"Who's in Charge Here?": Utah Expedition Command Ambiguity

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"We want a general to command the Utah Expedition." –Brevet Lieutenant General Winfield Scott to Brevet Major General John E. Wool, January 13, 1858.

"General Scott yields to the prayers of the Administration and has made up his mind to go to California, there to organize a campaign against Utah." –George Templeton Strong, Diary, January 25, 1858

"Has it ever occurred to your Excellency that neither ignorance or imbecility, but a settled plan to defeat and confuse your administration are the motives of such conduct [by General Scott]?"–Brevet Brigadier General William S. Harney to President James Buchanan, January 30, 1858

Many Utahns may call the Utah War of 1857–58 "Johnston's Army," but the U.S. Army and most historians surely do not. It seems to me that this shorthand label for the war trivializes, personalizes, and localizes it, much as the term "Seward's Folly" was used to deride the secretary of state's 1867 push to purchase Alaska.[1] By focusing on Colonel Albert Sidney Johnston–or at least on his name–this label's users have, in effect, taken his Utah

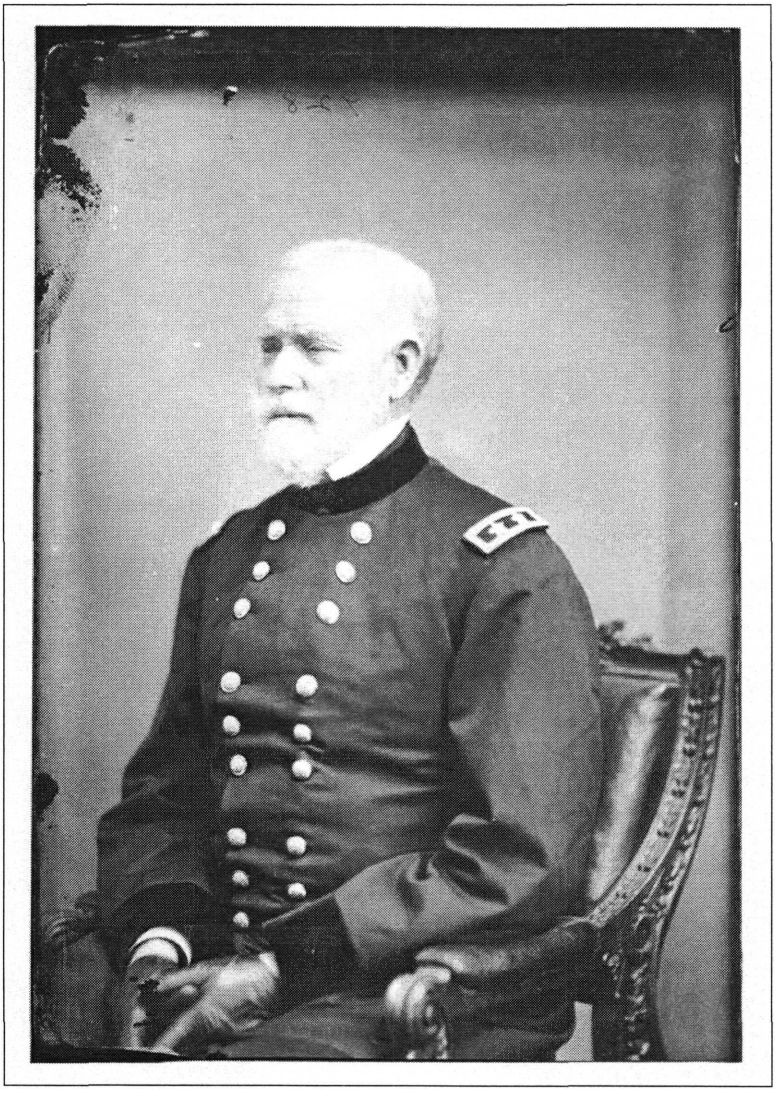
War leadership for granted.[2] They should not, for Johnston was hardly the Buchanan administration's first choice for this role; and once appointed, he almost lost the command—repeatedly. What has been missing for the past 150 years, then, is an awareness that, throughout this unprecedented territorial-federal conflicts there was anything but inevitability or even clarity as to which U.S. Army officer bore overall command responsibility for the Utah Expedition and with what understandings. With the sesquicentennial commemoration of the Utah War completed and that for the related Civil War in the planning stage, the purpose of this article is to probe the character and destructive impact of this poorly understood ambiguity of command. It does so by analyzing a series of heretofore unexploited documents shedding new light on the plans and behavior of the army's most senior leaders.

Because this was a murky, shifting command scene far different than the orderly, hierarchical atmosphere atop the army's adversary—the Nauvoo Legion—it is appropriate to start this examination with a few summary comments about the U.S. Army and the atmosphere in which its senior officers functioned. When James Buchanan assumed the presidency on March 4, 1857, he became commander in chief of an army of about 14,000 enlistees led by 1,000 officers. For a variety of reasons including the army's static size and the absence of a retirement system, its officer corps was seriously overage and underpromoted.[3] Compounding these problems of age and lack of advancement were additional negative forces such as sectional tensions, the chivalric code, separation from family, proximity to professional rivals, and intimacy with immigrant soldiers with whom they had little in common—even language. Importantly, many of Buchanan's military officers had severe physical or psychological problems aggravated by years of rugged, isolated frontier campaigning and an over-reliance on alcohol to relieve boredom. This dysfunction spawned what by today's standards are some very strange behaviors, characterized by an endless round of conflicts—some decades long—among hypersensitive officers jealous of their prerogatives and seniority. The result was a series of courts-martial, courts of inquiry, duels, and feuds that escalated from minor incidents and at times threatened to disrupt army operations, including those of the Utah Expedition.[4]

Brevet Lieutenant General Winfield Scott (1786–1866), the U.S. Army's general in chief. From his self-exile in New York, "Old Fuss and Feathers" resisted pressures to reinforce the Utah Expedition with Pacific Coast volunteers while trying simultaneously to promote and secretly supersede Colonel Johnston. Photograph courtesy U.S. Military Academy Library, West Point.

Heading this hierarchy were five aged, ailing general officers and a series of secretaries of war who instead of moderating these disruptive behaviors tended to tolerate or even aggravate them by their own contentiousness and self-indulgent lack of emotional control. When Buchanan became commander in chief he inherited a general in chief in the person of a 300-pound, virtually immobile Brevet Lieutenant General Winfield Scott, age seventy, who as a twenty-four-year-old captain in 1810, had been court-martialed and suspended from duty for a year for disrespect to his commanding officer. Subsequently promoted repeatedly and self-armed with a law license, Scott became involved in one internal army fight after another that carried through the Mexican War and beyond. In March 1857 General Scott's headquarters were not in Washington, D.C., but in two rented rooms in New York, a distant location where he had moved unilaterally in a fit of pique during the late 1840s following the presidential election of his Mexican War rival, General Zachary Taylor.[5] By the eve of the Utah War, all of the army's general officers—influenced by both Scott's behavior and his success—had been tried by court-martial, relieved of command, or investigated by courts of inquiry at least once, as had most of the twenty line colonels who were regimental commanders.[6]

No better illustration can be found of the pervasiveness of disciplinary problems and the impact of negative leadership by example in the antebellum army than in the case of the Utah Expedition's swaggering Second U.S. Dragoons. For years the regiment's first commander, David E. Twiggs, and his executive officer, William S. Harney, served together—a symbiotic relationship at close quarters that spawned a military record rich with personal valor but also extraordinary legal proceedings. Proximity to this contentious behavior influenced, in turn, the command style of their next most senior subordinate, Philip St. George Cooke, who attempted unsuccessfully to court-martial alcoholic Brevet Major Henry Hopkins Sibley on the eve of the Utah War and succeeded in doing so a year later at Camp Floyd, Utah. Even as Cooke and his dragoons paused at Fort Laramie in the fall of 1857 during what would become the longest cold weather march in American military history, he pelted Secretary of War John B. Floyd with an aggressive, almost insubordinate petition, urging



Brevet Brigadier General William S. Harney (1800–1889), Scott's antagonist and the Utah Expedition's first commander (1857), replaced by Albert Sidney Johnston, and even more briefly superseding him (1858). He appears here in his uniform as a major general, promoted in 1865. Mathew Brady photo, courtesy Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

reform in the promotional system for officers in the mounted service. This document was subsequently endorsed by Generals Harney and Scott during a pause in their own long-standing vendetta.[7]

