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EXPLORATION AND ADVENTURE
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— STANFORD KEKAUOHA
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When John C. Frémont viewed the Great Salt Lake—"the waters of the Inland Sea"—for the first time, his eyes caught hold of dark objects against the water. The next evening the men in his party speculated on what they might find on the islands: flowing springs, wild game, “a tangled wilderness of trees and shrubbery.” All exploration marrys, to some degree, reality and imagination, discovery and perception. Such speculation may have reflected the observation of Frémont’s contemporary, Henry David Thoreau, that while "we are earnest to explore and learn all things, we require that all things be mysterious and unexplorable.” They eventually reached one of the islands which turned out to be merely rocky and barren—what Frémont christened Disappointment Island, since it clearly did not satisfy expectations.

Frémont’s explorations established that the Great Salt Lake had no outlet to the sea, and his reports, written in scientific yet romantic prose, introduced readers to the Far West. As our lead article suggests, Frémont’s explorations left a profound influence on the western landscape—and perhaps nowhere more so than in Utah. Brigham Young and LDS leaders pored over the published contents of Frémont’s 1843–44 expedition into the Great Basin. On the basis of the report, the Great Salt Lake Valley became the new Mormon homeland in 1847. Not surprisingly, Frémont sometimes made errors in his reporting, as when he surmised, having only viewed its southern shore, that Utah Lake was a freshwater arm of the Great Salt Lake.

After Frémont, other federal surveyors funded by the U.S. Army—notably Captain Howard Stansbury, First Lieutenant John W. Gunnison, and Captain James H. Simpson—left their mark in Utah. Of these, perhaps less known is Simpson, a topographical engineer charged to identify a new road across the west Utah desert. That route became a portion of the Pony Express and, later, the Lincoln Highway. But, as our second article makes clear, the Simpson expedition was also significant for its photographs and sketches.

Neither Simpson’s report nor the accompanying sketches and photographs saw the light of day until published in 1876; until now historians knew next to nothing about Simpson’s artist, H. V. A. Von Beckh, or photographers C. C. Mills and Edward Jogiello.

Our third article carries the theme of exploration and adventure into the twentieth century with the story of Earl and Pearl Douglass. Earl Douglass worked his way from a meager Minnesota childhood to become a scientist for the Carnegie Museum and discover, in 1909, the deposit of fossils that would become Dinosaur National Monument. Along the slow road to these accomplishments, Earl met Pearl Goetschius, whom he married in 1905 after a decade of courtship. Together they founded a homestead in the Uintah Basin called Dinosaur Ranch. They fell in love with the area, and their only son enjoyed a child’s paradise on the ranch. Yet the Douglasses experienced many difficulties on the homestead and in relation to the Carnegie Museum, which would have a keen impact on the family’s life. Not only a tale of outdoor adventure, this article is also a bittersweet account of perseverance throughout a lifetime of trouble and achievement.

Our final piece speaks to the lighter side of exploration and adventure through excerpts of Ralph Becker’s travel diary in the backcountry of Capitol Reef National Park. Later becoming Salt Lake City’s mayor, Becker was a master’s student in geography and planning at the University of Utah when he set out to traverse the entire length of the Waterpocket Fold, a prominent north-to-south geologic uplift, in 1980. Traveling about 170 miles, Becker along the way provides commentary on what he saw and felt, offering us a glimpse into one man’s intimate encounter with Utah’s wild lands.

Each of the stories in this issue belongs to a larger history of exploration. They reveal the deep human impulse to forge new trails or trace and reimagine existing ones, whether in a physical or metaphorical sense.
John C. Frémont, lithograph by John Henry Bufford, Boston, Massachusetts, 1856. The image was made at the time Frémont was the Republican nominee for the U.S. presidency.

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John C. Frémont’s 1843-44 Western Expedition and Its Influence on Mormon Settlement in Utah

ALEXANDER L. BAUGH

John Charles Frémont (1813–90) has been celebrated as one of the most noted nineteenth-century explorers of the American West. During a period of twelve years (1842–54), he personally led and directed five western expeditions to: (1) South Pass and the Wind River Range in Wyoming in 1842; (2) the interior of the Rockies and the Pacific Coast in 1843–44; (3) California through Colorado, northern Utah, and central Nevada in 1845; (4) southern California through southern Colorado, New Mexico, and southern Arizona in 1848–49; and (5) northern California through southern Colorado, southern Utah, southern Nevada, and central California in 1853–54.

Following Frémont’s second expedition (1843–44), he went to Washington, D.C., where in collaboration with his wife, Jessie Benton Frémont, he completed writing a report and producing detailed maps of both the 1842 and 1843–44 western expeditions. In 1845, Congress approved the printing of ten thousand copies of Frémont’s Report of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in the Year 1842, and to Oregon and North California in the Years 1843–44.1 Editors around the country generated

1 The definitive study on John C. Frémont’s western expeditions is Donald Jackson and Mary Lee Spence, eds., The Expeditions of John Charles Frémont, 3 vols. (Urbana:
public interest in the report by including excerpts from the volume in their newspapers, which resulted in an even larger nationwide readership. Ultimately, the publication of the Report and the publicity that surrounded it generated a growing national interest in the West and fanned the flames of Oregon fever and U.S. expansionism among politicians, capitalists, adventurists, and unsettled Americans who believed that the remote regions of the West offered new possibilities of unlimited prosperity.

Among those significantly impacted by Frémont’s early western explorations were the Mormons residing in western Illinois. The explorer’s favorable descriptions of the Bear River region, the Salt Lake Valley, and the Great Basin (the name Frémont gave to the territory) had a profound influence on Brigham Young and the church’s leadership in their decision to select the Wasatch region of northern Utah as the main place of Mormon settlement.2

On March 10, 1843, Lieutenant Frémont received official notice from Colonel J. J. Abert, chief of the Army Topographical Engineers, to head a second expedition to the Far West. Abert’s instructions were for Frémont to map and survey the headwaters of the Arkansas River on the boundary of the Mexican and American borders in Colorado, then to do the same for the territory lying west of the Wind Rivers in Wyoming to the Columbia River on the Pacific. It was anticipated that the fulfillment of these objectives would provide the government a more accurate definition of the boundary between the United States and Mexico. Furthermore, when combined with Frémont’s 1842 survey of the area between the Kansas River and the Wind River Mountains, it was anticipated that the two reports would provide a detailed description (along with maps) of the entire route from the Missouri River to the Pacific.3

Frémont’s 1843–44 expedition party, consisting of thirty-nine men, left Westport Landing (Kansas City, Missouri) on May 29, 1843. The party traveled west through Kansas to Pueblo, Colorado, then north through the Medicine Bow Range in southern Wyoming, where they eventually reached the North Platte River, the Sweetwater River, and South Pass on the Oregon Trail. The expedition subsequently followed the Big Sandy River downstream, crossed the Green River, Blacks Fork, and Hams Fork, and then proceeded upstream on the Muddy River, where they reached the banks of the Bear River on August 21.4 Upon the expedition’s arrival at the Bear River in western Wyoming, the lieutenant recognized that he was on the main tributary of the Great Salt Lake, which had been the subject of mystery and folklore among western travelers. Frémont recorded:

We are now entering a region which for us possessed a strange and extraordinary interest. We were upon the waters of the famous lake which forms a salient point among the remarkable geographic features of the country, and around which the vague and superstitious obscurity which we anticipated pleasure in dispelling, but which, in the meantime, left a crowded field for the exercise of our imagination. . . .

