 approximated the loss of life from violence during 1854–61 in Utah's eastern neighbor—about 150 deaths—a scene so shocking that it inspired the enduring label "bleeding Kansas."<sup>55</sup>

For example, the execution of 120 children, women, and disarmed men at Mountain Meadows on September 11, 1857, by Nauvoo Legion troops and Indian auxiliaries was the largest organized mass murder of unarmed civilians in the nation's history until the 1995 Oklahoma City



bombing. Surely this slaughter was part of and prompted by the Utah War. There were, of course, even larger-scale massacres of Native Americans by regular or volunteer troops at Bear River, Utah (1863), Sand Creek, Colorado (1864), and Wounded Knee, South Dakota (1890); but in these engagements, the circumstances under which Indian children and women were killed were hopelessly complicated by the armed and/or combatant status of many of the women in all three encampments.<sup>56</sup> In contrast, the victims at Mountain Meadows were wholly defenseless. They had surrendered their weapons and entrusted their lives to the militia officers who guaranteed their safety, then murdered them.

Several weeks later—elsewhere in Utah—there occurred other, smaller-scale executions of unarmed civilian prisoners by Nauvoo Legion officers, as with the October murder of ammunition trader Richard E. Yates in northeastern Utah and the assassination of five members of the Aiken party near Nephi in November. I have concluded that the October lynching at Smith's Fork of Private George W. Clark, a Utah Expedition deserter, might well have been the act of non-Mormon mountaineers rather than an atrocity<sup>57</sup> committed by federal or militia troops operating in the area.

Nor was the Utah Expedition blameless with respect to bloodshed. David L. Bigler's research into the likelihood of indirect army complicity in the February 25, 1858, lethal raid on the Mormon mission at Fort Limhi, Oregon Territory, and my own discovery of Albert Sidney Johnston's spring 1858 decision to use Washakie's Shoshone warriors to operate and defend the Green River ferries raise serious questions of federal behavior as well as intent. The Fort Limhi massacre alone—executed by more than 200 Bannocks and northern Shoshones and possibly instigated by civilian agents of the army—resulted in the deaths of two Mormon farmer-missionaries and the wounding of five others plus an unknown number of Native American casualties.

The precise roles that Brigham Young and James Buchanan (through Johnston) played in this Utah War bloodshed is now under active debate; although it strikes me that, as commanders in chief of their respective armed forces, by nineteenth- as well as twenty-first-century standards, both leaders should surely be viewed as accountable. When ailing, militarily inexperienced James Buchanan and Brigham Young faced their first major military crisis during the spring of 1857, their response was to place large numbers of armed men in motion with powerful motivation

but ambiguous, murky, and sometimes conflicting instructions. And so the atrocities came. Whether the probing goes beyond the longstanding debate over what happened at Mountain Meadows to a sustained interest in and understanding of the broader Utah War context for bloodshed at places other than southern Utah remains to be seen.<sup>58</sup>

*Vast, Unexploited Sources in Surprising Places*

A fourth conclusion has been that, notwithstanding all of the digging by historians, the number of wonderful but still unexploited source documents on both sides of the war is massive. Perhaps surprising to some students of the war, many of these letters, diaries, reminiscences, photographs, poems, paintings, songs, sketches, and maps are in eastern as well as western manuscript collections. Those at Yale, Princeton, Cornell, and the New York Public Library are especially rich. This distribution pattern reflects the fact that most of the Utah Expedition's officers were from New England, New York, Pennsylvania, or Virginia, and so their personal papers gravitated to those places. Also, eastern collectors and benefactors during the mid-twentieth century either lodged their own enormously useful collections with eastern repositories or provided librarians with endowments to acquire those of other collectors.

This largesse for eastern manuscript collections was not just a matter of the self-perpetuating advantages of inherited eastern wealth or Ivy League backgrounds. A farsighted belief that such materials are crucial to understanding the past and should be assembled in critical mass was also at work in the building and placement of such collections—sometimes with the help of westerners. For example, although Yale's great benefactor, William Robertson Coe, made a fortune in the New York world of finance and insurance, he was an English immigrant without a college degree. But after Coe's financial success, he bought one of Buffalo Bill's cattle ranches and then acquired the Western Americana amassed by his neighbor, the Right Reverend Nathaniel S. Thomas, Episcopal Bishop of Wyoming. Decades later Coe offered his collection to Harvard, his son's alma mater. When Harvard turned up its institutional nose, James T. Babb, Yale University librarian and an energetic Idahoan, swooped in and won the prize. Similarly at Princeton, Alfred L. Bush, that university's able curator emeritus for Western Americana, has a Colorado, Utah, and Mormon background and was a friend of Juanita Brooks. Small wonder that Princeton's Firestone Library eventually ended up with the massive collec-

tion assembled in Salt Lake City by Herbert S. Auerbach, a president of the Utah State Historical Society.<sup>59</sup>

Not only are many of the war's key sources located outside Utah, but the conflict's action itself ranged far beyond the Salt Lake Valley. As will be apparent in *At Sword's Point*, the story of this campaign includes sub-plots ranging from Pacific Coast locations such as California, Vancouver's Island, and Russian America to inland valleys, canyons, and rivers in what are today Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, and Arizona. It was an awareness of this geographical sweep that prompted the Arthur H. Clark Company and Will Bagley to create in 1996 a publishing venture for an even broader Mormon story that unfolded beyond as well as in Utah. They purposefully titled this twenty-volume series *KINGDOM IN THE WEST: The Mormons and the American Frontier*. To me it is emblematic of the Mormon and Utah War story's regional character that the Clark Company is now based in Norman, Oklahoma, rather than in Salt Lake City, even though the firm's third-generation president, Bob Clark, is descended from both Daniel H. Wells, the Nauvoo Legion's lieutenant general during the Utah War, and Heber J. Grant, a subsequent LDS Church president.<sup>60</sup>

### *Sifting the Tailings*

Closely related to this realization about the scope of the Utah War story and its still-unexploited record has been a fifth discovery: that a relatively substantial number of very talented historians—all now dead—had been on this journey of discovery before me. In the process they generated wonderful research files but without publishing more than a fraction of what they apparently intended to say about the Utah War. There were multiple reasons for this substantial gap between research input and published output: professional distractions and fatigue, health problems, and cultural inhibitions about using some materials that might have been viewed as sensitive or non-faith-promoting. I refer especially to the largely unpublished research collections of the late Dale L. Morgan, Richard D. Poll, Frank Evans, Albert L. Zobell Jr., Hamilton Gardner, E. Cecil McGavin, M. Hamlin Cannon, LeRoy R. Hafen, Charles Kelly, Philip S. Klein, and Francis W. Craig. Further valuable discoveries may await us when Harold Schindler's research files become accessible or if those of Norman F. Furniss ever surface. These underutilized collections have provided me with not only rich source materials but also with a strong deter-

mination to share publicly as much of what I have discovered as my own energy, resources, and mortality will permit.