Given this quirky, highly uneven talent pool from which to choose, how did Buchanan and Floyd select a commander for the Utah Expedition? The number of officers with the requisite stamina, experience, judgment, rank, and availability was extremely small. The range of choice in the spring of 1857 was essentially the same narrow one available to the administration less than a year later when it contemplated a campaign against Indians in the Pacific Northwest. At that time Floyd told Buchanan, "Harney is really the only general officer—[Albert Sidney] Johnston alone excepted—who has the physical capacity to conduct such a campaign as this."[8] And so the Utah command fell to Harney in late May 1857 when the administration firmed up the decision to intervene in Utah with 2,500 troops drawn from the Fifth and Tenth Infantry, the Fourth Artillery, the Second Dragoons, and the Ordnance Department.[9]

At least four problems were associated with this narrowly based selection decision. First, Harney was temperamentally and behaviorally ill-suited for such an assignment. This volatile, sensitive mission required consummate good judgment if not diplomatic skills, but the administration selected for command a brevet brigadier general who had been court-martialed four times for various behavioral infractions and tried a fifth time in civil court for torturing and then bludgeoning to death a defenseless female slave. Small wonder that, during the plains campaigns, whites had dubbed Harney "Squaw Killer" while one Sioux chief called him "Mad Bear."[10] Compounding this reputational baggage was Harney's propensity to engage in bellicose, loose talk, including his boast that he intended to winter in Salt Lake City after summarily hanging the principal Mormon leaders.[11] Here was the source of corrosive garrison banter that cascaded down into the ranks while at the same time traveling west to stiffen needlessly Brigham Young's resolve that Harney and the Utah Expedition should not cross the Continental Divide into Utah.[12]

The second problem with Harney's selection was that Buchanan had already promised Robert J. Walker, the new governor

of Kansas Territory, that Harney and his Second Dragoons would be available to Walker to maintain order in strife-torn ("bleeding") Kansas. How Buchanan thought that he could juggle both missions for Harney—1,200 miles apart—is murky. On July 12 Buchanan secretly confided to Governor Walker (but not to General Scott), "General Harney has been selected to command the expedition to Utah, but we must continue to leave him with you, at least until you are out of the woods. Kansas is vastly more important at the present moment than Utah."[13]

The third complication associated with Harney's Utah appointment was that, once made, it was not finalized and communicated for another month for political reasons, an extraordinary delay aggravating the fact that the internal army announcement on May 28 of an expeditionary force for Utah was already two months late according to the inexorable timetable of grass, weather, and distance that governed travel and preparations for warfare on the high plains and in the Rockies. Finally, on June 29, 1857, Harney's role and crucial operational orders were confirmed and released to him.[14]

Permeating all of these machinations was a fourth complexity—a long vendetta between Scott and Harney that stemmed back to their clash during the Mexican War. During the summer of 1857, this Scott-Harney enmity played out in a series of acrimonious interactions in which Harney chose to deal directly with President Buchanan and Secretary Floyd to organize the Utah Expedition while a by-passed General Scott fumed in New York and pelted Harney with disapproving admonitions transmitted through his aides.[15]

Even as the Utah Expedition's regiments marched west from Fort Leavenworth during the third week of July, it was unclear whether their commander, Harney, would remain in Kansas to do Governor Walker's bidding or leave Kansas to take the field with his Utah-bound expeditionary force. Presciently, one of Harney's young officers had informed his father in New Jersey that Walker "is an able man, I have no doubt:—but he has no conception of the task he has undertaken to perform. No Governor, not even the archangel Michael, could give satisfaction to all parties here."[16] And so as the violence and chaos in Kansas escalated, Walker

clung tighter to Harney while continuing to pressure the administration for his retention.

Snared in this dilemma, for which he shared responsibility, Secretary Floyd ordered Colonel Albert Sidney Johnston to Washington from San Antonio in early August for consultations of an unspecified nature. Sensing a competitor and change in the wind, and anxious that he not miss the action and presumed glory in Utah, Harney again bypassed both Winfield Scott and Governor Walker to lobby Floyd on August 8 for his release from Kansas duty. As a rationale, Harney argued mendaciously that Kansas was under control and accurately that the Utah Expedition's subordinate leaders needed a seasoned commander:

> My presence is at this time so necessary to the troops en route [to Utah]—that I am constrained to speak to you [about] . . . my early release from the service in Kansas—everything here is quiet, nor is there any probability that I shall be needed. The commanders here are discreet & well disposed to co-operate with the Government and they are equal to any emergency that can occur here—but with the troops marching on Utah it is not so—the service is new to the commanders as well as the troops, & my knowledge & experience of that country will do much towards smoothing the way upon their arrival, to a correct & proper understanding with the [Mormon] people, among whom they are to serve—I can start the 1st week in September & overtake them, having everything in readiness to do so, at a moment's notice from yourself.[17]

With Johnston traveling to Washington under cryptic, ambiguous orders and Harney pressing for reassignment, indecision racked the administration throughout much of the month. When Johnston arrived in Washington, D.C., around August 26, 1857, he wrote to his brother-in-law in Louisville, "I do not think it is definitely determined whether to send me in command of the Utah army or to Kansas. I am ready and more than willing for either, but prefer the former, it being a separate *command* & more permanent. Genl. Scott arrived [from New York] yesterday & I presume I will know my destination tomorrow."[18] On August 28, General Scott's adjutant informed Johnston that he had been selected for Utah, and the next day a general order issued by the War Department announced: "It being deemed inadvisable to detach Brevet Brigadier General Harney from service in Kansas, Colonel A. S. Johnston, Second Cavalry, is assigned to the com-

Albert Sidney Johnston (1803–62) became the Utah Expedition's second commander as a colonel in August 1857 and, notwithstanding the ambiguous, precarious nature of his senior leadership role, was promoted retroactively to brevet brigadier general in March 1858 just before being subordinated to Generals P. F. Smith and W. S. Harney. Courtesy, Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Library.

mand of the Utah expedition, and will proceed to join the same without delay."[19]

How had Albert Sidney Johnston been selected? Because he was hardly the most senior regimental colonel in the service, Johnston's out-of-line selection spawned army speculation that he was politically connected to President Buchanan, just as his 1855 appointment to command the new Second U.S. Cavalry had been viewed by rivals as attributable to fellow-southerner Jefferson Davis, then U.S. Secretary of War. There were varying perceptions among army officers about Johnston's seniority and eligibility for promotion/command because of a fifteen-year gap in his U.S. Army service; he had spent that time serving the Republic of Texas as President Sam Houston's secretary of war and as a general in the Texas army. By way of rebuttal, and probably with an eye to newspaper publication of his letter, Johnston later wrote to a friend about the Utah command:

> If I were much of a favorite it would very naturally be supposed that I was personally known to the party whose patronage I am supposed to enjoy. It so happens that I have never had the opportunity to be introduced to the President, and of course have never spoken to him, and am personally unknown to him. I was called to the command of this department, I understand, at the request of the commander [general]-in-chief. The command was unsolicited by me, and not desirable on account of the inconvenience to my family and the unprotected situation in which I was obliged to leave them. The notice was sudden and unexpected; and moreover, I was sick and in need of surgical aid; the notice, however, was promptly responded to.[20]

By September 11 Johnston—sick or not—had arrived at Fort Leavenworth. There he was briefed by Harney and received for the first time a copy of Harney's crucial operational orders from Scott of June 29, a document with which his regimental commanders already on the plains were surprisingly unfamiliar. There, too, Johnston first met Alfred Cumming, the newly appointed successor to Brigham Young. When Cumming declined Johnston's invitation to travel west with him and a small, fast-moving escort of dragoons, Johnston, miffed, relegated the 400-pound Cumming to the expedition's rear guard. The colonel pushed on urgently from Leavenworth on September 17 in an at-

tempt to catch up with his new command, but did not succeed in reaching all of it until November 3.