Hitherto this lake had been seen only by trappers who were wandering through the country in search of new beaver

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4 John Charles Frémont, Report of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in the Year 1842, and to Oregon and North California in the Years 1843–44 by Brevet Captain J. C. Frémont of the Topographical Engineers, Under the Order of Col. J. J. Abert, Chief of the Topographical Bureau (Washington, D.C.: Gales and Seaton, 1845), 132 (hereafter cited as Frémont, Report). The Report was initially published as a Senate document (28th Congress, 2nd session, Senate executive document 174, serial 461). No copyright was issued for the Report, and numerous publishers reprinted the document under various titles. A memorial marker has been erected near Evanston, Wyoming, commemorating the site where the expedition encamped on the Bear River.
streams, caring very little for the geography; its islands had never been visited; and none were to be found who had entirely made a circuit of its shores; and no instrumental observation or geographical survey, of any description had ever been made anywhere in the neighboring region. It was generally supposed that it had no visible outlet; but among trappers, including those in my own camp, were many who believed that somewhere on its surface was a terrible whirlpool, through which its waters found their way to the ocean by some subterranean communication. All these things had made a frequent subject of discussion in our desultory conversations around the fires at night; and my own mind had become tolerably well filled with their indefinite pictures, and insensibly colored with their romantic descriptions, which, in the pleasure of excitement, I was well disposed to believe. And half expected to realize.\footnote{5}{Ibid., 132–33.}

Frémont considered the exploration of the Great Salt Lake so important to the success of the entire expedition that upon the party’s arrival at the big bend of the Bear River, for a period of twenty-six days (from August 25 to September 19), he left the main course of the Oregon Trail so that he might explore the lake. On August 25, near what is today Soda Springs, Idaho, Frémont handpicked seven men and left the Oregon Trail to explore the inland sea. The rest of the company went on to Fort Hall (near Pocatello, Idaho) to await their commander’s return.\footnote{6}{Ibid., 135–36.}

Following the Bear River southward, Frémont’s party camped just west of where Preston, Idaho, is today, then proceeded west until coming to the Malad River, which he called the Roseaux or Reed River. Following the Malad southward, the expedition crossed the forty-second parallel into Utah and on September 1 camped three hundred yards above where the Malad flows into the Bear.\footnote{7}{Ibid., 140–47.} Two days later they reached the Bear River delta (what is today the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge). The company then proceeded on a southward course east of the Great Salt Lake, somewhat parallel to the Wasatch Mountain range, before reaching the Weber River on September 5. Although they had been on the perimeter of the Great Salt Lake for several days, the men had still not seen the lake because they had traveled in the low-lying areas, where much of the view had been obscured by plant life. Leaving their camp on the Weber River on the morning of September 6, Frémont directed his men to a butte (now called Little Mountain), where the company experienced their first full view of the great inland sea.\footnote{8}{Ibid., 147–51.}

On September 9, using an eighteen-foot inflatable rubber boat loaded with provisions, fresh water, blankets, and scientific equipment and instruments, Frémont, Charles Preuss, Kit Carson, Baptiste Bernier, and Basil Lajunesse paddled out onto the lake and steered a course to a
large island some five miles distant. Reaching the island, they spent the better part of two days exploring and making scientific measurements and calculations. Frémont named the land mass “Disappointment Island,” because he had expected to find game and thick vegetation there but did not. The island has since been renamed Fremont Island in honor of the explorer (fig. 1).

On September 10, Frémont and his men left the island and paddled back to the mainland to begin the return trip to Fort Hall, where the main body of men in the expedition had been waiting. Frémont recorded that the party returned “by nearly the same route which we had traveled in coming to the lake.” On September 15, four days after having departed from the lake’s shores, the expedition crossed the current northern Utah border into Idaho and arrived at Fort Hall on September 19. All told, Frémont spent approximately two weeks (September 1–15) within the present confines of northern Utah (fig. 2).

The expedition departed Fort Hall on September 22 and followed the Snake River until reaching Fort Boise, situated on the junction of the Snake and Boise Rivers (the present border of Idaho and Oregon).

9 Ibid., 153–58.
10 Ibid., 158.
11 Theodore Talbot, one of the members of the expedition who waited at Fort Hall while the smaller expeditionary force explored the lake, recorded that Frémont’s company arrived at Fort Hall on September 18. See Charles Carey, ed., The Journals of Theodore Talbot, 1843 and 1849–52, with the Frémont Expedition of 1843 and with the First Military Company in the Oregon Territory, 1849–52 (Portland: Metropolitan Press, 1931), 50. Apparently Frémont arrived back at Ft. Hall late in the day on September 18, but he did not meet with the men from his company who had remained behind at the fort until the next day. See Frémont, Report, 162.
journey through the Blue Mountains of Oregon, the government expedition arrived at Marcus Whitman's mission near Walla Walla, Washington. After Frémont reached the Columbia River, his next destination was The Dalles, where his expedition arrived on November 5. From here, the lieutenant and a handful of men canoed down the Columbia to Fort Vancouver, where they arrived on November 8. With his arrival at Fort Vancouver, Frémont essentially fulfilled or completed the mission of the expedition, and from here he could have simply retraced his steps and returned to the east. However, having no intention to retrace his steps, he set out to conduct further explorations to the south.

From The Dalles, Frémont traveled due south along the eastern slope of the Cascade Mountains. Near Klamath Lake, the expedition headed south-southeast into northwestern Nevada. After making almost a complete circle along the eastern slope of the Sierra Nevada in central Nevada and California, Frémont finally chose to cross the formidable mountains slightly south of Lake Tahoe. It took the expedition from the middle of January to the first part of the month of March to travel through the Sierra Nevada to Sutter's Fort. Leaving the fort during the latter part of March, Frémont journeyed through the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys. Upon striking the Mojave River, the explorer struck the Old Spanish Trail, then turned east en route to the Utah region once again.

On approximately May 10, 1844, while following the Virgin River upstream in the extreme southwest portion of present-day Utah, Frémont's company entered the state's confines a second time. Near what is today St. George, Frémont recorded that his men immediately began to display a more lively spirit because of the noticeable change of the country's surroundings. The greener terrain of southern Utah was a welcome sight after having traveled for several weeks through the dry, barren territory of southeastern California and southern Nevada. “We seem to have entered a different climate,” the commander wrote. “The country is no longer so distressingly desolate.”

12 Frémont, Report, 270.
By May 12, the company had advanced northward up the Santa Clara River into a pastoral area in low-lying mountains, which, in 1857, became the scene of the bloody massacre of emigrants passing through Utah on their way to California. Commonly known as Mountain Meadows, the area was the last resting spot for travelers on the Old Spanish Trail before proceeding across the deserts of what is now southern Nevada. Although Frémont was traveling in the opposite direction, the meadows also served his expedition’s needs as a place for rest and recuperation. He wrote:

We found here an extensive meadow, rich in bunch grass, and fresh with numerous springs of clear water, all refreshing and delightful to look upon. It was, in fact, the las Vegas de Santa Clara, which had been so long present to us as the terminating point of the desert, and where the annual caravan from California to New Mexico halted and recruited for some weeks. It was a very suitable place to recover from the fatigue and exhaustion of a month’s suffering in the hot and sterile desert. The meadow was about a mile wide, and some ten miles long, bordered by grassy hills and mountains.

Leaving the meadows, Frémont descended into the broad Escalante Valley. Viewing the vast expanse to the west, the explorer realized that the chain of mountains to the east—the western rim of the southern Colorado Plateau (along with the Wasatch Range farther north)—formed the east rim of a large geographic basin that had no outlet to the sea. Frémont had earlier concluded that the Sierra Nevada range formed the basin’s western boundary. In his Report, Frémont appropriately designated this region the “Great Basin” (fig. 3).