### *The Role of Serendipity*

In discovering and pursuing collections such as these and others, I have come to a sixth conclusion: Serendipity perhaps as much as careful planning has shaped my discoveries. By serendipity I mean not dumb luck but rather the prepared mind linked to a spirit of energetic inquisitiveness tuned to spot promising leads or fruitful interconnections. As with my old squadron's radar gear at work in the Berlin air corridor, it is a matter of having the equipment on, properly calibrated, and perpetually monitored.

I mentioned serendipity earlier in connection with my 1996 discovery at a formative junction that Arthur H. Clark and Will Bagley intended to bring out a documentary history of the Utah War. It was also through serendipity that I was able to determine that indeed there was a lone U.S. Marine Corps officer who participated in the Utah War (as an observer) and also tracked down the identities and ultimate fates of the Utah War field correspondents for ten New York, Washington, London, and San Francisco newspapers.<sup>61</sup> It is by such process—hard work combined with serendipity—that I ferreted out the Utah War reminiscences of Charles R. Morehead of Russell, Majors and Waddell, which in turn led me to the missing life story of Morehead's Utah companion, John I. Ginn.<sup>62</sup> The same process yielded the autobiographical and captivity narratives of Charles W. Becker, a Utah War teamster turned Pony Express rider and Oregon rancher; an account of Private Henry Feldman's capture by the Nauvoo Legion; and the unpublished photographs of the Nauvoo Legion's Adjutant James Ferguson, Captain George W. Cherry, and Lieutenant James E. Bennett of Bee's volunteer battalion, and the notorious W. M. F. Magraw.<sup>63</sup> It is by such methods, too, that I will some day learn the identity of *Mormoniad's* author as well as the fate of men I call "the missing": William Porter Finlay, the volunteer battalion's Belfast-born, ne'er-do-well sergeant-major; Hiram F. Morrell, Salt Lake City's mountaineer-postmaster and the most hated gentile in Utah; and John M. Hockaday, W. M. F. Magraw's one-time business partner as well as Utah's U.S. attorney during 1856–58.<sup>64</sup>

Mundane as the point may be, I also believe that understanding the Utah War's chronology is a powerful aid to serendipitous discovery. The

campaign involved not only a great many people but a complex chain of events that unfolded across the United States as well as in England, British North America, and Russia. Grasping the sequence of events in detail—tedious as it is—yields not only the rough outlines of how the conflict began but what happened during the Utah War. This is a story assembled through linkages, subtle patterns, and discoveries about: Brigham Young's February 1857 role in what unwittingly became the Santa Clara River ambush as well as Springville's Parrish-Potter murders; the reasons for Thomas L. Kane's disengagement from and then reinvolvement in the campaign during the spring and fall of 1857; the impact of Lot Smith's October raid on Buchanan's subsequent Pacific Coast counter-measures as well as on the alarm of the Russian and British governments; and the drivers for Brigham Young's abrupt March 1858 change in strategy and tactics immediately following news of the Fort Limhi massacre.<sup>65</sup>

#### *In Good Company*

A seventh lesson learned over the years is that research work about the Utah War—like book collecting—is a very people-connected activity rather than a reclusive, lonely endeavor detached from the warmth of human contact. Certainly the writing process can be a bit solitary, but the research part brings involvement with consistently bright, interesting, and accomplished people.<sup>66</sup> I have mentioned long-lasting transcontinental friendships with Howard Lamar, Archie Hanna, Everett Cooley, Stan Layton, and Dick Poll. At the Utah State Historical Society, I have also benefitted from the personal warmth and substantial help of Philip F. Notarianni, Kent Powell, and Craig Fuller. More recently I have befriended an extraordinary group of delightful and helpful professionals assigned to the LDS Church Archives in Salt Lake, especially Elder Marlin K. Jensen, Richard E. Turley Jr., Ronald O. Barney, W. Randall Dixon, Michael Landon, William W. Slaughter, and Ronald G. Watt. Other friendships that have developed from initially professional inquiries are too numerous to identify all by name, but they include an eclectic mix of archivists, curators, librarians, historians, book dealers, publishers, soldiers, religious leaders, geologists, genealogists, and editors. To my great good fortune, I have discovered that Utah friend Ardis E. Parshall, my research associate, has managed to combine many of these roles in a single person.

My point is that a warm, rewarding set of relationships with fascinat-

ing people takes shape while pursuing the past. As an immature nineteen-year-old, I neither guessed that this would be the case nor understood that it is from such interactions that serendipitous discoveries often flow. For example, an offhand comment that Will Bagley made several years ago in his paper-intensive Salt Lake City office launched the quest that identified the *New York Herald's* mysterious Utah War correspondent as Lemuel Fillmore, a distant cousin of President Millard Fillmore. Coincidentally, this factoid led to the realization that reporter Fillmore was, in turn, one of the 150 corpses left in the smoking ruins of Lawrence, Kansas, in 1863 by Confederate guerrilla William C. Quantrill, a former Utah War teamster.<sup>67</sup>

*Trouble in Paradise: Beware the Bogus*

My eighth lesson learned is that, judged anecdotally at least, the trail of Mormon history is marked with the pitfalls of "bogus"—legal, religious, and historiographical controversies over counterfeit money, forged documents, and their impact on the unwary. (This is a matter wholly apart from disputes among historians and others over controversial but authentic documents.) Upon reflection, it strikes me that documentation for the Utah War is relatively free of such problems, but not to an extent that historians should suspend reasonable research vigilance and normal skepticism. In my experience, students of the Utah War should be aware (and beware) of about ten cases of forgery, documentary deception, or hoaxes. Several of these hazards are relatively well known, but some—those involving claims about non-existent documents or fictive events—are understandably even more elusive than general awareness of the Utah War itself. Only one of the cases of which I am aware bears the possible imprint of the notorious murderer-forger Mark W. Hofmann.<sup>68</sup>