It is unlikely that, after the poor start to their relationship, Johnston and Cumming communicated well enough at Fort Leavenworth to recognize the fundamental conflicts in the orders each had received from the Buchanan administration. (These orders had been drafted independently a month apart by overlapping offices; Buchanan was a common member on the drafting committees in both the War and State departments.) In these disconnects lay a nightmarish operational dilemma that would later complicate the role of the Utah Expedition's commander as well as that of the governor he was expected to escort and support.[21]

As a result of this bizarre chain of events, the army expedition established to escort a new governor for Utah had marched out of Fort Leavenworth without him—in fact, unaware of who or where he was. Furthermore, the expedition was under the misimpression that General Harney (who was also not with them) was still its overall commander, functioning under operational orders completely unknown to the troops in the field.

Compounding these miscommunications was the unwillingness of the expedition's senior officer present—Colonel Edmund B. Alexander of the Tenth Infantry—to act as de facto commander on the trail. Alexander's reluctance to assume responsibility in effect rendered the expedition leaderless and consequently vulnerable to attack as its units marched west as uncoordinated regiments and batteries. On October 8 at Hams Fork west of South Pass, as his frustrated officers virtually forced him to assume ad hoc command, Colonel Alexander plaintively informed his subordinates: "No information of the position or intentions of the commanding officer has reached me, and I am in utter ignorance of the objects of the government in sending troops here, or the instructions for their conduct after reaching here."[22] When Johnston—more than a hundred miles to Alexander's rear—became aware of Alexander's comments ten days later, he testily reported to army headquarters: "Colonel Alexander questions, by the hesitation with which he assumes them, his right to exercise fully all the duties of commander. His authority to exercise them without restriction is clearly granted by the sixty-second article of war.

Moreover, General Orders No. 12, headquarters of the army, specially directs who shall command in the absence of General Harney, or, to be inferred, any other named commander [himself], and sufficiently explains the objects of the expedition."[23] Three weeks earlier on October 2, Alexander had responded to a cheeky demand from Brigham Young that he leave Utah (the army was just within its northeastern boundary) or lay down his arms with a weak rebuttal and vague allusion to the expedition's command arrangement: "I am at present the senior and commanding officer of the troops of the United States at this point, and I will submit your letter to the general commanding as soon as he arrives here."[24]

The sorry spectacle that unfolded while Johnston moved west—including the shocking Lot Smith raid of October 4–5 on the expedition's supply trains, just two days after Alexander's feeble response—is well known and need not be rehashed here.[25] With Johnston on the scene at Hams Fork a full month later on November 3, a much-relieved Colonel Alexander returned to his less responsible regimental command. Finally, it was clear to the troops and their officers, if not to Brigham Young, that a mature, experienced, and determined leader was at last present and in charge. In Brigham Young's case, although Mormon intelligence agents returning from the plains had brought him informal reports in mid-September that a Colonel "Johnson" was replacing Harney, for several more weeks until at least early October Young continued to refer to Harney as the Utah Expedition's commander, perhaps for shock effect associated with the general's reputation for brutality. Compounding the confusion over which officer held what command was the fact that, during the summer of 1857, Lieutenant Colonel Joseph E. Johnston, executive officer of the First U.S. Cavalry—Albert Sidney Johnston's sister regiment—was also in the field (though in Kansas) to protect the party surveying that territory's southern boundary.

But even as the Utah Expedition struggled up Blacks Fork in blizzards toward Fort Bridger during the first half of November, and then settled into winter quarters at that post, the War Department was initiating plans to reinforce the Utah Expedition from the Pacific Coast. These plans would call into question again the

overall leadership for the campaign—the matter of who was in charge of it.

The notion of reinforcing the Utah Expedition from California and perhaps Oregon Territory had started with Alexander and Johnston in October—before Johnston had caught up with his expedition. After the Lot Smith raid, both officers had independently sent reports east suggesting a pincers strategy featuring a thrust from the Pacific Coast. Emblematic of the U.S. Army's bifurcation at its top was the fact that Alexander sent his report and recommendations to Colonel Samuel Cooper in Washington, D.C., the adjutant general who worked in close concert with Secretary of War Floyd, while Johnston wrote to New York and Major Irvin McDowell, one of General Scott's trusted assistant adjutants.[26] These October reports arrived on the Atlantic Coast in mid-November at about the same time that a national alarm arose over the Utah Expedition's prospects for success. Scott tried to defuse a resulting call to attack Utah from the Pacific Coast by having his aide send Johnston's report to Floyd with the following cautionary note: "As to the expeditions from the Pacific, he [Scott] is confident the Colonel is not aware of the difficulties which would attend them,—and this part of the dispatch is not concurred in, as it is the opinion of the Genl-in-Chief that he can be reinforced earlier and far more effectually from this side."[27]

But Floyd rejected this caution and pushed plans for a thrust from the Pacific. On November 24—the day a Chicago newspaper described him as "worried"—he sought advice on how to prosecute the Utah War from one of Scott's senior subordinates, Brevet Major General Persifor F. Smith, commander of the Department of the West. Smith, then in Washington seeking medical treatment for an undisclosed condition, immediately responded to Floyd's question with a lengthy memo that, stunningly, recommended reinforcements for the Utah Expedition totaling 15,000 men—a force equal to the size of the entire U.S. Army. As Smith saw it, these reinforcements would move on Utah in three columns: one each from Kansas, California, and Oregon. Smith left unaddressed the important, politically volatile matter of the overall command structure for this force and how it would mesh with the already existing Utah Expedition commanded by Johnston, although he did envision the army's need for several more major

generals. That rank was far senior to Johnston's current grade as colonel.[28]

As word of Smith's extraordinary advice leaked into the newspapers, Harney became aware of it at Fort Leavenworth. He entered the fray immediately with a memo of his own—this one sent directly to President Buchanan, who was then attempting to determine what he would say to Congress about Utah when its members returned to Washington a week later in early December.[29] Harney's recommendations of November 29 were slightly more modest in scale than Smith's, but nonetheless involved an enormous force of eight to ten thousand men. Harney assumed that he would receive the overall command and wrote fawningly to Buchanan: "[My adjutant] Captain Pleasonton has told me of the kind feelings you entertain for me, and that you are disposed to entrust the command of this expedition to my judgment.—I can only now thank you for this evidence of your confidence, but I hope the result will show how earnest & sincere are my feelings of admiration, esteem & friendship for you, both personally & as the distinguished head of this great nation."[30]

It is unclear whether Smith and Harney shared their provocative views with Scott, their superior, or even whether the recipients—Floyd and Buchanan—did so. By December 8, when Buchanan sent both his first annual message and Floyd's first annual report to Congress, both leaders were mindful of the financial panic that had disrupted the nation's economy since late summer. Accordingly they modified Smith's and Harney's gargantuan projections to a still-substantial request for four additional regiments for the Utah War—about 4,000 men. They left unstated such crucial issues as whether these new troops for Utah would be regulars or volunteers, who their expeditionary commander would be, and whether they would reinforce the Utah Expedition, now in winter quarters at Fort Bridger, from the east or the west. Reflecting the extent to which General Scott had been subordinated, if not muzzled, by Buchanan and Floyd, his own year-end report of the army's condition and activities for 1857, submitted to Floyd incredibly failed to mention the Utah Expedition in any way, a stunning omission.[31]

Although Scott was opposed to both a Pacific thrust against Utah and the use of volunteer troops from California and Oregon

Brevet Major General John E. Wool (1784–1869), commander of the Department of the East in Troy, New York, to whom Scott secretly offered command of a reinforced Utah Expedition on January 13, 1858. Courtesy, New York State Library, Albany.