13 Ibid.
14 Ibid., 272. The map Frémont and his cartographer, Charles Preuss, produced following the 1842 and 1843–44 expeditions shows relatively little information about the interior of the Great Basin, but it is obvious that Frémont clearly understood the relationship of the
With the arrival of the expedition at the Sevier River on May 23, Frémont’s party reached the last major river crossing before proceeding on to Utah Valley. Dominguez and Escalante had named the Sevier River and Sevier Lake on their expedition in 1776, and the explorer, being well aware of the names given to these two water sources by the Spanish Fathers, referred to them as such in his report. On the morning of May 25, two days after crossing the Sevier, the expedition arrived in Utah Valley, where they camped for two days in two separate encampments (fig. 4). During their time in the valley, the company encountered numerous Ute Indians near the lake, and one group provided the company with fresh fish, which Frémont called “salmon trout.” The lieutenant was especially impressed with the area’s fertility and the numerous streams that flowed into the lake. “The lake is bordered by a plain, where the soil is generally good, and in greater part fertile; watered by a delta of prettily timbered streams,” he wrote. “This would be an excellent locality for stock farms; it is generally covered with good bunch grass, and would abundantly produce the ordinary grains.”

On May 27, Frémont’s party exited Utah Valley through Spanish Fork Canyon. One week later they arrived at Fort Uintah (also called Fort Robidoux after Antoine Robidoux) located on the Uinta River, where they stayed for two days. Leaving the fort on June 5, the company trav-

15 Frémont, Report, 272.

16 Ibid., 273.

17 Ibid., 274.
eled some twenty-five miles in a northeast direction and camped on Ashley Creek. Two days later, on the afternoon of June 7, the expedition crossed the Green River and arrived at Brown’s Hole near the present-day Utah-Colorado border. In total, Frémont spent some forty-three days within the confines of Utah during the 1843–44 expedition—fifteen days exploring the northern portion of Utah in 1843 (September 1–15) and twenty-eight days traversing the southern, central, and eastern regions in 1844 (May 10–June 7; fig. 5).

After leaving the Utah region, once again Frémont was not content to return east over familiar territory. From Brown’s Hole he traversed the central Colorado region before arriving at Pueblo on June 28 and Bent’s Fort on June 30. Leaving Bent’s Fort five days later, Frémont followed the Arkansas River eastward until reaching the northern bend of the river (near Great Bend, Kansas). There, the expedition journeyed overland to the Smoky Hill River, then followed the Smoky to the Kansas River until it reached the Santa Fe Trail. By August 6, fourteen months after the expedition officially began, the commander and his weary men arrived in St. Louis.

Frémont’s writings about his 1842 expedition to South Pass and the Wind River Range in Wyoming were read by Mormons in Illinois in 1843, when portions of the explorer’s narrative from his first expedition were published in the Nauvoo Neighbor in October of that year. John Taylor and Wilford Woodruff, coeditors of the Neighbor, did not indicate how they obtained the extracts from the expedition, or why they printed them, but newspaper editors often copied articles from other newspapers that circulated around the country. In early 1844 Joseph Smith obtained a printed copy of Frémont’s 1842 expedition, courtesy of Illinois congressman Stephen A. Douglas. In April, while Orson Hyde was in Washington, engaged in petitioning the government about matters concerning the Mormons and the possibilities of securing a place for the church in the West, Hyde wrote to church leaders in Illinois that

Judge Douglass has given me a map of Oregon, and also a Report on an exploration of the Country lying between the Missouri River and the rocky Mountains on the line of the Kansas, and great Platte Rivers: by Lieut. J. C. Fremont of the Corps of topographical Engineers. On receiving it, I expressed a wish that Mr. Smith [Joseph Smith] could see it. Judge D. [Douglas] says it is a public document, and I will frank it to him. I accepted his offer, and the book will be forth coming to him. The people are so eager for it here that they have stole it out of the Library. The author is Mr. [Thomas Hart] Benton’s son-in-law. Judge D. [Douglas] borrowed it of Mr. B. [Benton]. I was not to tell any one in this city where I got it. The book is a most valuable document to any one contemplating a journey to Oregon.

The fact that Hyde refers to Frémont as “Lieut Frémont” supports the conclusion that the document Douglas sent to Joseph Smith at Nauvoo was the report of the 1842 Wind River expedition and not the report that included Frémont’s 1843–44 expedition, when he came into the Utah region. In the published report of the latter expedition, Frémont had acquired the title of captain.

It is important to note that the narrative and map of Frémont’s 1842 expedition to South Pass arrived in Nauvoo before the death of Joseph Smith. Even though Frémont did not come into Utah on his first expedition in 1842, it is significant that Joseph Smith and the Mormons were interested in Frémont’s western travels before

18 Ibid., 277–79.
19 See “South Pass to Oregon,” Nauvoo Neighbor October 25, 1843, 1. The account of Frémont’s 1842 expedition was first published as an independent document in 1843 under the title A Report of an Exploration of the Country Lying between the Missouri River and the Rocky Mountains, on the Line of the Kansas and Great Platte Rivers (Washington, D.C.: Printed by Order of the United States Senate, 1843). The document was later reprinted in 1845 along with the account of the 1843–44 expedition as part of Frémont’s Report.

20 Orson Hyde to the Council of the Church, April 26, 1844, 4–5, box 3, fd. 6, Joseph Smith Papers, MS 155, Church History Library (hereafter cited as CHL), Salt Lake City; see also Journal History of the Church, April 26, 1844, 3–4, CHL; and Joseph Smith Jr., History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2d ed., rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971), 6:375 (hereafter cited as History of the Church).
they made any definitive plans for the western exodus.

A number of individuals recalled Joseph Smith stating on different occasions that the Latter-day Saints would eventually relocate to the West, and more specifically to the Rocky Mountains. Perhaps the statement most often attributed to the Mormon leader is the following under the date of August 6, 1842: “I prophesied that the Saints would continue to suffer much affliction and would be driven to the Rocky Mountains, many would apostatize, others would be put to death by our Persecutors, or lose their lives in consequence of exposure or disease, and some of you will live to go, and assist in making settlements and build cities and see the Saints become a mighty people in the midst of the Rocky Mountains.”21

Upon completion of his 1843–44 expedition in August 1844 in St. Louis, Frémont returned to Washington, D.C., to report to government leaders and to prepare for publication the account of his travels in the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific. By March 1, 1845, Frémont’s narrative of his second expedition, now ready for publication, led Congress to authorize the printing of ten thousand copies of a report detailing the 1842 and 1843–44 expeditions.22

Importantly, reports about Frémont’s second expedition to the West were printed in the Nauvoo Neighbor even before the completion of the published volume in Washington, D.C. In late January 1845, the Neighbor published a brief sketch of Frémont’s 1843–44 expedition, including his reaching the Great Salt Lake and Utah Lake (spelled “Euta”).23 In March, less than two months later, another article about the 1843–44 expedition appeared in the Neighbor with notably more space devoted to a description of the Utah region.24 In September 1845, the Nauvoo Neighbor printed direct extracts from Frémont’s newly published Report of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in the Year 1842, and to Oregon and North California in the Years 1843–44. The September 17 issue reprinted the section of the report detailing the party’s entrance into northern Utah along the Bear River.25 Perhaps more significantly, the September 24 issue of the Nauvoo Neighbor included some four-and-a-half columns filled of extracts from the Report under the dates of August 29–30, 1843, and September 6, 8–9, 1843, all dates in which Frémont was in

21 Manuscript History of the Church, vol. D–1, 1362, CHL. The source appears to have come from a statement given by Anson Call. See History of the Church, 5:85–86n. For an analysis of the validity of the statement, see Davis Bitton, “Joseph Smith in the Mormon Folk Memory,” Restoration Studies I, ed. Maurice L. Draper and Clare D. Vlahos (Independence, MO: Herald, 1980), 85; and Lewis Clark Christian, “A Study of Mormon Knowledge of the American Far West Prior to the Exodus” (master’s thesis, Brigham Young University, 1972), 72–73. Historian Ronald K. Esplin gives additional evidence to show that even prior to 1842, Joseph Smith had conveyed to others the idea that the Latter-day Saints would eventually settle in Rocky Mountains. Esplin further demonstrates that beginning in early 1844, the Mormon leader began making more definitive plans to relocate the main body of the Saints in the West, which plans were eventually carried out by the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. See Ronald K. Esplin, “A Place Prepared: Joseph, Brigham, and the Quest for Promised Refuge in the West,” Journal of Mormon History 9 (1982): 85–111; see also Christian, “A Study of Mormon Knowledge of the American Far West Prior to the Exodus,” 78–87. Mosiah Hancock said he heard Smith speak to the Nauvoo Legion just before his death, and pointing to Frémont’s map, he said: “I will show you the travels of this people. . . . Here you will make a place for the winter; and here you will travel west until you come to the valley of the Great Salt Lake.” Mosiah Lyman Hancock, “The Life Story of Mosiah Lyman Hancock,” typescript, 28, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. It is important to note that Hancock would have only been ten years old at the time he said he heard Joseph Smith speak about the Latter-day Saints relocating to the Great Salt Lake Valley. In addition, Hancock’s narrative is a late reminiscence, which suggests that his information may not be entirely accurate.