An article of this length is not the place to describe all of these cases of forged documents or bogus stories. For purposes of illustration, though, I might mention two questionable claims of participation in one of the Utah War's truly heroic adventures on the federal side. The first such claim is embedded in the reminiscences of H. H. McConnell, an aging enlisted veteran of the Sixth U.S. Cavalry, who published his military memoirs of campaigning in Texas in 1889. Although neither McConnell nor his regiment had been in Utah, he gratuitously included in his own reminiscences a lengthy tale supposedly related to him by another "old soldier named Jim DeForrest," allegedly a veteran of the Utah Expedi-



tion's Tenth U.S. Infantry. According to DeForrest (who actually did serve in the Sixth Cavalry with McConnell), he had accompanied Captain Randolph B. Marcy from Fort Bridger to northern New Mexico and back to procure horses for the Utah Expedition during November 1857–June 1858. This feat is the most daunting winter march in American military history. In its substance, the DeForrest narrative (via Harry McConnell) is a superficially accurate account of Marcy's march. If authentic, it would represent the only known participant's description of the southbound leg of the trek other than Marcy's own. In probing DeForrest's story as related by McConnell, however, I find that his name does not appear in the army's special order detailing volunteers to accompany Marcy to New Mexico. Neither is it among the troops listed as standing muster with the Tenth Infantry during the fall of 1857 and the subsequent winter. The National Archives has neither a pension file nor a military service record for such a soldier in the Tenth Infantry. I conclude that this narrative is a bogus account probably fabricated by DeForrest and foisted on McConnell, based on Marcy's published and widely read 1866 narrative of the march, which McConnell admitted reading.<sup>69</sup>

The second example is a corollary to the Jim DeForrest claim of participation in the Marcy trek. James Sweeney of Foster County, North Dakota, made a similar assertion at age eighty-three in 1921. Unlike DeForrest, Sweeney actually had served with the Utah Expedition as a private in that organization's frustratingly "silent" Fifth U.S. Infantry. What initially aroused my suspicion of Sweeney's unpublished but colorful narrative was his vignette of Captain Marcy secretly sharing food pilfered by a small group of enlisted men during the most arduous part of the march to New Mexico. This description of a hedonistic Marcy was sharply at odds with his long-standing reputation for discipline, leadership, self-reliance, and selflessness. A check of the army's Special Orders No. 50 and the muster rolls of the Fifth Infantry's Company C indicated that Sweeney never left Camp Scott-Fort Bridger during the winter of 1857–58, a conclusion confirmed by the staff of the National Archives. Although he was illiterate, I believe that Sweeney probably dictated his old-age account of this adventure after hearing of the earlier published reminiscences of Marcy, McConnell, or both.<sup>70</sup> *Caveat lector!*

#### *Be Prepared for Surprises*

The ninth lesson learned is the extent to which I have been sur-



prised by findings encountered during my research. Over the decades my conclusions have changed or formed anew; happily, I have learned from the material, often in unexpected ways. The eight conclusions set forth above touch on some of the more significant such surprises.

Other conclusions, less major but perhaps even more colorful, include these unexpected discoveries: (1) Ogden gunsmith Jonathan Browning's rejected offer to design an aerial torpedo for the Nauvoo Legion in December 1857 while Brigham Young was advocating the use of medieval longbows and crossbows; (2) the extent and early character of Brigham Young's active preparations for armed conflict; (3) the extent to which Young cultivated and used not only Thomas L. Kane but three other men engaged in various U.S. government roles: U.S. Army Quartermaster-Captain Stewart Van Vliet, explorer Frederick W. Lander, and U.S. Senator Sam Houston; (4) the legitimacy of Brigham Young's fears over the likely behavior of U.S. Army troops and their campfollowers; (5) the ad hoc rather than carefully crafted nature of Brigham Young's military tactics and strategy; (6) the extent to which some of the most enduring myths (excluding its "bloodlessness") about the Utah War were indeed largely true; (7) the extraordinary complexity of both Thomas L. Kane's psyche and his Utah War role; (8) the extent to which Brigham Young's gubernatorial neighbors also declared martial law in their territories and states at about the same time that he did in 1857; and (9) the fact that both sides in the Utah War were losers—politically, financially, and reputationally.<sup>71</sup>

### Summing Up

To date, my ongoing Utah War odyssey has been a wonderfully exciting journey. For a half-century it has been an adventure that brings to mind the title of Andrew Garcia's classic account of his passage across frontier Montana in the wake of the Nez Perce exodus, *Tough Trip through Paradise*.<sup>72</sup> Jeffrey M. Flannery, an archivist with the Library of Congress's Manuscript Division, imagines that at night the "people" in his collections talk to one another after lights-out from their archival boxes, filing cabinets, and stacks.<sup>73</sup> The Utah War's long-dead participants may or may not still engage in an ongoing dialogue among themselves, but they certainly are on my mind. Overwhelmingly, the message is that their extraordinary Utah War story remains only half-told and needs America's attention as well as my own.

What awaits us are accounts of Brigham Young's alarming dreams

about U.S. Army Lieutenant Sylvester Mowry as well as insights into the military advice dispensed covertly to President Buchanan by a brace of such eclectic advisors as the winsome Georgia widow Elizabeth C. Craig; James Arlington Bennett, an eccentric Nauvoo Legion major general turned Brooklyn cemetery developer; and William Smith, the erratic, vindictive, younger brother of the late LDS founder-prophet. Also lamentably unexplored are the circumstances by which General-in-Chief Winfield Scott secretly sought to supersede Albert Sidney Johnston as the Utah Expedition's commander in January 1858, less than two months after promoting him to brevet brigadier general.

These and many other stories beckon, as do the wonderful, still unexploited documents from which we will learn them. In southern California alone are treasures in a family lawyer's Los Angeles bank vault, at the home of a prominent Mormon family near Pasadena, and in the desk of an elderly and somewhat reclusive Utah War descendant in the lee of LAX airport. And more.