Territory, he nonetheless took seriously the need to reinforce the Utah Expedition from Kansas. By the New Year–just as Colonel Johnston was learning of Brigham Young's dramatic plans to reinforce the Nauvoo Legion with a new "Standing Army" of one or two thousand men–Scott was preparing to act. On January 8, he informed the army that, "with the approbation of the War Department . . . the Army of Utah will be reinforced, as soon as practicable [in the spring], by the 1st Regiment of Cavalry, 6th and 7th Regiments of Infantry, and Light Companies A. and M., 2d Artillery." Directionally, Scott's order referred to this move as "the march of the reinforcement[s] across the plains." He appears to have ignored the other proposals afoot: a Pacific-based movement into Utah, use of volunteer troops, and an implied change in command. A week later, the general in chief ordered troops from two more regular units to join the Utah Expedition. They came from the widely separated posts of Fort Leavenworth, Kansas (Companies B and K of the Second Dragoons) and West Point, New York (Company A from the U.S. Engineers).[32]

But soon thereafter during the second week of January 1858, Scott's Utah War planning took a bizarre turn. Understanding what happened, given the labyrinth of rapid changes in direction, requires close attention to the sequence of events that unfolded in Washington, Manhattan, and Troy, New York. On January 13, Scott, then briefly in Washington, sent Brevet Major General John E. Wool the following telegram: "WE WANT A GENERAL TO COMMAND THE UTAH EXPEDITION. WHAT SAY YOU OR WHO DO YOU RECOMMEND."[33] Whatever prompted Scott to risk sending such a volatile message by public telegraph service must have been terribly urgent since mail, if not courier, service between Washington and Troy (better in 1858 than now) often provided overnight or, at most, two-day delivery. Intriguingly, there is no evidence that Scott's superiors in the War Department and the White House–let alone Johnston at Camp Scott–were aware that he was making such an overture to Wool, although Scott's temporary location in Washington and use of "we" in his wire makes it difficult to believe that he was acting unilaterally.

From Troy, General Wool replied promptly by telegram on January 15, the text of which signaled his uncertainty as to who

was behind this unexpected offer: "IF IT IS YOUR DESIRE OR THAT OF THE ADMINISTRATION I WILL WITH PLEASURE TAKE COMMAND OF THE UTAH EXPEDITION. SEE MY LETTER BY MAIL. PLEASE ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT."[34] He followed up the same day with a letter to Scott which repeated the text of his wire and raised the inescapable matter of Albert Sidney Johnston's sensitivities—and those of even more senior officers—as well as some concerns of his own:

> The command may be one of great hardship and difficult of execution. In saying this much I would not be understood to express any desire whatever to supersede the present gallant and very capable officer in command of the expedition, nor would I by any means be understood to say that Bvt. Major General Twiggs or Bvt. Maj. General Smith are not equal and perhaps more capable of executing the important duties which would devolve upon them than myself.
>
> If it should be determined to select me for the command, it may not be improper to say that before the order is issued or before I enter upon the important duties indicated, I would be much pleased to confer with the Lieut. General on the subject. At the same time to ask for the time necessary to settle my [San Francisco] accounts with the Government. . . . These [arrearages] I would have [to arrange for them to be] cancelled before I again enter upon a distant and hazardous command.[35]

Scott's offer of such an assignment to Wool is puzzling. Granted, Wool was among the army's most senior officers and had known Scott since the War of 1812, although Scott's biographer observes that the two were not close friends. Furthermore Wool was seventy-three and had been recently relieved as commander of the Department of the Pacific because of acrimonious clashes with Pacific Coast governors and then-Secretary of War Jefferson Davis over the Indian campaigns of 1855–56 in Washington, Oregon, and California and his reluctance to use volunteer troops. In fact Wool's early 1857 reassignment from San Francisco to command the Department of the East, with headquarters in Troy, had been a political accommodation to save his career.[36] These background factors made the possibility of a Utah War assignment for Wool truly mystifying.

From a twenty-first century perspective, Scott's telegram—implying an arrangement to supersede Albert Sidney Johnston with a controversial and over-age officer—would ordinarily suggest

deep anxieties about Johnston's competence plus serious concerns over some combination of the growing complexity of the Utah Expedition's next organizational phase and/or the lack of other available talent of appropriate rank for such a difficult assignment. In view of Scott's well-known respect for Johnston, it is highly unlikely that his proffer of the Utah command to Wool reflected a negative view of Johnston's capabilities. On the contrary, on January 19, 1858, one of Scott's assistant adjutants general, Major Irvin McDowell, sent Johnston a private note leaking the news that the general in chief would soon seek Johnston's promotion to brevet brigadier general.[37]

On January 23, 1858, a week after the first exchange of messages between Scott and Wool, Wool sent Scott another memorandum dealing with the Utah campaign.[38] Strangely, it lacked any hint that Wool had been offered and tentatively accepted a major role in the Utah War. It was as though both generals had agreed to ignore Scott's invitation and Wool's sympatico answer. Thus, Scott's proposal that Wool should command a Utah campaign, expanded in both size and scope, died a quick and quiet death. The paper trail shedding light on this affair ends with Wool's puzzlingly detached January 23 letter to Scott, and neither leaked documents nor contemporaneous newspaper speculation dealing with the Utah campaign offer further illumination.

With Wool no longer a prospect for higher command and Johnston not yet nominated to be a brigadier, Scott resolved to go west himself. On January 23, 1858—ten days after Scott had broached the Wool gambit and the same day that Wool wrote his second Utah War memorandum—Scott's aide abruptly wrote to Johnston: "The General-in-chief himself, will set sail for the Pacific Coast, in the steamer of the 5th proximo [February], clothed with full powers for an effective diversion or cooperation, in your favor, from that quarter. It is not desired, however, that this information shall modify the instructions heretofore given you, in any degree, or delay your movements."[39] It was a remarkable announcement, given Scott's age, medical problems, and general immobility. As recently as September, Scott had told Wool that he did not anticipate a period of sufficiently robust health in the foreseeable future to permit traveling the mere one hundred

miles up the Hudson River by rail or steamer to visit Wool's department headquarters in Troy, New York.[40]

Almost certainly, Scott was responding to Floyd's prodding. Evidence for this conclusion comes from the January 25 diary entry of Manhattan lawyer George Templeton Strong, one of the town's inveterate gossips whose information came indirectly from the general's daughter and her husband, Scott's aide de camp. To Strong, such a journey was a virtual death sentence for the aging, ailing General Scott: "General Scott yields to the prayers of the Administration and has made up his mind to go to California, there to organize a campaign against Utah. So his daughter . . . reports to Murray Hoffman. The General is a grand old fellow, too old for the fatigue and exposure of such an expedition. It's not likely he will ever return. We must get up a graven image of him on the other side of Union Square to balance Colonel Jem Lee's copper Washington."[41]

No doubt aware of Scott's plans, and plagued by his own ambition, Harney wrote emotionally to Buchanan from Fort Leavenworth, criticizing Scott's leadership and loyalty in terms that were both insubordinate and ruthless. Although Harney never mentioned Albert Sidney Johnston by name, his transparent self-promotion was loaded with negative implications for both Johnston's future command responsibilities and Scott's:

> I believe your Excellency has confidence in the sincerity of my friendship, and in this belief, I deem it my duty to state some facts which you should be advised of. This I would have done last summer, but a desire not to annoy, if possible, restrained me from so doing.
>
> An ill-will of long standing towards myself on the part of Gen. Scott, has caused him to attempt, upon every occasion, he could turn to his purpose, to defeat any operation with which I have been charged—at the same time, his orders are studied to mortify and lower me in the estimation of the army and my friends in civil life—Personally, I care nothing for this, but as the interests with which I have been lately charged, are of the utmost importance to the successful administration of the affairs of the country, and as Gen. Scott[']s prejudices have always been too strong for an impartial consideration of any subject in which his prejudices are involved, I most earnestly call your Excellency[']s attention to Gen Scott[']s course of conduct since the commencement of your administration.
>
> . . .

From the commencement of the Utah Expedition, to the present time, he has opposed or ignored every useful suggestion I have made to him and his own plans are so faulty, I assume very little, in predicting a decided failure, should they be attempted to be carried out.

He is sending Cavalry to act in a mountainous country where the expense of supporting them render their efficiency an impossibility, and places a fine Regt of foot troops in depot on the plains, to be laughed at by mounted Indians.[12]

Has it ever occurred to your Excellency that neither ignorance or imbecility, but a settled plan to defeat and confuse your administration are the motives of such conduct?

Whoever you may be pleased to send to Utah, let him throw his reputation and his life upon the die, but give him the sole responsibility of his actions. The campaign to Utah cannot be planned in Washington or New York— . . .

Your Excellency is very popular in the army and it is due to the feeling that your rectitude of character will not permit injustice to be done to any one—

Persons in exalted positions, seldom hear the unvarnished truth.