22 John Charles Frémont, Memoirs of My Life (Chicago and New York: Bedford, Clarke and Company, 1887), 415. Frémont intended Memoirs to be a two-volume narrative of his life; however, only volume one was published. The volume covers the history of Frémont’s life through the year 1847. His wife, Jessie, attempted to chronicle the remaining forty-three years of her husband’s life in a manuscript she titled “Great Events during the Life of Major General John C. Frémont,” but the manuscript was never published.

23 “Lieutenant Fremont’s Expedition to Oregon and California,” Nauvoo Neighbor January 1845, 3.


25 “Capt. Fremont’s Expedition,” Nauvoo Neighbor, 1. Nearly the entire first page (six columns) of the September 17 issue is devoted to information regarding Frémont’s 1843–44 expedition. In prefacing the article, John Taylor, editor of the Neighbor, noted that the information was originally printed in the National Intelligencer, a daily newspaper published in Washington, D.C., circulated widely throughout the United States.
the vicinity of Utah and the Great Salt Lake. The closing paragraphs in the September 17 issue of the Neighbor perhaps reveal the extent to which the Mormons were interested in the Great Basin region by that time:

The Great Salt Lake, one of the wonders of nature, and perhaps without rival in the world, (being a saturated solution of salt, of a hundred miles in diameter,) is for the first time revealed to our view, by one who has surveyed its shores and navigated its waters.—The Bear River Valley, with its rich bottoms, fine grass, walled up mountains, hot springs, mineral springs, soda fountains, volcanic rock, volcanic crater, and saline effervescences, and four thousand five hundred feet above the sea, is for the first time described. . . .

Of the Geographical discoveries and descriptions, the most striking is that of the Great Basin or vast interior plane [sic] which lies between the Sierra Nevada and Rocky Mountains east and west, and between the Blue mountains and the Wahsatch [sic] on the South, and embracing an area of five or six hundred miles in diameter. The elevation of the Sierra Nevada being more lofty than the Rocky Mountains accounts for the formation of the Great Basin, as Lieutenant Frémont called it, and of which he is the first to announce its existence to the world. A basin which may hold such a kingdom as France, and which has for its rim a circle of mountains, whose summits penetrate the regions of eternal snow, is certainly a new and grand object to be revealed.

By late August Mormon leaders had proposed that the main place of Mormon settlement would possibly be in the vicinity of Utah Lake in present-day Utah County. However, those plans were quickly modified. On September 9, the Council of Fifty proposed that “a company of 1500 men be selected to go to the Great Salt Lake Valley.”

Brigham Young and other church leaders were intensely interested in Frémont’s Report and read from it frequently. On December 20, 1845, members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles assembled in the attic room of the Nauvoo Temple listened to Franklin D. Richards read from Frémont’s published narrative. Heber C. Kimball wrote a few more details concerning the reading: “Pres. Young having slept in the Temple last night was early at his post, and dictating in relation to the business of the day. And arranging the workmen in order, . . . after which he listened to a reading from Capt. Frémont’s journal by Franklin D. Richards in the east room. . . . Amasa Lyman came in during the reading, also Heber C. Kimball, at a quarter to 10. The reading was finished at 10 o’clock.”

A week and a half later, on December 29, William

26 “Captain Fremont’s Second Exploring Expedition,” Nauvoo Neighbor, 1. Beginning in September 1845, excerpts from Frémont’s Report were printed in other Illinois newspapers, including successive issues of the Sangamo Journal (Springfield, Illinois).

27 “Capt. Fremont’s Expedition,” 1. It appears the editors of the Neighbor extracted the summary of Frémont’s assessment of the Great Salt Lake and the Great Basin region from other published reports that had circulated around the country. For example, the July–August issue of the United States Magazine and Democratic Review published in New York City, printed the same narrative that appeared in the September 17 issue of the Neighbor. See United States Magazine and Democratic Review 17, no. 85 (July–August 1845): 73.


Clayton reported that Young “spent near an hour reading Capt. Frémont’s Narrative, after which he retired for the night.”

Brigham Young was misled in one particular way by Frémont’s reporting. After reading the Report, the Mormon leader was of the opinion that the Great Salt Lake and Utah Lake were in fact one lake. When Frémont was in the vicinity of Utah Lake for two days during the latter part of the month of May 1844, he explored only the southern portion of Utah Valley before heading east through Spanish Fork Canyon. Since he did not explore the region between Utah Lake and the Great Salt Lake, the explorer-scientist made the following incorrect conclusion about the relationship of the two bodies of water:

It [Utah Lake] is a lake of note in this country, under the dominion of the Utahs, who resort to it for fish. Its greatest breadth is about 15 miles, stretching far to the north, narrowing as it goes, and connecting with the Great Salt Lake. This is the report, and which I believe to be correct; but it [Utah Lake] is fresh water, while the other [the Great Salt Lake] is not only salt; but a saturated solution of salt; and here is a problem which requires to be solved. . . . The Utah [Lake] is the southern limb of the Great Salt Lake; and thus we have seen that remarkable sheet of water both at its northern and southern extremity.

Frémont’s conclusions about the two lakes were definitely inaccurate, and it is easy to see how Brigham Young was misled by the explorer’s reporting.

Some years after the Mormons settled in the Great Salt Lake Valley, Eli Perkins interviewed Brigham Young. During the course of the interview, Perkins recorded that when Brigham Young read Frémont’s report, the Mormon leader came away with the idea that the Great Salt Lake was composed of both salt and fresh water. A portion of the Perkins-Young interview, which appeared in the New York Times, reads as follows:

“How came you to think of Utah?” I asked.
“Well, we had read an account of Gen. Fremont’s travels—how he found a large salt lake in the interior of our continent, in the middle of a fertile plain. We read the account of his rowing to an island in the centre of the lake in an India-rubber boat, and how the south end of the lake was fresh and the north salt.”
“But the south end of Salt Lake is not fresh, is it?” I asked.
“No; Fremont made a mistake. In going to the south of Salt Lake he struck Utah Lake, another lake, and thought it was a continuation of the same lake.”


33 Frémont, Report, 273–74.

34 Eli Perkins, “Growth of Mormondom,” New York Times June 2, 1887, 3. Perkins conducted the interview with Young on May 14, 1877. A portion of the interview was also included by Frémont in Memoirs of My Life, 415. In speaking to a congregation of Latter-day Saints in Brigham City, Utah, in 1865, George A. Smith, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, perhaps speaking tongue-in-cheek “alluded to the explorations of John C.
When Frémont read the Perkins-Young interview in the *Times*, the explorer responded with his own explanation of the alleged discrepancy about the two lakes and insisted that he did not err in his reporting and that Brigham Young was in error. However, from his description given in the *Report*, it is clear that in 1844 Frémont did not understand the true relationship of the two lakes. Two pieces of evidence support this conclusion. First, on the map of his 1842 and 1843–44 expeditions, Frémont and cartographer Charles Preuss joined Utah Lake and the Great Salt Lake with a rather large narrow channel, essentially making them one lake (fig. 6). Second, in his expedition through Utah the following year (1845), Frémont spent some two weeks in the vicinity of both Utah Lake and the Great Salt Lake. On this occasion he investigated the northern shore of Utah Lake and clearly saw what is today the Jordan River flowing some twenty-five miles northward into the Great Salt Lake. It was at this time that he clearly understood the relationship between the two bodies of water. This is evident from Frémont’s 1848 map, on which he made the necessary correction and showed the two lakes being connected by the Jordan River (fig. 7).