As for me, I am still tunneling through the archival galleries of Yale's Collection of Western Americana in good company with a very active Howard Lamar. Only most recently I have been there, not as a nineteen-year-old undergraduate in search of a senior essay topic, but rather as the aging former chairman of the Yale Library Associates—a guardian of this material—hearing voices in the stacks, dreaming of the West, and worrying a bit about the passage of time since 1958.

### Notes

1. James Buchanan to Rev. Smith Pyne, undated letter written during Buchanan's presidency, <http://www.antebellumcovers.com/newlist303.doc> (accessed March 2, 2004). Pyne was rector of St. John's Episcopal Church opposite the White House. Buchanan frequently attended services there but was not a communicant. The biblical verse which the president paraphrases is Proverbs 26:18 (King James Version).

2. The Utah War of 1857–58 was the armed conflict between Mormon leaders and U.S. President James Buchanan over power and authority in Utah Territory. Ultimately the struggle pitted nearly one-third of the U.S. Army against Brigham Young's Utah territorial militia in a guerrilla campaign until a non-violent settlement resolved the military aspects of the affair. Norman F. Furniss, *The Mormon Conflict, 1850–1859* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1960); my "Utah Expedition or Utah War," in *New Encyclopedia of the American West*, edited by Howard R. Lamar (New Haven, Conn.:

Yale University Press, 1998), 1149–51; my "Utah War (1857–1858)," in *Ground Warfare: An International Encyclopedia*, edited by Stanley L. Sandler (Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2002), 913–14.

3. Jan Shippo, *Sojourner in the Promised Land: Forty Years among the Mormons* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000); Klaus J. Hansen, "The Long Honeymoon: Jan Shippo among the Mormons," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, 37, no. 3 (Fall 2004): 1–28.

4. As yet there is no full-length biography of Howard Roberts Lamar, and he has not written his reminiscences. Nonetheless, over the decades a rich body of anecdotal and chapter-length material about him has sprung up to describe his teaching skills, sense of humor, seminal role in the study and interpretation of Western Americana, willingness to mentor more than sixty graduate students, including large numbers of women, and ability to calm turbulent faculty/alumni waters at Yale. See essays in honor of Lamar by his former graduate students in George Miles, William Cronon, and Jay Gitlin, eds., *Under an Open Sky: Rethinking America's Western Past* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1992); Lewis L. Gould, "Howard Roberts Lamar," in *Clio's Favorites: Leading Historians of the United States, 1945–2000*, edited by Robert Allen Rutland (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2000), 84–97. The latest assessments of Lamar's work by his peers took the form of multi-paper panels devoted to this subject at the 2003 and 2005 annual meetings of the Western History Association and Organization of American Historians, respectively. In 2005 the Mormon History Association honored Lamar with its Thomas L. Kane Award. His most recent book is *Charlie Siringo's West: An Interpretative Biography* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005).

5. A description of Archibald Hanna Jr. and his archival career appears in MacKinnon, "The Curator Retires from the Old Corral: Where the East Studies the West," *Yale Alumni Magazine* 45 (October 1981): 33–37.

6. MacKinnon, "President Buchanan and the Utah Expedition, a Question of Expediency Rather than Principle" (Senior essay, Yale Department of History, 1960). Also of substantial help during a crucial point in my research for this paper was William H. Goetzmann, then Yale associate professor and later a lion of the faculty at the University of Texas, Austin. Either by intent or oversight, neither Lamar nor Hanna mentioned to me that, while I was working on my senior essay, Norman F. Furniss, a Yale Ph.D. then teaching at Colorado State University, was finishing a book on the Utah War. The week I handed in my paper, the Yale University Press published Furniss's *The Mormon Conflict, 1850–1859*, a complete surprise and temporary blow to my morale from which I soon recovered with the prospect of graduation before me.

7. MacKinnon, "The Buchanan Spoils System and the Utah Expedition: Careers of W. M. F. Magraw and John M. Hockaday," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 31 (Spring 1963): 127-50. Although not paid for this article, my delight at its publication was no less than nineteen-year-old Arthur Conan Doyle's 1878 joy upon the sale of his first published story, "The Mystery of Sasassa Valley," to an Edinburgh magazine: "After receiving that little cheque I was a beast that has once tasted blood, for I knew that whatever rebuffs I might receive—and God knows I had plenty—I had once proved I could earn gold, and the spirit was in me to do it again." Quoted in Daniel Stashower, *Teller of Tales: The Life of Arthur Conan Doyle* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1999), 30-31.

8. Notwithstanding my six demanding years at Yale and Harvard, it was in this business office that my writing skills underwent their most rigorous test. For a description of the atmosphere and work style in this unusual staff operation, see MacKinnon, "Developing General Motors' Chairmen: The Extraordinary Role of GM's New York Treasurer's Office Since World War I," *Automotive History Review* 33 (Fall 1998): 9-18.

9. The unit history for this four-company infantry organization remains unfinished. I intend to complete it following the publication of my documentary history of the Utah War.

10. Howard Roberts Lamar, *The Far Southwest, 1846-1912: A Territorial History* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1966), 337-48; Juanita Brooks, *On the Mormon Frontier: The Diary of Hosea Stout, 1844-1861*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press and Utah State Historical Society, 1964), 2:553-54; James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976), 676.

11. This classic Morganism has been adopted by Will Bagley as the tag line for his Salt Lake City research and publishing firm, Prairie Dog Press.

12. Although NYANG's 106th Tactical Control/Direct Air Support Squadron had no officer named Major Major, as did Captain Yousarrian's fictive World War II bomber unit, its troops did have some ironic names: a mess sergeant bearing the surname Hash and a first sergeant whose last name was Bombay. The 106th's lieutenant colonel-commanding, a former civilian short-order cook, was covertly dubbed "Mike Scramble Two" by enlisted wags. From the squadron's weekend perch on the grounds of a former estate atop Long Island's highest hill, pulsations from the unit's radar gear inadvertently contributed to the Cold War by ruining television reception for the Sunday NFL football games so eagerly anticipated by staffers at the Soviet legation's getaway mansion in nearby Glen Cove.