I have spoken plainly to your Excellency—my sincere desire is to serve you to the best of my humble abilities, & not the least of this service is to tell you of your true friends, & to point out the disagreeable ones.[13]

Less than a week after Harney wrote this remarkable letter to the president, Scott cancelled his travel plans. On February 4, the literal eve of Scott's earlier announced departure for the West, his aide wrote to Johnston: "I am desired by the General-in-Chief to inform you that it is no longer probable that he will go to the Pacific Coast, or that any expedition against or towards Utah will be despatched from that quarter."[44] There was no further explanation of this change.

John M. Bernhisel, Utah Territory's delegate in Congress, reported in mid-February to Brigham Young but was equally terse and unenlightening about these machinations. After noting that "I have had several interviews with the President and Secretary of War, and have been for sometime laboring [unsuccessfully] to procure an amicable adjustment of the Utah difficulties," Bernhisel commented without elaboration, "The order for General Scott to proceed to California has been rescinded. . . . It is proposed to re-inforce Colonel Johnston as early in the Spring as

possible." Brigham Young received this report without asking Bernhisel for further explanation, an uncharacteristic lack of curiosity. He responded cryptically, "We have our eyes on the Russian possessions," a comment that has prompted historians to debate whether Young was seriously considering a mass Mormon exodus to what is now Alaska.[45]

Unaware that a move on Utah from the west had been scrapped and that Scott had cancelled his trip, Captain P.G.T. Beauregard, an army engineer, wrote from New Orleans to fellow-Louisianian U.S. Senator John Slidell in Washington, D.C., to ridicule the notion of a thrust from the Pacific. Although silent on the subject of command and Albert Sidney Johnston's role, Beauregard lobbied Slidell for appointment to the colonelcy of any new regiment created to execute such a stragegy:

> I see it stated in the newspapers that Genl Scott is about to repair to California to take command of a Corps d'Armée to move from thence on to Utah! I wonder if this is to be done upon the recommendation of the Genl? If so, it is contrary to all "strategic" principles, if to be executed in conjunction with a similar movement on this side of the mountains—for it is impossible that two operations, from such distant initial points—should be performed with such precision & regularity as to arrive at the Utah Valley within a few days of each other—at any rate such a favorable result would be against all probabilities—It would then follow, if the Mormons are ably commanded, that they would concentrate their forces in succession against each of said columns & crush them before they could unite. . . . How do we know but that the Mormons may have amongst themselves a great Captain *in embryo!* Are not volunteers considered *by many* as equal if not superior to regulars in a Mountainous War?—then how much the more superior would they not be when defending their religion & their own firesides! . . . If I were a Mormon and amply supplied with provisions & ammunitions, I would defy ~~five~~ three times the number of troops you could send against me on the system now adopted—not one of them would ever set foot within the valley of Utah![46]

One wonders about the reason for all of this enigmatic marching/counter-marching about a move on Utah from the Pacific Coast and the identity of the officer to lead it. In probing the possible explanations for this phenomenon, a case could be made that President Buchanan simply acquiesced to Harney's persistent, aggressive self-pleading and refused to sanction reinforce-

ments for the Utah campaign other than those to be led by Harney from Fort Leavenworth. After all, notwithstanding the location of Harney's headquarters in Kansas, attendees at White House receptions were accustomed to seeing his towering figure or that of his alter-ego and adjutant, the ubiquitous, dapper Captain Alfred Pleasonton of the Second Dragoons in close proximity to the president. Yet Buchanan was far too seasoned a politician to succumb to lobbying from a single general officer, even one as important and aggressive as Harney. Significantly, an enraged Buchanan relieved Harney of command of the Department of Oregon in 1859 over his ham-handed handling of the "Pig War" border confrontation with Great Britain in the San Juan Islands.[47]

Perhaps part of the explanation was somehow enmeshed in a peculiar resolution about Wool that welled up without explanation in the U.S. House of Representatives on January 26, 1858, during deliberations about "the Mormon problem." Without specific reference to its motivations, the House resolved: "That the President be requested to communicate to this House, if not incompatible with the public service, so much of the correspondence between the late Secretary of War Davis and Major General John E. Wool, late commanding the Pacific department, relative to the affairs of such department as has not heretofore been published under a call of this House."[48] With good reason, some Representatives may have suspected that this correspondence would reveal personal and professional clashes between Wool and Jefferson Davis, like the shockingly acrimonious exchanges between Davis and Winfield Scott throughout the mid-1850s. Davis was now a senator from Mississippi and chair of the Senate Military Affairs Committee; thus, the House of Representatives' curiosity about Wool's correspondence would probably not redound to Wool's benefit in any reorganization and enlargement of the Utah Expedition command.

An alternate explanation for the decision to abandon plans for Scott (or Wool) to attack Utah from the Pacific Coast may be connected to the arrival in Washington, D.C., in early February 1858 of Charles R. Morehead and James Rupe, the principal field agents of the western freighting firm of Russell, Majors, and Waddell. The two men had left Johnston's command at Camp Scott on Christmas Day and, notwithstanding an arduous, unes-

corted 1,200-mile mule ride in severe weather, they had reached Fort Leavenworth in late January after slightly more than a month of travel. They immediately pushed on to Washington by train and gave Buchanan and Floyd their initial news first-hand from the Utah Expedition since it had gone into winter quarters during the third week of November 1857. Morehead later argued that their trip demonstrated the feasibility of all-weather travel across the plains, the inspiration for his firm's subsequent establishment of the Pony Express. This dramatic demonstration may also have been the catalyst by which Scott mustered the fortitude to argue successfully for the reinforcement of Johnston and the Utah Expedition during 1858 from Kansas alone.[49]

Without knowing what thoughts might have been crossing Albert Sidney Johnston's mind or what rumors about command matters may have reached his winter quarters at Fort Bridger, the news that General Scott had cancelled his movement to the Pacific Coast probably produced relief in the Utah Expedition. It was not that Johnston and his officers did not want reinforcements; rather, they were anxious about whether they or the leaders of another column marching on Utah from the snow-free Pacific Coast would receive the glory and promotions when the Mormons were brought to heel.[50]

With the Utah command for Wool no longer in the picture and with Scott's decision to remain in New York while Johnston would be reinforced from Kansas alone, Scott turned to his intent to make Albert Sidney Johnston a general. This promotion had long been on the general in chief's mind, perhaps since he had assigned Johnston to the Utah Expedition. On February 11, 1858, Scott wrote a fascinating letter on Johnston's future to William Preston, who was both Johnston's brother-in-law and John B. Floyd's cousin: "Colonel Johnson [sic] is more than a good officer—he is a God send to the country thro' the army. I urged his brevet [promotion], strongly, when he was here [in August], & have repeated my instances [entreaties] to the same end almost daily, since the beginning of January either in conversation with the Secretary or the President, & I told the latter that I did not doubt he would find himself constrained, by admiration, to add a second brevet before the end of this year."[51] It is emblematic of the disconnect between Scott and Floyd—in terms of their rela-

tionship as well as the New York-Washington geography—that, without Scott's knowing it for sure, Floyd had, three days earlier, written to Buchanan nominating Johnston for appointment as a brigadier by brevet "'for meritorious conduct' in the ability, zeal, energy, and prudence displayed by him in the command of the Army in Utah to date from November 18, 1857."[52] On the same day, the president forwarded this nomination to the U.S. Senate for its consideration through a brief special message.

Scott had heard rumors of this nomination and, on February 11, had informed Preston in conspiratorial tones, "I have reason to believe that the Secretary sent a nomination for the brigadier's brevet, to the President, several days ago. Whether it has gone to the Senate I know not. I have however prepared many [members] of that body to receive it favorably."[53]

The Congress was then heatedly debating the wisdom of the Utah War, how best to prosecute it, and an appropriate way to reinforce the Utah Expedition within the financial constraints imposed by the nation's worst economic downturn in twenty years. Among the war's critics was U.S. Senator Sam Houston, Johnston's enemy since their Texas days when Houston was the new republic's president and Johnston was both his secretary of war and a general in the Texas army. Unknown to Johnston at his Camp Scott winter quarters and to Scott in New York, Houston was then being lobbied by Seth M. Blair, a Nauvoo Legion major and comrade in arms during both the Texas Revolution and the Mexican War. Houston had successfully recommended Blair as U.S. attorney for Utah Territory in 1850.[54] There is no evidence that Houston tried to scuttle Johnston's promotion with his fellow senators, but it is reasonable to assume that their longstanding enmity did little to help Johnston.