By 1846, LDS converts living in the British Isles were also reading about Frémont’s adventures in the American West and more specifically the Great Basin region. When Congress ordered that the *Report* be printed, no copyright was attached to the document, and publishers were free to reproduce the *Report* without restriction, resulting in numerous publishing companies reprinting the document under various titles. In 1846, for example, Wiley Putnam Publishers of London completed a printing of Frémont’s narrative. Using the Wiley Putnam edition, Orson Hyde, editor of the *Millennial Star*, a newspaper published in Liverpool, published excerpts of Frémont’s 1843–44 expedition. Perhaps Hyde hoped that by publishing Frémont’s favorable descriptions of the newly proposed Mormon place of settlement, British Mormons would be more inclined to gather to Zion.

Although the Mormons had obtained a copy of Frémont’s narrative of the 1842 expedition by early 1844 and the explorer’s published *Report* of the 1842 and 1843–44 expeditions by September 1845, church leaders apparently did not obtain Frémont’s map of the “combined” expeditions until March 27, 1847, just a few days

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Figure 7. A portion of the John C. Frémont and Charles Preuss Map of Oregon and Upper California (1848). *While en route to California in 1845, Frémont passed through the northern Utah region, bringing him once again in the vicinity of Utah Lake and the Great Salt Lake. On this occasion, he observed firsthand that the two lakes were actually not connected by a narrow channel but that Utah Lake had an outlet—the Jordan River (titled the “Utah” river by Fremont on his map)—which flowed north and emptied into the Great Salt Lake.*

Fremont, who with men furnished to him, and at the expense of some $40,000 to the government, had made a wonderful discovery that the Great Salt Lake and Utah Lake were one sheet of water, propounding the startling proposition, how the north end of the same lake could be salt and the south end fresh!” E. L. Sloan, “President B. Young’s Trip to Cache Valley,” *Deseret News* May 17, 1865, 260.

36 The following issues of the *Millennial Star* included passages from Frémont’s *Report*: March 1, 1846, 65–66; March 15, 1846, 81–85; April 1, 1846, 97–102; April 15, 1846, 113–17; May 1, 1846, 129–32; May 15, 1846, 145–48; June 1, 1846, 161–65; June 15, 1846, 177–82; July 15, 1846, 2–5; August 1, 1846, 17–19; August 15, 1846, 33–35; September 1, 1846, 49–52; October 1, 1846, 65–67; October 15, 1846, 81–84.
Upon completion of the second expedition, Frémont and his cartographer, Charles Preuss, combined to produce a large lithographed map of both the 1842 and 1843–44 expeditions. Like the report, the map was also completed in 1845, but it was published separately. This explains how the Saints could have obtained a copy of the report in 1845, but not the large detailed map. There can be little doubt that the map given by Atchison to Mormon leaders at Winter Quarters was Frémont’s 1845 map. On April 4, eight days after receiving it, Young recorded: “T[om] Bullock made a sketch of Capt. Fremont’s topographical map of [the] road to Oregon for the use of the Pioneers.”

It appears that the main contribution Mormon leaders obtained from Frémont’s report was not necessarily to assist them in knowing the route which they were to travel to the valley of the Great Salt Lake, although the report and maps certainly gave them assistance. Of greater importance and concern was learning about the agricultural and geographic characteristics of the region in order to assess whether the region would meet the needs of the vast number of people they envisioned would settle in the region. Assessments by Frémont, such as the following, must have played an important part in the decision by the Church’s leadership to settle in the vicinity of the Great Salt Lake:

Taking leave at this point of the water of the Bear River, and of the geographical basin which encloses the system of rivers and creeks which belong to the Great Salt Lake, and which so richly deserves a future and detailed and ample exploration, I can say of it, in general terms, that the bottoms of this river, (Bear) and some of the creeks which I saw, form a natural resting and recruiting station for travelers, now, and in all time to come. The bottoms are extensive; water excellent; timber sufficient; the soil good, and well adapted to the grains and grasses to such an elevated region.

Prior to leaving Winter Quarters for the trek west, Brigham Young noted that on this date he received a copy of Frémont’s Map of an Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in the Years 1842 and to Oregon & North California in the Years 1843–44 (published 1845) from Missouri Senator David R. Atchison, former legal counsel to the Mormons in Missouri (fig. 8).37

rights as citizens. It appears he still had sympathetic feelings for the Saints in his gesture of making sure Mormon leaders had a copy of Frémont’s 1845 map to assist them on their trek west.

37 Elden J. Watson, ed., Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 1846–1847 (Salt Lake City: the Compiler, 1971), 542. Atchison was a longtime friend of the Mormons. Following the expulsion of the Mormons from Jackson County, Missouri, in late 1833, Atchison was one of several attorneys hired to help the displaced Mormons. As a general in the state militia during the years 1838–39, he vigorously sought to help secure the Saints their

38 Ibid., 545.
In 1848, when he presented his *Geographical Memoir Upon Upper California* to the United States Senate, Frémont was no doubt pleased to report to the lawmakers that the Mormon people had settled in the Great Basin, an area he promoted as being rich in natural resources. And although he reported that “the general character of the Great Basin was that of a desert,” he also added, “but with great expectations, there being many parts of it very fit for the residence of a civilized people; and of these parts, the Mormons have lately established themselves in one of the largest and the best.”

Frémont’s published narratives and maps from his first and second expeditions had a profound impact on the Mormons in Illinois. Mormon leaders were particularly interested in the information he provided about the geographical elements, and the agricultural and economic potential of the Bear River area, the Salt Lake Valley, and the Great Basin in general. The explorer’s assessment of this geographic region played a significant part in the decision by Mormon leaders in Illinois in their selection of northern Utah as the main place of Mormon settlement in the West.

High on the bench east of Salt Lake City is the This Is the Place Monument, erected and dedicated in 1947 as part of the centennial celebration commemorating the arrival of the Mormon pioneers in July 1847. Featured on the granite base and tower are a number of bronze-cast figures created by the renowned Latter-day Saint sculptor Mahonri M. Young (grandson of Brigham Young). Most notable are the large statues of Mormon leaders Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Wilford Woodruff, who stand atop the centerpiece while gazing to the west over the Salt Lake Valley. In addition, nearly twenty other figures are situated around the monument’s base, including one representing John C. Frémont (fig. 9). A plaque, placed in front, provides a fitting tribute highlighting the contributions of the explorer to the Utah region and his influence upon the Mormon populace:

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40 Ibid., 277.

JOHN C. FRÉMONT

1813–1890

Pathfinder, explorer, soldier, statesman. Led five significant exploring and scientific expeditions to the West, 1842–54, three of which traversed the Great Basin to California. Conducted the first scientific exploration of the Great Salt Lake in 1843 and was the first to traverse the treacherous Great Salt Lake Desert directly westward from [the] Great Salt Lake to the site of modern Elko, Nevada. His report and map published in 1845 were invaluable to the Mormon pioneers in their westward journey.

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WEB SUPPLEMENT

At history.utah.gov/uhqextras, we present an interview with Alexander L. Baugh on John C. Frémont.
“Observation of Sun with Sextant, Camp Floyd, Utah Terr,” late 1858 or early 1859. In this photograph, Lieut. J. L. Kirby Smith (seated at right) demonstrates how he sights a sextant to calculate the angle between the sun and the horizon for determining their latitude. Meanwhile, William Lee (at left) is recording the exact time of the measurement using a chronometer. The expedition’s taxidermist, Charles McCarthy, is standing at center observing this important mapping operation. By Samuel C. Mills and Edward Jägiello.