13. James Buchanan Bicentennial Conference, September 20-21,

1991, at Lancaster (Franklin and Marshall College) and Carlisle (Dickinson College), Pennsylvania. Many of the papers given at this symposium subsequently appeared in Michael J. Birkner, ed., *James Buchanan and the Political Crisis of the 1850s* (Selinsgrove, Pa.: Susquehanna University Press, 1996). Other than design of the conference's format, content, and speakers, my contribution was an unpublished paper titled "James Buchanan's Western Military Adventures."

14. Richard D. Poll and MacKinnon, "Causes of the Utah War Reconsidered," *Journal of Mormon History* 20 (Fall 1994): 16-44.

15. I had been an admirer of the Arthur H. Clark Company and its indispensable, elegant books since my Yale days. I subsequently befriended Bob Clark, first through telephone calls as a customer and then occasional meetings in the Pacific Northwest and Salt Lake City. In 1992 I was privileged to provide some minor editorial suggestions for a handsome volume that is now a collectors' item, Robert A. Clark and Patrick Brunet, *The Arthur H. Clark Company: Bibliography and History, 1902-1992* (Spokane, Wash.: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1993).

16. I did not meet Will Bagley until 1997; my first awareness of him was as a fellow commentator (filmed separately) for *The Tops of the Mountains: An Illustrated History of Utah*, a videotape produced in 1995 for the January 1996 centennial celebration of Utah statehood. Although over the decades it has become apparent that Will and I do not always share the same approach to Utah and Mormon history, I continue to admire his inquiring mind, ferocious dedication to research in unexploited primary sources, and generosity in sharing information.

17. LeRoy R. and Ann W. Hafen, eds., *The Utah Expedition, 1857-1858: A Documentary Account of the United States Military Movement under Colonel Albert Sidney Johnston, and the Resistance by Brigham Young and the Mormon Nauvoo Legion* (1958; rpt., Glendale, Calif.: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1982).

18. See press statement, May 31, 2005, by Dr. Philip F. Notarianni, director of Utah's Division of State History/Utah State Historical Society, and Michael W. Homer, Chair, Board of State History; Lee Davidson, "Historians Aim to Put 1857-58 Utah War in Spotlight," *Deseret Morning News*, April 27, 2006, <http://deseretnews.com/dn/print/1,422,635202903,00.html> (accessed April 27, 2006).

19. A typical such comment appeared in an email message from J. Curtis Fee in Chicago to MacKinnon, February 16, 2005: "I'll bet not one college graduate in a thousand even knows of its existence. I knew about it, to an embarrassing small degree."

20. There is a wide range in the quality and balance among the books

about Mountain Meadows, including the most recent ones. Of the twenty-first-century nonfiction treatments, the best researched and most thoughtful, provocative one is Will Bagley, *Blood of the Prophets: Brigham Young and the Massacre at Mountain Meadows* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002), which ranks with the earlier classic, Juanita L. Brooks, *The Mountain Meadows Massacre* (1950; 2d ed., Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962). Bagley's work is far above the quality of Sally Denton, *American Massacre: The Tragedy at Mountain Meadows, September 1857* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003). The most widely read account appears in Jon Krakauer, *Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith* (New York: Doubleday, 2003). Among the most eagerly awaited studies is Richard E. Turley Jr., Glen M. Leonard, and Ronald W. Walker, *Tragedy at Mountain Meadows* (New York: Oxford University Press, forthcoming). For an insightful review essay, see Turley, "Recent Mountain Meadows Publications: A Sampling," *Journal of Mormon History* 32 (Summer 2006): 213-25.

21. Jean H. Baker, *James Buchanan* (New York: Times Books/Henry Holt, 2004), 90-93.

22. Thirty years ago, I lamented this neglect in MacKinnon, "The Gap in the Buchanan Revival: The Utah Expedition of 1857-58," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 45 (Winter 1977): 36-46.

23. This image of Buchanan is implicit in the title of Ralph W. Hansen and Richard D. Poll, "Buchanan's Blunder: The Utah War, 1857-1858," *Military Affairs* 25 (Fall 1961): 121-31.

24. For a discussion of these post-1858 individual stories and societal forces as well as the sources through which they may be pursued in depth, see MacKinnon, "Epilogue to the Utah War: Impact and Legacy," *Journal of Mormon History* 29 (Fall 2003): 186-248.

25. James Buchanan, *Mr. Buchanan's Administration on the Eve of the Rebellion* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1866), 232-39; Winfield Scott, *Memoirs of Lieut.-General Scott, L.L.D., Written by Himself*, 2 vols. (New York: Sheldon & Co., 1864), 2:604.

26. In addition to Baker's *James Buchanan*, see Philip S. Klein, *President James Buchanan: A Biography* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1962); Elbert B. Smith, *The Presidency of James Buchanan* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1975).

27. In the absence of medals, the U.S. Army's brevet system—derived from the British Royal Army—was a means of extending honorific recognition to officers for acts of valor or for long and faithful service. Unless assigned to a specific duty (such as service on a court martial) in his brevet rank, the officer carried the title, wore the insignia, and received the pay of his



lower, regular rank, although as a courtesy he might be addressed informally by his higher, brevet grade. Colonel Albert Sidney Johnston became a brigadier general by brevet effective November 18, 1857, because of his effective leadership of the last stages of the Utah Expedition's march to Fort Bridger. In the spring of 1858, General Scott also nominated Captain Randolph B. Marcy to be brevetted major, but inexplicably no action was taken. In sharp contrast to this paucity of brevets, dozens of the Utah Expedition's officers had received brevet recognition during the Mexican War, and scores would be so recognized during the Civil War. The Nauvoo Legion had no brevet system, and the U.S. Army dropped its use of this confusing, problematic tradition late in the nineteenth century.

28. Frederick T. Wilson, *Federal Aid in Domestic Disturbances, 1797-1903*, 57th Cong., 2d Sess., 1903, Senate Doc. 209, 93-96; Robert W. Coakley, *The Role of Federal Military Forces in Domestic Disorders, 1789-1878* (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, 1988), 194-218.

29. See George F. Kennan, *The Decision to Intervene: Soviet-American Relations, 1917-1920*, 2 vols. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1958), second volume; Mark Ruotsila, "Senator William H. King and His Campaigns against Russian Communism, 1917-1933," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 74 (Spring 2006): 147-63.

30. MacKinnon, "125 Years of Conspiracy Theories: Origins of the Utah Expedition of 1857-58," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 52 (Summer 1984): 212-30.