For whatever reason, Johnston's nomination worked through the confirmation process slowly. On March 24, 1858, the Senate finally turned from its debates on "the Mormon problem" and gave its constitutionally required advice and consent to Johnston's promotion. Floyd wrote on April 3 to inform Johnston of the good news and a week later the oath of office was transmitted from Adjutant General Cooper.[55]

Even before official news of Johnston's elevation had reached Camp Scott, rumors had leaked about the prospects for such an

appointment as far as the Utah Expedition's winter quarters. Johnston's quartermaster wrote to a civilian friend in Washington, D.C., revealing both his admiration for the brigadier-in-waiting and his concerns about the stability of his command situation: "We were all delighted that Col Johnston had been nominated for the brevet of Brig. General, which indicates that he is not to be superceded [sic] in the command. He is universally popular and deservedly so. He has more good points as a commanding officer than any one I know in the Army."[56]

But the question of Johnston's command was not yet settled, the matter of his responsibilities not closed. In April 1858, with the formalization of plans to reinforce the Utah Expedition from Kansas alone, the administration turned to a new command structure to head up what its leaders projected as an expeditionary force equivalent to nearly one-third of the U.S. Army. Under this arrangement, plans were activated to create a Department of Utah commanded by Brevet Major General Persifor F. Smith. Reporting to him would be Brevet Brigadier Generals Harney and the newly promoted Johnston. The division of responsibility between these two one-star officers operating under Smith's command was unclear, but Johnston would apparently retain command of the original or core Utah Expedition—now dubbed the Army of Utah—and Harney would be responsible for moving west six columns of reinforcements totaling more than three thousand men. How this command structure would function once all of the units involved were in Utah and the new department was fully operational was a major ambiguity to be addressed once the Utah campaign had run its course. Irrespective of whether Floyd or Scott was the principal architect of this command restructuring, it was a remarkable one. The fifty-nine-year-old Smith had been ailing for years and was often on medical leave of absence. Indeed, he died at Fort Leavenworth on May 17, 1858, less than a month after his new appointment as supreme commander of the Department of Utah, on the very day that Johnston learned of his promotion 1,200 miles to the west.

One must wonder what the president, secretary of war, and general in chief had conceptualized as their strategic needs and a failing General Smith's ability to execute them, let alone the impact of such a change on Johnston's morale. Harney, assuming

that he was Persifor Smith's successor, immediately proceeded to act as department commander. Scott, enraged by Harney's presumption, sent Harney yet another letter of reprimand, a document to which Harney responded as he usually did with a pointed, barely respectful, unrepentant defense of his behavior. Notwithstanding Scott's displeasure, Harney did indeed continue to function briefly during the summer of 1858 as commander of the Department of Utah and was, in fact, promoted to the full brigadier's rank vacated upon Smith's death. This arrangement made Johnston temporarily but technically Harney's subordinate. Here was a leadership hierarchy that provoked great consternation, not only for Johnston, who was keenly aware of the deep flaws in Harney's command style, but also among his subordinate officers, most of whom had bonded with Johnston during their shared hardships at Fort Bridger. Johnston asked to be relieved from duty in Utah and reassigned to command of his regiment in Texas, a request that the War Department denied.[57]

With the peaceful resolution of "the Mormon problem" during the summer of 1858 and Harney's sudden reassignment to command the Department of Oregon to deal with an Indian outbreak, much of this angst became moot. As Harney departed from Kansas, Johnston assumed command of the Department of Utah and delegated direct responsibility for its troops to Lieutenant Colonel Charles F. Smith (no relation to the late Persifor F. Smith) of the Tenth Infantry. Notwithstanding this clarification in his command, Johnston continued to press the War Department with requests for furlough and reassignments, which the army repeatedly denied until it finally relented effective March 1, 1860.

On that date, Johnston left Camp Floyd, headed for San Bernardino and ultimately a steamer home, amid rumors that he might become a presidential candidate in the fall elections. His journey across the desert produced one of the eeriest scenes of the Utah War. As Johnston and his sixty-dragoon escort rode westward across the rim of the Great Basin near the killing field of Mountain Meadows, his adjutant, Major Fitz John Porter, realized that they were being shadowed by a lone, heavily bearded horseman, with a dog slung across his saddle. This outrider was Orrin Porter Rockwell, Brigham Young's bodyguard, and the dog was his signature. This solitary vigil more than three hundred miles

from the Salt Lake Valley sent an unmistakable message to the departing general about who held the real power in Utah Territory, regardless of who was nominally in command. As the alarmed Major Porter described the scene, "It was a warning. We were at once on our guard and our party, somewhat separated . . . was halted and united."[58]

Given this chain of events, was it really "Johnston's Army"? As I have demonstrated, below the Utah War's surface roiled a far more complex U.S. Army command situation than realized by those who have adopted the traditional Utah-centric label. Perhaps it is more useful to think of this armed confrontation as the "Utah War" rather than "Johnston's Army"—as a conflict in which the federal "Utah Expedition," led by a shifting variety of real or prospective commanders, was pitted against the Mormon "Nauvoo Legion" or Utah territorial militia. The latter force was clearly led by Lieutenant General Daniel H. Wells—whenever Brigham Young stepped back from micromanaging its operations.[59] But then the Young-Wells command relationship is a story deserving a separate study.

Notes

1. For a review of this Utah-centric label's use and implications, see Gene A. Sessions, "The Legend of 'Johnston's Army': Myth and Reality among the Mormons," Paper presented at the Mormon History Association annual conference, Salt Lake City, May 26, 2007.

2. The Utah War of 1857–58 was the armed confrontation between the administration of President James Buchanan and the civil-religious leadership of Utah Territory led by Governor Brigham Young, second president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. At stake were power and authority in Utah, through a conflict that pitted its large, experienced territorial militia (Nauvoo Legion) against a federal force (Utah Expedition) that ultimately involved nearly one-third of the U.S. Army. The most complete and recent narrative and documentary histories of the war are: Norman F. Furniss, *The Mormon Conflict 1850–1859* (1960; rpt., New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1966); MacKinnon, *At Sword's Point, Part 1: A Documentary History of the Utah War to 1858* (Norman, Okla.: Arthur H. Clark Co., 2008); and 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 Le-*

gion (1958; rpt., Glendale, Calif.: Arthur H. Clark, 1982). The latter study was most recently reprinted as *Mormon Resistance: A Documentary Account of the Utah Expedition, 1857–1858* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005). A useful but limited study of the conflict's immediate aftermath is Donald R. Moorman with Gene A. Sessions, *Camp Floyd and the Mormons: The Utah War* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2005). Context for the war is found in David L. Bigler, *Forgotten Kingdom: The Mormon Theocracy in the American West, 1847–1896* (Spokane, Wash.: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1998), while valuable information about the war itself is contained in three quite different interpretations of its worst atrocity: Will Bagley, *Blood of the Prophets: Brigham Young and the Massacre at Mountain Meadows: An American Tragedy* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002); Ronald W. Walker, Richard E. Turley Jr., and Glen M. Leonard, *Massacre at Mountain Meadows* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), and Bigler and Bagley, *Innocent Blood: Essential Narratives of the Mountain Meadows Massacre* (Norman: Arthur H. Clark Co., 2008).

3. An extreme example was Colonel John DeBarth Walbach, commander of the Fourth U.S. Artillery, who died on the eve of the Utah War in his ninety-third year—an officer beloved but so old that he had served under George Washington. Even the best and the brightest officers languished under this constipated, seniority-driven "system." Robert E. Lee, one of Winfield Scott's favorites, was still only a captain of engineers twenty-six years after heading his West Point class of 1829. Lee did not receive his first troop command until his 1855 promotion at age forty-eight as lieutenant colonel of the newly established Second U.S. Cavalry led by fifty-two-year-old Colonel Albert Sidney Johnston.

4. For a discussion of these structural, environmental, and behavioral forces as they impacted the contentious career of the antebellum army's second most senior officer, see William P. MacKinnon, "David Emanuel Twiggs," in *Dictionary of American Military Biography*, edited by Roger J. Spiller, 3 vols. (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1984), 3:1119–22. A classic description of young Braxton Bragg's prolonged quarrel with himself in his dual roles as a frontier company commander as well as his own company quartermaster appears in Grady McWhiney, *Braxton Bragg and Confederate Defeat*, 2 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), 1:33–34. For Winfield Scott's intervention in Kansas to prevent the court-martial of key officers over minor matters as the Utah Expedition was being organized, see MacKinnon, *At Sword's Point, Part 1*, 163–64, 369–70.