Library of Congress
“SHADOWY FIGURES ABOUT WHOM LITTLE IS KNOWN”

BY EPHRIAM D. DICKSON III

In 1858–59, Captain James H. Simpson of the U.S. Army’s Corps of Topographical Engineers surveyed several new roads in Utah Territory, including a wagon route across the Great Basin desert from Camp Floyd to central California. This new shortcut was soon utilized by the Overland mail and stage line, the Pony Express, the transcontinental telegraph, as well as by many westbound emigrant wagon trains. Less well known are Simpson’s pioneering efforts to experiment with the new emerging technology of photography as a tool for documenting the landscapes across which he traveled.1

In the preface to his official exploration report, Simpson acknowledged the officers and civilians who had served on his expedition, including three artists. He especially thanked Mr. H. V. A. Von Beckh “for the original sketches of scenery” and noted that “a couple of gentlemen accompanied me as photographers.”2 Several years later in writing about the

2 James H. Simpson, Report of Explorations across the Great Basin of the Territory of Utah for a Direct Wagon Route from Camp Floyd to Genoa, in Carson Valley, in 1859
preferred railroad route across the continent, Simpson again made reference to his original survey team, this time listing his photographers by name: C. C. Mills and his assistant Edward Jagiello. But since then, scholars have struggled to identify exactly who these three artists were. Art historians noted that Von Beckh may have been a soldier from Camp Floyd. Photo-

graphic historians Peter Palmquist and Thomas Kailbourn searched for years to uncover biographical details about Mills or Jagiello, finally describing the two men as simply “shad-

owy figures about whom little is known.”

The author’s discovery of previously unknown records from the Simpson Expedition helps finally solve the mystery of the artists’ identities. Simpson’s original field journals, letter books, and survey notebooks were found buried within the records of the Corps of Engineers at the National Archives, while the Department of Treasury files provided his receipts and pay accounts. Simpson sent dispatches to his hometown newspaper, and additional research located brief accounts and additional photo-

graphs by both his photographer and assistant.

(14th Street: Government Printing Office, 1876). His original handwritten final manuscript of this report survives at the Library of Congress.

3 J. H. Simpson, The Shortest Route to California (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1869), 32. This document contained a typographical error regarding Mill’s initials, one that subsequently led historians astray.


Figures 1–2. Samuel C. Mills (left) and Edward Jagiello (right) were the two civilian photographers hired to accompany the Simpson Expedition to Utah in 1858. These self portraits were probably taken at Camp Floyd in their temporary studio in early 1859.
photographer, including their self portraits (figs. 1–2). Finally, the unpublished diary and a set of drawings belonging to a Seventh Infantry officer who socialized with Simpson at Camp Floyd were found, providing additional details about the sketch artist. Using this wealth of new primary sources, this article will introduce readers to Simpson’s three artists and help place their body of work within the larger historical context, as the army’s scientific corps experimented with the innovation of photography.6

During the two decades prior to the Civil War, most federal funds for western exploration were allocated to the U.S. Army, in particular to the Corps of Topographical Engineers. Under the energetic direction of Colonel John J. Abert, army engineers mapped the unexplored western lands and laid out routes for new roads. Many of these early army expeditions included a team of civilian specialists in botany, zoology, and geology who described the natural history and collected samples for the fledgling Smithsonian Institution. Most army expeditions also hired an artist to create sketches from which engravings were later made to illustrate their final reports. Once published, their artwork played an important role in shaping the public’s perception of the American West.7

Located at the center of overland traffic, Utah Territory soon became an area of focus for early army exploration. The noted explorer Captain John C. Frémont passed through this region three times between 1843 and 1853. Captain Howard Stansbury and his assistant, First Lieu-

6 Captain Simpson’s field journals, letter books, chronometer logs, sextant time books, astronomical observations, and an Indian vocabulary are located in Field Survey Records, Entry 161, Records of the Office of the Chief of Engineers, RG 77, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). See also Simpson Survey file, U.D. 334, Survey 15, Records of the Accounting Officers of the Department of the Treasury, 1775–1978, RG 217, NARA; Settled Accounts of Army Paymasters, 1815–1863, Entry 516, RG 217; and Reports of Persons and Articles Hired, Entry 238, Records of the Quartermaster General, RG 92, NARA. The diaries of Captain Henry Little are located in Fielding Tyler’s private collection.

In 1857, newly elected president James Buchanan ordered a large military force to Utah Territory to reestablish federal authority in a region viewed by many to be on the verge of rebellion. About fifteen hundred troops marched from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, with the mission to establish several military posts and to support the newly appointed territorial governor and other federal officials. But the columns departed late in the season. The Mormon militia burned three of the contractor’s wagon trains filled with army supplies, and the arrival of the season’s first snows stalled the troops before they could reach Salt Lake City. Federal troops spent a long cold winter encamped in tents at Fort Bridger. Meanwhile back in Washington, D.C., the secretary of war determined that additional troops were needed to reinforce the original expedition.8

Among the new reinforcements assigned was a small party of Topographical Engineers under the command of Captain James H. Simpson. Intelligent and devoutly religious, the forty-five year old officer brought considerable energy and experience to his new assignment. A graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, Simpson had been initially assigned to the artillery. But after serving as aide-de-camp to General Abram Eustis during the Seminole War in Florida, he landed a coveted spot with the newly created Corps of Topographical Engineers in 1838. His next ten years were a whirl of engineering activities, including harbor improvements on Lake Erie, road surveying in Florida, and overseeing the construction of a light house in Michigan. Then in 1849, Simpson was selected as the topographical engineer for an overland expedition from Fort Smith, Arkansas, to Santa Fe, New Mexico, his first experience in the West. Keeping detailed notes, he crafted a lengthy report of the region’s geography with details about its flora, fauna, and Indian tribes that garnered considerable attention upon its publication. Simpson’s next assignment took him to St. Paul, Minnesota, for four years to supervise road construction. Then in 1856, having caught the attention of the prominent civilian scientist Alexander D. Bache, he was detailed for special duty with the U.S. Coastal Survey.11

During his military career, Simpson had apparently built considerable political support, as evidenced by how he was selected for the assignment to Utah Territory. When General-in-Chief Winfield Scott called for two topographical engineers to accompany the reinforcements to Utah, Abert originally selected his son, Captain James W. Abert, as well as First Lieutenant Francis T. Bryan who had previous experience in the region surveying a new road across Nebraska to Fort Bridger through Bridger’s Pass. But two weeks after these orders had been issued, and while these officers were closing out their previous activities in preparation for the expedition, the secretary of war suddenly altered the selection without explanation. Instead, Simpson would now lead the party to Utah Territory.12

In early March 1858, Simpson arrived in Washington, D.C. to complete preparations for his new assignment. After discussing his options with Abert and other topographical engineers at the war department, Simpson proposed that his first task would be to remap the main emigrant trail on his way to Utah. Over the years, this road had evolved as new shortcuts were pioneered and other sections abandoned.13 By 1858, many of the earlier maps and emigrant guide books had become outdated and were inaccurate. “The reconnaissances of Captain Frémont and Capt. Stansbury are good,” fellow engineer Lieutenant Gouverneur K. Warren advised Simpson, “but they probably do not coincide with the roads now used.”14 Simpson proposed creating a new updated map with a detailed trail itinerary, one that would be of great value to the army as well as to the large number of civilian freighters and emigrants who used the road.