31. Sherry L. Smith, "Re-searching the Army in the American West," *Western Historical Quarterly* 29 (Summer 1998): 149-63.

32. For example, the July 2006 Biennial Conference of Army Historians in Arlington, Virginia, cancelled because of governmental funding restrictions, was to have included a panel on the Utah War as part of its program "Terrorists, Partisans, and Guerrillas: The U.S. Army and Irregular Warfare." Two retired U.S. Army officers who are also Utahns—Colonel Robert Voyles and Lieutenant Colonel Sherman Fleek—have been vigorous and effective in moving their service toward a better awareness of the Utah War through their membership on the Utah War Sesquicentennial executive committee.

33. For a discussion of Utah War casualties, see the section titled "The Myth of a Bloodless Conflict." From this ambivalence about the conflict came Brigham Young's view of the Civil War as a non-Mormon fight, Utah's minimal involvement in that conflict, and decades of subsequent debate within the LDS Church's hierarchy about the wisdom of supporting the U.S. government's foreign military adventures. Ronald W. Walker, "Sheaves,



Bucklers, and the State: Mormon Leaders Respond to the Dilemmas of War," *Sunstone Review* 7 (July/August 1982): 43-56.

34. Scott's circular is in U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, *The Utah Expedition*, 35th Cong., 1st Sess., 1857-58, House Exec. Doc. 71, Serial 956, 4-5; Hafen and Hafen, eds., *The Utah Expedition*, 27-29.

35. I believe that the first such conflict was a physical one, significantly a clash involving a small detachment of U.S. troops (or their civilian packers) in transit to California and Salt Lake City constables following a rape attempt in late August 1849. Apostle George A. Smith, a colonel in the Nauvoo Legion, recalled this virtually unknown incident with much heat during the Utah War ten years later. E. Cecil McGavin, *U.S. Soldiers Invade Utah* (Boston: Meador Publishing, 1937), 236.

36. The most recent and complete discussion of this long list of pre-1857 secular and religious points of conflict appears in five works by David L. Bigler: *Forgotten Kingdom: The Mormon Theocracy in the American West, 1847-1896* (Spokane, Wash.: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1998), 1-199; *A Winter with the Mormons: The 1852 Letters of Jotham Goodell* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Tanner Trust, 2001), 1-19; "Sources of Conflict: Mormons and Their Neighbors, 1830-90," lecture delivered to the Salt Lake Theological Seminary, July 25, 2003, photocopy in my possession; "Theocracy Versus Republic: The Irrepressible Conflict," paper delivered at the Mormon History Association annual meeting, May 2006, Casper, Wyoming; and "A Lion in the Path: Genesis of the Utah War, 1857-58," keynote address, Utah State Historical Society annual meeting, September 2006, Salt Lake City; notes in my possession.

37. The precarious status of Brigham Young's continuance as governor once his four-year term expired in 1854 was discussed for years in the monthly correspondence between Young and Utah's territorial delegate in Washington, John M. Bernhisel. Brigham Young Collection, Archives, Family and Church History Department, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter LDS Church Archives). Young was acutely aware that he was, as the modernism goes, "on the bubble." Since he was never appointed to a second term, Young continued to serve as governor on a de facto month-to-month basis until a successor was qualified and sworn in. Technically, then, under the provisions of Utah's organic act of September 9, 1850, he was not overtly removed by Buchanan but left office automatically when Buchanan appointed Alfred Cumming, and Cumming, in turn, took the gubernatorial oath at Fort Bridger on November 21, 1857.

38. A classic case for the significance of these three letters appears in Leland Hargrave Creer, *Utah and the Nation* (Seattle: University of Washing-

ton Press, 1929), 117–26. For the match/powder keg metaphor, I am indebted to Leo V. Gordon and Richard Vetterli, *Powderkeg* (Novato, Calif.: Lyford Books, 1991), a novel about the Utah War. An even earlier use of this metaphor appears in Robert Richmond, "Some Western Editors View the Mormon War, 1857–1858," *Trail Guide* 8 (March 1963): 3.

39. This letter had been filed with State Department records because, in 1856, Secretary of State William L. Marcy bore administrative responsibility for most territorial affairs.

40. For an analysis of these documents, see MacKinnon, "The Buchanan Spoils System and the Utah Expedition." The juxtaposition of Magraw's letter and the 1856 presidential election is another example of the importance of understanding chronology in piecing together the Utah War story.

41. "Mr. Buchanan's Administration and Our Foreign and Domestic Affairs," *New York Herald*, March 17, 1857, p. 4, col. 3. Interestingly, this newspaper's publisher-editor, James Gordon Bennett, was an inactive brigadier general in the Nauvoo Legion.

42. Drummond, Letter to unspecified cabinet officer (presumably Attorney General Jeremiah S. Black), "Utah and Its Troubles . . .," March 19, 1857, dispatch from Washington, *New York Herald*, March 20, 1857, p. 4, col. 5.

43. "Memorial and Resolutions to the President of the United States, Concerning Certain Officers of the Territory of Utah" and "Memorial to the President of the United States," by the Utah Territory Legislative Assembly, January 6, 1857, holograph copies retained in Utah State Archives, Salt Lake City; Bernhisel, Letter to Young, April 2, 1857, Brigham Young Collection, LDS Church Archives. Fearful that uncontrolled political consequences might follow public awareness of such volatile material, the Buchanan administration suppressed it and advised Bernhisel not to publish the memorials. Consequently, neither Bernhisel nor the Buchanan administration ever submitted these documents to Congress, disregarding normal procedure and even the House of Representatives' subsequent special year-end demand that Buchanan produce all materials shedding light on the extent to which Utah was in a state of rebellion. This treatment was in marked contrast to the wide and immediate publicity given to the even more inflammatory memorial adopted by the legislative assembly a year later on January 6, 1858, and sent to the U.S. House of Representatives. A federal grand jury sitting at Camp Scott returned an indictment of treason against every man who signed the 1858 memorial. Bernhisel's April 2, 1857, report to Brigham Young remains unpublished. Bernhisel wrote it too late to be included in the April mail to Salt

Lake City, and so, ironically, this document traveled west in the same coach with Bernhisel a month later. The letter arrived at its destination on May 29, 1857, just after the governor's return from a five-week trek to Fort Limhi and the day following the release of General Scott's circular about the Utah Expedition. Bernhisel departed for Washington in September 1857, and Buchanan later complained that the doctor had been avoiding him.