5. Allan Peskin, *Winfield Scott and the Profession of Arms* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2003).

6. See Records of the Judge Advocate (RG 154), National Archives,

Washington, D.C., for the most seriously disruptive of these incidents—those that were adjudicated by general court-martial.

7. MacKinnon, *At Sword's Point, Part 1*, chap. 7. For a colorful but rueful account of the brutal Twiggs-Harney command style written decades later by one of their still-smarting quartermasters, see Parmenas Taylor Turnley, *Reminiscences* . . . (Chicago, Ill.: Donohue & Henneberry, 1893), 208–9.

8. John B. Floyd, Letter to James Buchanan, August 5, 1858, James Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

9. For the timing and drivers of the decision to replace Brigham Young as governor and to escort his as-yet-unidentified successor with a large army expedition, see MacKinnon, "And the War Came: James Buchanan, The Utah Expedition, and the Decision to Intervene," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 76 (Winter 2008): 22–37. Scott's order launching the expedition was in the form of a May 28, 1857, circular to the chiefs of the army's staff bureaus. "The Utah Expedition," U.S. Congress, *House Ex. Doc. 71*, 35th Cong., 1st Sess., Serial 956, 4–5, and LeRoy R. and Ann W. Hafen, eds., *Mormon Resistance*, 27–29. Notwithstanding the expectation of a 2,500-man force, by the time the expedition was on the plains, transfers and massive desertion had reduced it to fewer than 1,500 troops.

10. For a review of Harney's command style and disciplinary record, see George Rollie Adams, *General William S. Harney: Prince of Dragoons* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001); MacKinnon, "Review Essay [Harney]," *New Mexico Historical Review* 76 (October 2001): 431–37.

11. L. U. Reavis, *The Life and Military Services of General William Selby Harney* (St. Louis: Bryan, Brand & Co., 1878), 277–79.

12. MacKinnon, "'Lonely Bones': Leadership and Utah War Violence," *Journal of Mormon History* 33 (Spring 2007): 121–78.

13. James Buchanan, Letter to Robert J. Walker, July 12, 1857, "Covode Investigation" [Covode was the Congressman who chaired the investigating committee], U.S. Congress, *House Report 648*, 36th Cong., 1st Sess., Serial 1071, 112–13. Buchanan guarded closely the text of this letter until the pressure of a congressional investigation forced its publication. For the clashes and recriminations between Walker and the administration over assigning Harney simultaneously to Kansas and Utah, see Adams, *General William S. Harney*, 159–81, and Pearl T. Ponce, "Pledges and Principles: Buchanan, Walker, and Kansas in 1857," *Kansas History* 27 (Spring-Summer 2004): 51–91.

14. Through his aide, Scott took pains to explain to Harney that the delay in his orders lay not with Scott but rather with his civilian superiors (Floyd and Buchanan). Lieutenant Colonel George W. Lay, Letter to Wil-

liam S. Harney, June 26, 1857, Headquarters of the Army, Letters Sent (RG 108), National Archives.

15. MacKinnon, *At Sword's Point, Part 1,* 164–65.

16. Second Lieutenant George Dashiell Bayard, Letter to Samuel J. Bayard, March 3, 1857, quoted in Bayard, *Life of George Dashiell Bayard, Late Captain, U.S.A., and Brigadier-General of Volunteers, Killed in the Battle of Fredricksburg, Dec. 1862* (New York: G. P. Putnam, 1874), 115.

17. William S. Harney, Letter to John B. Floyd, August 8, 1857, Records of Adjutant General's Office, Letters Received (RG 94), National Archives. Contrary to the impression Harney conveyed here, he had never been to Utah and had no experience in dealing with Mormon leaders.

18. Albert Sidney Johnston, Letter to William Preston, August 26, 1857, Wickliffe-Preston Papers, 63M349, University of Kentucky Library, Lexington.

19. Major Irvin McDowell, Letter to Albert Sidney Johnston, August 28, 1857, and War Department, General Orders No. 12, August 29, 1857.

20. Albert Sidney Johnston, Letter to Captain N. J. Eaton, October 11, 1858, quoted in William Preston Johnston, *The Life of General Albert Sidney Johnston* . . . (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1878), 232. The medical condition to which Johnston alludes here is unclear, although it may possibly have been related to a leg wound, sustained in Texas's army during a duel fought with another general. Johnston's August 26, 1857, comment to his brother-in-law that he was then "ready and more than willing" for assignment to either Utah or Kansas raises the questions of his candor in writing to Eaton thirteen months later to portray himself as a reluctant, ailing commander.

21. Furniss, *The Mormon Conflict,* 97–99.

22. Alexander, Letter "to the officers of the United States Army commanding forces en route to Utah," October 8, 1857, in Hafen and Hafen, eds., *Mormon Resistance,* 66–69.

23. Albert Sidney Johnston, Letter to Irvin McDowell, October 18, 1857, "The Utah Expedition," *House Ex. Doc. 71,* 35–38.

24. Edmund B. Alexander, Letter to Brigham Young, October 2, 1857, in ibid., 35. Alexander, writing to Young from within Utah's northeast boundary, did not then know that Johnston had superseded Harney in command.

25. The two freshest accounts of the Lot Smith raid are found in the reminiscences of Smith himself and one of his Nauvoo Legion cavalrymen, James Parshall Terry, which are reprinted most recently in Hafen

and Hafen, eds., *Mormon Resistance*, 220–46, and MacKinnon, *At Sword's Point, Part 1*, 347–49.

26. Edmund B. Alexander, Letter to Samuel Cooper, October 9, 1857, and Albert Sidney Johnston, Letter to Irvin McDowell, October 18, 1857, "The Utah Expedition," *House Ex. Doc. 71*, 32, 37–38.

27. Irvin McDowell, Endorsement to John B. Floyd, December 10, 1857, written on Scott's behalf on the dispatch of Albert Sidney Johnston to McDowell, October 18, 1857. When Johnston's dispatch was copied and published at Congress's request as part of "The Utah Expedition," *House Ex. Doc. 71*, this endorsement was excluded and so remained unpublished until 2008. It may be found with a copy of Johnston's dispatch in folder "Correspondence Regarding Utah Expedition," (HR 35A-D123), House Committee on Military Affairs (RG 233), National Archives, and in MacKinnon, *At Sword's Point, Part 1*, 425.

28. Persifor Frazer Smith, Memorandum to John B. Floyd, November 24, 1857, Persifor Frazer Smith Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Brevet Lieutenant General Scott was the army's only officer who held the substantive rank of major general. Twiggs, Wool, and Smith were brigadiers who were major generals only by brevet.

29. Remarkably by twenty-first-century standards, James Buchanan had made no public utterance about Utah or Mormon affairs until his written first annual message to Congress on December 8, 1857, the equivalent of today's presidential State of the Union Address.

30. William S. Harney, Letter to James Buchanan, November 29, 1857, James Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

31. Buchanan's first annual message to Congress and the related year-end 1857 annual reports of Floyd and Scott may be found in John Bassett Moore, ed., *The Works of James Buchanan, Comprising His Speeches, State Papers, and Private Correspondence*, 12 vols. (New York: Antiquarian Press Ltd., 1960), 10:129–63; John B. Floyd, "Annual Report," December 5, 1857, U.S. Congress, *Senate Ex. Doc 11*, 35th Cong., 1st Sess., Serial 920, 6–9.

32. Headquarters of the Army, General Orders No. 1 and 4, January 8 and 16, 1858; copy in my files.

33. Winfield Scott, Telegram to John E. Wool, January 13, 1858, Wool Papers, State Library of New York, Albany, and Records of the Headquarters of the Army, Letters Sent (RG 108), National Archives.

34. John E. Wool, Telegram to Winfield Scott, January 15, 1858, Wool Papers, State Library of New York.

35. John E. Wool, Letter to Winfield Scott, January 15, 1858, in ibid. Wool's reference to settling his "accounts" relates to his financial worries over the substantial sum still in dispute between him and the govern-

ment as a result of his tumultuous earlier assignment as commander of the Department of the Pacific.