But this would not be just any guide book. Simpson had recently become enamored with the field photographs of the Crimean War taken by British photographers Roger Fenton and James Robertson, and he believed that he could similarly utilize this new technology on his expedition to Utah. Warren encouraged the idea, suggesting that “a photograph view of Courthouse Rock, Chimney Rock and especially of Scotts bluffs would be exceedingly interest-

12 Circular, Army Headquarters, January 11, 1858, Letters Received, Adjutant General’s Office, RG 94 (Microcopy 567, roll 574, index 6–9), NARA; Col. J. J. Abert to Col. S. Cooper, January 13, 1858, Letters Received, Headquarters of the Army, RG 108 (M1635, roll 41, index 13–14), NARA; Special Orders No. 10, January 27, 1858, and Special Orders No. 22, February 12, 1858, Headquarters of the Army, 180:438, 443–44, Entry 41, RG 108; Maj. Irvin McDowell to Col. J. J. Abert, February 15, 1858, Letters Received, Topographical Engineers, RG 77 (M506, roll 2, index 465–466).
ing.” If successful, his would be the first emigrant guidebook illustrated through the lens of a camera.

Other army officers who had previously experimented with the use of field photography met with little success. Frémont, for example, had purchased a daguerreotype camera for both his 1842 and 1843 expeditions but struggled because of his inexperience with the equipment and the delicate developing process. By the mid-1850s, however, the original daguerreotype had given way to the new collodion or wet-plate process that proved more economical and less temperamental to surrounding conditions. In addition, the invention of light sensitive photographic paper now allowed for images to be captured on glass plate negatives from which multiple paper prints could be made, the beginnings of mass production that would forever change the art. These technological advancements offered new hope for the camera’s use in the rugged conditions of the western territories.

Within days of his arrival in Washington, D.C., Simpson submitted his list of needed equipment. In addition to the typical survey instruments such as prismatic compasses, artificial horizons and an astronomical transit, Simpson also requested a “Photographic Apparatus” at an estimated cost between $200 and $400. For this, he turned to Captain Israel C. Woodruff for assistance. Responsible for the inventory and purchase of all equipment used by the Topographical Engineers, Woodruff himself had previously taken a camera on his expedition from Fort Gibson, Indian Territory, in 1850 and had recently arranged for a camera and photographic supplies to accompany First Lieutenant Joseph C. Ives on his Colorado River explorations. Woodruff soon purchased the needed camera, packing it with the other survey instruments for shipment to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, from where all the troops for Utah were to depart. Simpson himself made a quick trip to New York City where he visited E. Anthony’s photographic shop on Broadway to obtain the needed photographic chemicals and probably some technical advice as well.

If Frémont’s failed experiment offered any lesson to Simpson, it was that field photography depended upon more than simply possessing the camera and the developing equipment—he also needed the services of a professional photographer, someone who had both the eye of an artist and the practical skills of a chemist. While in New York City, Simpson wrote to Charles Ehrmann, one of the pioneers in American photography then living in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. This German born pharmacist-turned-artist had initially worked in the Philadelphia studio of noted photographer James McClees and had been involved in the early refinement of the wet-plate process. But by 1858, Ehrmann appears to have been unemployed after McClees moved his studio to Washington, D.C. Simpson offered him the dual position of photographer and collector of natural history specimens. “Mindful of dangers and privations that such an expedition undoubtedly will bring upon its followers,” the thirty-six-year-old photographer replied to Simpson’s offer: “I am not so young any more as to look merely upon the romantic and adventurous parts of such an expedition.” Ehrmann’s request for a permanent position as photograph-

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15 Ibid.
16 Capt. J. H. Simpson to Col. J. J. Abert, October 14, 1858, Letters Received, Topographical Engineers, RG 77 (M506, roll 67, index 1076–1082); also in Simpson letter books, 1-42–47, Field Survey Records, RG 77.
18 Capt. J. H. Simpson to Col. J. J. Abert, March 11, 1858, Letters Received, Topographical Engineers, RG 77 (M506, roll 67, index 800–805).
19 In May, Woodruff requested permission to travel to New York City and Boston to purchase instruments for the Corps, including “1 Photographic Apparatus (furnished Capt. Simpson). $497.20.” Capt. I. C. Woodruff to Col. J. J. Abert, May 24, 1858, Letters Received, Topographical Engineers, RG 77 (M506, roll 83, index 388–391); Simpson, Report of Explorations, 8. Ives’ equipment was destroyed at the mouth of the Colorado River in December 1857, though given his limited correspondence with Washington, it is probable that Simpson did not learn of this until much later.
pher in the War Department was declined by the secretary of war.\textsuperscript{20}

With Ehrmann’s unwillingness to take the position and his time for preparations quickly drawing to a close, Simpson submitted a request to hire a photographer at $40 per month and an assistant photographer at $25 per month, inclusive of their traveling expenses.\textsuperscript{21} He then turned to the local photographic community in Washington, D.C. to identify a possible candidate. Just down the street from the War Department offices, Blanchard P. Paige had been operating a successful photographic gallery on Pennsylvania Avenue for the past fifteen years. Among his employees was a twenty-five-year-old artist named Samuel C. Mills, the son of a shoemaker in the city. Mills had become interested in the photographic arts and joined Paige’s gallery two years earlier, probably initially as an apprentice. Mills soon developed his skills as a portrait photographer, mastering the art of composition and chemistry. How Simpson initially met young Mills is lost to history, but one can imagine the officer simply walking into the studio and probing the gallery manager for advice of how to find the type of individual he was looking for. He soon invited Samuel Mills to join his adventure to Utah.\textsuperscript{22}

Simpson found his assistant photographer through the military social network in the capital city. Army officers were frequent guests at the Alexandria home of Major Gaspar Tochman, a Polish dissident and now prominent D.C. lawyer who was a close friend of the former secretary of war. Lee also kept a personal diary of his experiences.\textsuperscript{24}

In April 1858, Mills and Jagiello joined Simpson in Buffalo, New York, as the officer visited his wife and daughter in advance of yet another extended absence. Leaving Buffalo on April 13, the three men first traveled to Cincinnati, where they were joined by two additional members of the party. Charles S. McCarthy had agreed to serve as the expedition’s taxidermist, upon the recommendation of Major William H. Emory for whom he had worked two years earlier on the Mexican border survey. William Lee, the seventeen-year-old son of a clerk in the secretary of war’s office, was hired as Simpson’s secretary. Lee also kept a personal diary of his experiences.\textsuperscript{23}

Newspapers that spring had continuously reported on the evolving situation in Utah Territory. Under fire from Congress over his unilateral decision to send the Utah Expedition and for encumbering its staggering costs during the worst economic decline in twenty years, President Buchanan felt political pressure to find a diplomatic solution. He decided to send two peace commissioners, former Kentucky governor Lazarus W. Powell and Texas U.S. marshal Ben McCulloch, to deliver an ultimatum. Mormon leaders could either agree to abide by U.S. law and accept a pardon for past

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{21} Capt. J. H. Simpson to Col. J. J. Abert, March 29, 1858, Letters Received, Topographical Engineers, RG 77 (M506, roll 67, index 811–812).
  \item \textsuperscript{23} Sarah Hale, Woman’s Record; Or, Sketches of All Distinguished Women (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1874), 704–6; Grace Greenwood, “Reminiscences of Washington Before the War,” The Independent (New York), vol. 55, no. 2851 (July 1903), 1733–34. The Washington, D.C. Evening Star reported the arrival of a man named E. Jagiello at the Brown’s Hotel in April 1857.
  \item \textsuperscript{24} Buffalo Daily Courier, April 13, 1858; William Lee Diary, Lee-Palfrey Family Papers, Library of Congress. See also John P. Langellier, “The William Lee Diary Account of the James H. Simpson Expedition, 1858–59,” Annals of Wyoming 59, no. 2 (Fall 1987): 36–47.
\end{itemize}
rebellious actions or, the president warned, the army would enforce the law and “let the consequences fall on your heads.” On the train from Cincinnati to St. Louis, Simpson and his party unexpectedly encountered these two commissioners as they headed to Utah. Simpson described Governor Powell as “a shrewd, kind-hearted, venerable man” and McCullough as having “all the air of a sharp, resolute character, yet, under all this there seems to be a deep substratum of caution, that will, no doubt, prevent his doing anything rash.” Ultimately, Powell and McCulloch were successful in bringing about a peaceful resolution to the standoff, and General Albert S. Johnston’s troops at Fort Bridger advanced through Salt Lake City without incident.