44. John F. Kinney, Letter to Jeremiah S. Black, March 20, 1857, photocopy of holograph in my possession, together with the typed transcription, courtesy of Professor David H. Miller, Cameron University. This letter is marked "Confidential & Private" in a hand other than Kinney's. The only known published reference (but not the text) to this important document is a simple listing in the bibliography for James F. Varley, *Brigham and the Brigadier: General Patrick Connor and His California Volunteers in Utah and along the Overland Trail* (Tucson, Ariz.: Westernlore Press, 1989), 309. Kinney's relationship with the Mormons was highly ambivalent over an extended period of time. Starting in 1855 Brigham Young accurately suspected the judge of joining other disaffected federal appointees in writing anti-Mormon reports to Washington, behavior that Kinney vehemently denied while simultaneously courting Mormon approbation. Howard Lamar refers to Kinney during this period as "busily playing the double game of cooperating with the Mormons on the local level while bombarding Washington with secret strictures against Young." Lamar, *The Far Southwest*, 331; Michael W. Homer, "The Federal Bench and Priesthood Authority: The Rise and Fall of John Fitch Kinney's Early Relationship with the Mormons," *Journal of Mormon History* 13 (1986-87): 89-108.

45. With respect to violent rhetoric in apparent conflict with his gubernatorial responsibilities, see the text of Brigham Young's April 8, 1853, discourse, which vigorously advocated the summary execution (without trial) of thieves.

46. Fanny Stenhouse, wife of Mormon apostate-editor T. B. H. Stenhouse, makes this point about Brigham Young's governmental obligations *vis à vis* his actions in "Tell It All: The Story of a Life's Experience in Mormonism" (Hartford, Conn.: A. D. Worthington & Co., 1875), 309.

47. The texts for these three indictments are unpublished. They were quashed under unusual circumstances described in MacKinnon, "Epilogue to the Utah War," 245, note 134; Edwin Brown Firmage and Richard Collin Mangrum, *Zion in the Courts: A Legal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830-1900* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988) 138, 144-47.

48. On May 26, 1857, Scott wrote a memorandum to Secretary Floyd

advising against an expedition for Utah until 1858 because of the late season. In his memoirs, Buchanan denied being aware of this document. M. Hamlin Cannon, "Winfield Scott and the Utah Expedition," *Military Affairs* 5 (Fall 1941): 208-11.

49. John B. Floyd, Letter to Ben McCulloch, July 8, 1857, Records of the Secretary of War, Letters Sent (RG 107), National Archives, Washington, D.C.

50. After the war, Buchanan implied that face-to-face communications with Brigham Young might have averted the conflict, and Young argued that a north-south telegraph line in Utah could have prevented the Mountain Meadows Massacre. For an account of how the U.S. government and army used differing communications technology, including the reluctance of senior commanders to use the telegraph during 1856 to deal with civil disorders in Kansas Territory, see Tony R. Mullis, "The Dispersal of the Topeka Legislature: A Look at Command and Control (C-2) during Bleeding Kansas," *Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains* 27 (Spring-Summer 2004): 62-75.

51. Bigler, "Theocracy Versus Republic."

52. Beginning in January 1857 and through that spring, Buchanan suffered intermittently from a debilitating gastro-intestinal affliction acquired at Washington's National Hotel during a pre-inaugural visit to the capital. This serious disease took the life of the president's nephew-secretary and led to the temporary residence in the White House of U.S. Navy Surgeon Jonathan M. Foltz, Buchanan's physician-neighbor from Lancaster. At age sixty-six, Buchanan was then the nation's oldest president. Once in office, his stamina was further sapped by the crushing daily need to dispense the vast federal patronage. Charles S. Foltz, *Surgeon of the Seas: The Adventurous Life of Jonathan M. Foltz in the Days of Wooden Ships* (Indianapolis, Ind.: Bobbs-Merrill, 1931), 180-86; Kenneth R. Crispell, M.D., "Presidential Illness and the Course of History," paper delivered at the 1991 James Buchanan Bicentennial Conference, Lancaster and Carlisle, Pennsylvania; Crispell, "A Medical and Social History of President James Buchanan: Illness Followed His Crises," *Buchanan Banner*, Summer 1992, 8-9. Brigham Young's 1857 medical problems are more elusive and seemed to begin—as they frequently did during times of crisis—as an undiagnosed exhaustion that beset him immediately after the unexpected death on December 1, 1856, of Jedediah M. Grant, his indispensable second counselor. As indicated by reports in the *Deseret News*, this condition periodically kept President Young confined and absent from Sunday services throughout the winter of 1856-57. Nonetheless and significantly, in January he began planning what became an arduous, five-week trip to visit distant

Fort Limhi, the new LDS mission on Oregon's Salmon River, during April–May 1857. Lester E. Bush Jr., "Brigham Young in Life and Death: A Medical Overview," *Journal of Mormon History* 5 (1978): 79–103; David L. Bigler, *Fort Limhi: The Mormon Adventure in Oregon Territory, 1855–1858* (Spokane, Wash.: Arthur H. Clark Co., 2003), 131–60.

53. Bernhisel justified his departure from Washington at this critical juncture on grounds that Brigham Young had authorized him to return home once Congress adjourned in March 1857. However, Young had framed these instructions in 1856 without awareness of important events unfolding in Washington during the following spring. Compounding the Mormon lobbying vacuum created by Bernhisel's absence from the capital was Thomas L. Kane's distraction at the same time by combined personal and family crises that took him to the isolated mountains of western Pennsylvania. Kane, like Bernhisel and Young, was incommunicado during May 1857, a period important to Utah's future.

54. MacKinnon, "Utah Expedition, or Utah War," *New Encyclopedia of the American West*, 1149.

55. Dale E. Watts, "How Bloody Was Bleeding Kansas? Political Killings in Kansas Territory, 1854–1861," *Kansas History* 18 (Summer 1995): 116–29.