36. Wool lacks a biographer, although a first-rate unpublished study of his life is Harwood P. Hinton, "The Public Career of John Ellis Wool" (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin, 1960). Hinton does not discuss the Scott telegram.

37. Irvin McDowell, Letter to Albert Sidney Johnston, January 19, 1858, Johnston Papers, Barrett Collection, Howard-Tilton Library, Tulane University, New Orleans, as discussed in Charles P. Roland, *Albert Sidney Johnston: Soldier of Three Republics* (1964; rpt., Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2001), 203 note 69.

38. John E. Wool, Memorandum to Winfield Scott, January 23, 1858, Wool Papers, State Library of New York.

39. Lieutenant Colonel George W. Lay, Letter to Albert Sidney Johnston, January 23, 1858, "Report of the Secretary of War [1858]," U.S. Congress, *House Ex. Doc. 2*, 35th Cong., 2d Sess., Serial 998, 33. Lay was Scott's aide de camp. This discussion of the Utah War's little-known Pacific Coast dimension–significant, ambitious, but aborted–is adapted from MacKinnon, "Buchanan's Thrust from the Pacific: The Utah War's Ill-Fated Second Front," *Journal of Mormon History* 34 (Fall 2008): 226–60.

40. Winfield Scott, Letter to John E. Wool, September 2, 1857, Wool Papers, State Library of New York.

41. Allan Nevins and Milton Halsey Thomas, eds., *The Diary of George Templeton Strong: Young Man in New York* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1952), 383, January 25, 1858. Murray Hoffman, Strong's direct source, was a prominent judge on New York's superior court. The massive bronze (not copper) equestrian statue of General George Washington had been installed in Manhattan's Union Square in 1856 and remains there. In an attempt to save face, Scott later told Albert Sidney Johnston's brother-in-law that the notion of a Pacific Coast journey was his with sanctioning by Buchanan and Floyd. Winfield Scott, Letter to William Preston, February 11, 1858, Wickliffe-Preston Papers, University of Kentucky Library.

42. Ironically, the Nauvoo Legion's adjutant general, Brigadier General James Ferguson, came to a similar conclusion in January 1858 and complained in his year-end 1857 report to Brigham Young that disproportionate emphasis and resources were being placed on Mormon cavalry rather than infantry for the coming campaign in the mountains. Ferguson, Report, January 7, 1858, Nauvoo Legion Records, LDS Church History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.

43. William S. Harney, Letter to James Buchanan, January 30, 1858, James Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

44. George W. Lay, Letter to Albert Sidney Johnston, February 4, 1858, "Report of the Secretary of War [1858]," *House Ex. Doc. 2*, 33.

45. John M. Bernhisel, Letter to Brigham Young, December 17, 1857, LDS Church History Library. The date is incorrect. Based on internal evidence, it was written during the third week of February 1858, probably February 17. The allusion to Alaska appears in Brigham Young, Letter to John M. Bernhisel, March 5, 1858, LDS Church History Library. See differing interpretations of its meaning, MacKinnon, *At Sword's Point, Part 1*, 439–44.

46. P.G.T. Beauregard, Letter to John Slidell, February 9, 1858, holograph copy in Huntington Library, San Marino, California; typescript in Leonard J. Arrington Papers, Merrill-Cazier Library, Utah State University, Logan. Notwithstanding Beauregard's plea for a colonelcy, he never rose above the rank of captain and brevet major in the U.S. Army but soon became a full general in the Confederate service.

47. Adams, *General William S. Harney*, 197–214.

48. "Correspondence between the Late Secretary of War and General Wool," U.S. Congress, *House Ex. Doc. 88*, 35th Cong., 1st Sess.

49. "Personal Recollections of Charles R. Morehead" in William Elsey Connelly, *War with Mexico, 1846–1847: Doniphan's Expedition and the Conquest of New Mexico and California* (Topeka, Kans.: n.p., 1907), 600–622. Without asserting a cause and effect linkage, one Washington reporter noted in the same dispatch plans for Pacific Coast reinforcements and the arrival of Morehead and Rupe: "Advices of the most reliable character have been received here from the Utah expedition." "General Scott to Organize a Force on the Pacific Against the Mormons," Dispatch, *Baltimore Sun*, January 24, 1858, rpt., *New York Times*, January 26, 1858, 1.

50. For officers' apprehensions about threatened glory and promotions, see "General Scott to Organize a Force on the Pacific Against the Mormons," *New York Times*, January 26, 1858, 1.

51. Winfield Scott, Letter to William Preston, February 11, 1858, Wickcliffe-Preston Papers, University of Kentucky Library. The army's brevet system of officer rank was derived from that of the British Royal Army and was a form of honorific recognition for long service, valor, or merit in the absence of medals and decoration, which were not awarded in the American service until the Civil War. For most of their service, officers served in their substantive rank unless temporarily detailed to perform special duties, such as serving on a court-martial, in which case they could be assigned in their higher, brevet rank, be paid according to

that rank, and were addressed accordingly. Under this system, Colonel Harney, commander of the Second U.S. Dragoons, had been assigned to command the Utah Expedition in his brevet brigadier's rank, a grade with which he had been honored earlier by the nomination of the Secretary of War and the U.S. president with the advice and consent of the U.S. Senate in recognition of his valorous Mexican War service. Awarding brevet promotions was a way of extending recognition to deserving officers without doing violence to the extremely limited and rigid table of organization prescribed for the army by Congress. Notwithstanding Scott's apparent prediction to Buchanan that Johnston would be brevetted twice during 1858, he was not nominated to major general. In fact, during the spring of 1858, Scott was unable to secure even a brevet majority for the Utah Expedition's highly deserving Captain Randolph B. Marcy, Fifth U.S. Infantry, presumably because of the controversy over the Utah campaign. Scott's own substantive rank was that of a major general, although he served in the position of general in chief as a brevet lieutenant general, a grade awarded to him after the Mexican War and only after a bitter, partisan political battle in Congress.

52. John B. Floyd, Letter to James Buchanan, February 8, 1858; copy in my files.

53. Winfield Scott, Letter to William Preston, February 11, 1858, Wickliffe-Preston Papers, University of Kentucky Library.

54. Michael Scott Van Wagenen, "Sam Houston and the Utah War," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 76 (Summer 2008): 66–78. For the unpublished centerpiece of this Mormon lobbying effort, see Seth Blair, Letter to Sam Houston, December 1, 1857, "THE MORMON QUESTION, Interesting Letter from Great Salt Lake to Gen. Sam Houston," *New York Herald*, March 2, 1858, p. 1, cols. 4–5. An example of Houston's laudatory comments on Johnston's courage but scathing assessment of his military capabilities, especially during the Civil War, appears in Sam Houston, Letter to Eber Worthing Cave, February 3, 1863, in *The Personal Correspondence of Sam Houston*, edited by Madge Thornall Roberts, 4 vols. (Denton: University of North Texas Press, 2001), 4:418–19.

55. Cooper's letter of April 10 enclosed Floyd's of April 3. Archivist Jessica Kratz, National Archives, email to MacKinnon, July 22, 2008; Albert Sidney Johnston, Letter to Samuel Cooper, May 17, 1858 (RG 98), National Archives. Consistent with the usages of substantive and brevet rank, Johnston immediately began to sign his Utah correspondence and orders as "Colonel, 2nd Cavalry, Bvt. Brig. Genl, Commanding" and was addressed by others as "General."

56. Captain John H. Dickerson, Letter to W. A. Gordon, April 16, 1858, MSS 68, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

57. Wilford Hill LeCheminant, "A Crisis Averted? General Harney and the Change in Command of the Utah Expedition," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 51 (Winter 1983): 30–45.

58. Fitz John Porter, "A Characteristic (Mormon) Conspiracy, (From Incidents of the Utah Expedition of 1859 to 1860, under Genl. A. S. Johnston)," holograph, 9–11, Box 53, Microfilm #25, Fitz John Porter Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Upon sensing danger, Rockwell's dog was trained to rise up and silently lick his master's face.

59. For specific examples of Young's frequent and deep involvement in the minutiae of the Nauvoo Legion's operations during the Utah War, see MacKinnon, *At Sword's Point, Part 1*, 11, 321, 340, 358–61.