56. Interestingly, at the Bear River Massacre, U.S. Army General Connor used Mormon guides, including Orrin Porter Rockwell, who functioned as a civilian rather than as a Nauvoo Legion officer. Harold Schindler, "The Bear River Massacre: New Historical Evidence," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 67 (Fall 1999): 300–308.

57. I use *atrocious* here to mean violence by military forces—regulars and militia as well as their Indian auxiliaries—against noncombatants or unarmed prisoners.

58. For a discussion of violence in Utah during February–March 1857 on the eve of the Utah War, see the important new scholarship in Ardis E. Parshall, "'Pursue, Retake & Punish': The 1857 Santa Clara Ambush," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 73 (Winter 2005): 64–86 and Polly Aird, "'You Nasty Apostates, Clear Out': Reasons for Disaffection in the Late 1850s," *Journal of Mormon History* 30 (Fall 2004): 173–91. For a discussion of the myth of the Utah War as a bloodless conflict and an in-depth account of the casualties that occurred substantially north and soon after the Mountain Meadows Massacre, see MacKinnon, "'Lonely Bones': Leadership and Utah War Violence," *Journal of Mormon History* 33 (Spring 2007).

59. A description of the dynamics between collectors, benefactors, antiquarian booksellers, and curators, through which research libraries—Yale's

Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, the University of Michigan's William L. Clements Library, the Arizona Historical Society, and others—strengthen their collections appears in MacKinnon, "The Curator Retires from the Old Corral" and "Campaigns in the West, 1856–1861: A Review Essay," *Journal of Arizona History* 45 (Winter 2004): 395–406; William S. Reese, "The 1993 Pforzheimer Lecture Delivered at the New York Public Library," <http://www.reeseccom/papers/pforz.htm> (accessed June 3, 2004); Stephen Parks, ed., *The Beinecke Library of Yale University* (New Haven, Conn.: The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, 2003); John C. Dann, Arlene Shy, Barbara DeWolfe, and Brian Leigh Dunningan, "In Appreciation of Giving," *Quarto* 22 (Fall-Winter 2004): 1–14.

60. For an elaboration on the concept of Mormon history and the Utah War story as a western rather than primarily Utah phenomenon, see my "Thoughts Re Robert A. Clark and MHA Recognition," accompanying the presentation of a special citation to Robert A. Clark and the Arthur H. Clark Company at the Mormon History Association annual meeting, May 2006, Casper, Wyoming.

61. I refer to Second Lieutenant Robert L. Browning, the U.S. Marine Corps' one-man contribution to the Utah War. For the chain of events leading to discovery of his unusual role in an otherwise all-army campaign, see MacKinnon, "Epilogue to the Utah War," 219.

62. MacKinnon, "'Unquestionably Authentic and Correct in Every Detail': Probing John I. Ginn and His Remarkable Utah War Story," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 72 (Fall 2004): 322–42.

63. Marie Pinney, "Charles Becker, Pony Express Rider and Oregon Pioneer," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 67 (September 1966): 213–56; "Statement of the Soldier Taken Prisoner by the Mormons," *Sun* (Pittsfield, Mass.), March 25, 1857, [http://infoweb.newsbank.com/in-seach/we/HistArchive?P\\_action=doc&s\\_lastnonissuequeryna...](http://infoweb.newsbank.com/in-seach/we/HistArchive?P_action=doc&s_lastnonissuequeryna...) (accessed June 22, 2006).

64. The anonymously authored *Mormoniad* was a 100-page epic satire (Boston: A. Williams & Co., summer 1858) that lampooned both President Buchanan's and Brigham Young's involvement in the Utah War.

65. See Ardis E. Parshall, "Who, What, Where, When, Why: A Utah War Primer," Paper presented at the Utah State Historical Society annual meeting, September 2006, Salt Lake City, photocopy in my possession.

66. My view on the interactions associated with historians and their work differs substantially from the summary description of historians ("often socially inept, more comfortable with the dead than the living") in Carol Berkin, "So You Want to Be in Pictures? Tips from a Talking Head," *OAH Newsletter* 33 (February 2005): 1, 10.



67. MacKinnon meeting with Bagley, October 26, 2002. This discussion prompted Bagley, with typical generosity, to share with me a typescript photocopy of Lemuel Fillmore's diary, January 1–August 10, 1858, made from Fillmore's shorthand notes, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming, Laramie.

68. I refer to the journal of Nauvoo Legionnaire Peter Sinclair (holograph for 1856–62, 1874, 1881 at LDS Church Archives) and its seductively appealing account of the scene at Big Cottonwood Canyon's Silver Lake on July 24, 1857, when news of the Utah Expedition's launch was confirmed. Whether the Sinclair journal is authentic or bogus is clouded by its passage through Mark Hofmann's hands, a provenance factor about which LDS Church Archives' catalogue entry properly alerts the reader. Because of this murkiness, I have bypassed Sinclair as a source.

69. For the only roster of the enlisted men and guides (but not packers) who accompanied Marcy to New Mexico, see Special Orders No. 50, November 24, 1857, Headquarters, Army of Utah, Camp Scott, photocopy in my possession; David H. Wallace, Old Military and Service Records, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Letter to MacKinnon, January 28, 2002; H. H. McConnell, *Five Years a Cavalryman, or, Sketches of Regular Army Life on the Texas Frontier, 1866–1871* (1889; rpt., Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), 150–55; Randolph B. Marcy, *Thirty Years of Army Life on the Border* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1866), 224–75.

70. "Narrative of James Sweeney," 1921, typescript, Special Collections, Library, North Dakota State University, Fargo; photocopy in Special Collections, Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City; T. Juliette Arai (National Archives), Letter to MacKinnon, April 11, 2006. Donald R. Moorman with Gene A. Sessions, *Camp Floyd and the Mormons: The Utah War* (1992; rpt., Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2005), 152, uncritically accepts Sweeney's tempting story.

71. All of these findings will be discussed with related documentation in *At Sword's Point*.

72. Andrew Garcia, *Tough Trip through Paradise, 1878–1879*, edited by Bennett H. Stein (1967; rpt., Moscow: University of Idaho Press, 2001).

73. Linda Greenhouse, "Correspondence/The Blackmun Papers; At a Shrine of American Documents, Pathos, Poetry, and Blackmun's 'Rosebud,'" *New York Times*, March 7, 2004, sect. 4, p. 7, col. 1.