Meanwhile, Simpson and his party arrived in St. Louis on April 15 and found the city in mourning for the late Missouri senator Thomas Hart Benton who had recently passed away in Washington, D.C. Benton had done more than any other congressman to promote westward expansion, and his famous son-in-law, John C. Frémont, had created many of the maps Simpson now carried with him as reference. The captain watched as the long procession passed, including a hearse drawn by four black horses draped in black and escorted by the Seventh Infantry. Simpson was now part of the small cadre of army officers whose explorations were helping make Benton’s vision a reality.

While in St. Louis, Simpson met with fellow engineer Lieut. Francis T. Bryan. Since being relieved from the expedition that Simpson now commanded, Bryan had been assigned to the First Column of reinforcements that would soon be departing Fort Leavenworth. His task was to lead the troops along his new route to Fort Bridger via Lodgepole Creek and Bridger’s Pass, making the road passable for wagons to more easily supply the army in Utah. Bryan urged Simpson to add a civilian geologist to his scientific team and recommended Henry Engelmann who had served on his crew the previous year. In addition to his field experience and technical knowledge, the young geologist also brought connections to his older brother, Dr. George Engelmann, a prominent St. Louis physician and a botanist of some renown. If the plant samples were sent to St. Louis, the doctor was willing to identify them and write a brief description for Simpson’s final scientific report.

After settling into his camp near Fort Leavenworth, Simpson worked tirelessly to complete the final arrangements for his expedition. He now had two second lieutenants of the Topographical Engineers—Lieutenants J. L. Kirby Smith and Haldimand S. Putnam—as well as five civilian employees. Simpson also hired a cook and several laborers to take care of various camp duties while his free black servant, John, attended to his uniform and other personal needs. Simpson had a special spring wagon constructed for hauling the fragile survey instruments, while the Quartermaster Department provided an army ambulance for his use and assigned several escort wagons with mule teams and civilian drivers to haul their supplies, tents, and baggage.

On April 28, wood crates packed with instruments arrived by a Missouri River steamer. As the men spent the next month familiarizing themselves with the equipment, Mills and Jagiello practiced using their new camera. Simpson noted in his diary that Mills produced three photographic views of Captain William F. Barry’s battery of the Second Artillery, “one quite good, the others failures.” Among Mills’ sur-


26 Capt. J. H. Simpson dispatch, April 26, 1858, published in Buffalo Courier, May 4, 1858. Simpson wrote a series of letters to the Buffalo Courier providing details about his overland trip to Utah.

27 Lee diary, April 16, 1858, Lee-Palfrey Family Papers; Chicago Daily Tribune, April 17, 1858.


29 James W. Abert initially joined Simpson at Fort Leavenworth but prevailed upon his father to forward a request to General Scott to be reassigned, since he would not be leading the expedition. Col. J. J. Abert to Gen. W. Scott, March 27, 1858, Letters Received, Headquarters of the Army, RG 77 (M1635, roll 41, index 58–63).

30 Simpson field journals, May 26, 1858, Field Survey
viving images of Fort Leavenworth are three views of buildings—the oldest known of the post—and a fourth of Simpson’s camp overlooking the Missouri River, evidence that the artists were mastering the use of their new “photographic apparatus.”

The topographical party finally departed Fort Leavenworth on May 31, 1858. During their first days on the road, Simpson taught the young “tenderfoots” how to adjust to their new camp life, learning to cook over campfires and to properly erect their tents each evening. On one occasion shortly after their departure, William Lee casually put up his tent only to discover during the night that rain was flooding him out. He quickly learned to dig a trench around his tent each evening to drain away any pooling water. Under Simpson’s watchful eye, the men also practiced firing their weapons at targets, and everyone took their turn on the night guard duty. They later laughed over an incident when Edward Jagiello, on guard detail one night, fired his weapon in the air after spotting a figure approaching the expedition’s mules. The figure proved to be a drunken soldier who raced back into camp, convinced that the Mormons were attacking. “Am beginning to get used to camp life,” Lee noted at one point in his diary.31

Assistant photographer Edward Jagiello seemed particularly impressed with Simpson, his photographic skills.

31 Lee diary, April 24, June 2, 3, 1858, Lee-Palfrey Family Papers; Simpson field journal, June 2, 1858 and Lieut. J. L. Kirby Smith notes and observation book, entry for June 3, 1858, Field Survey Records, RG 77.
not only for his field experience but also for the confidence that he exuded and his strong work ethic. “From the day of leaving Fort Leavenworth you might have seen Capt. Simpson all day on horseback with his memorandum book in hand,” Jagiello wrote in a letter home. “Every day he went several miles from the road, seeking water, grass, wood, encamping places, comforts of travelers, &c. He was never tired; always the first on horse and the last off.” On Sundays, Simpson often brought out his box of Bibles and hymnals, leading a religious service for any who wanted to attend. “It is a fine spectacle to see in a wilderness a party of eighteen men on Sunday praying around their Captain,” Jagiello observed. “The captain was dressed in his uniform, the other officers in like manner, and all the men as neat and clean as they could have found themselves in any church in Washington.”

Among his many duties, Simpson demonstrated a particular interest in his photographic experiment, personally directing many of the images that were to be taken. For example, on June 9, while stopped on the Big Blue River, a tributary of the Kansas River, near the large encampment of the Third Column of reinforcements for Utah, Simpson rode with several officers to scout for a good vantage point from which to produce an image of the extensive gathering of tents and wagons. “Found some fine points of view & Mr. Mills and Jagiello got everything ready to take the views,” Simpson recorded in his diary, “but a rain coming up which continued all day, nothing could be done.” Several days later, Simpson directed his photographers to produce an image of their own camp on the Little Blue. “Succeeded very well,” Simpson noted.

32 Extracts from the letter “of a Polish gentleman attached to the Topographical Corps of the Army in Utah” (no doubt Edward Jagiello), published in National Intelligencer, May 17, 1859.
33 Simpson field journals, June 9, 10 and 15, 1858, Field
After arriving at Fort Kearny in mid-June, Simpson turned over the supervision of his topographical party to his most senior subordinate, J. L. Kirby Smith, while he traveled in advance as a member of General Harney’s staff. Simpson had now spent the past two months training his young lieutenants how to use their survey instruments and had preached about camp safety and protocol. He believed they were now ready to continue on their own. Among the instructions that Simpson left for Smith was specific guidance for the expedition’s artists. “Photographic pictures of as many prominent scenes as possible will also be taken,” Simpson wrote, “including Fort Kearney [sic], Court House & Chimney Rocks, Fort Laramie & every other proper object or scene.”34 Later on the trail, Simpson instructed Smith to get a good view of Ash Hollow, noting that such “would make a fine illustration for the report.” He again

Figure 5. “Butte,” September 1858. This view shows one of the prominent red rock formations later known as the Devil’s Post Office located near the head of Echo Canyon. This was later the site of a stage station and Pony Express stop. By Samuel C. Mills and Edward Jagiello.

Library of Congress

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emphasized the importance of securing “as many views taken of remarkable topographical and geological features of the region traversed as possible... even if the party is delayed by it.”

Under Smith’s leadership, the small party dutifully complied. “Stopped at Court House Rock on our road today,” William Lee noted in his diary on July 25, “and Mills (the photographer) took a picture.” Extant images confirm that the photographers produced negatives of a number of important landmarks along the trail, including Scotts Bluff, Fort Laramie, Devil’s Gate, Fort Bridger, and the head of Echo Canyon (figs. 3–5). These photographs by Mills and Jagiello are the earliest surviving views from along the Oregon-California Trail. Upon their arrival in Salt Lake City, Smith’s party fell in with the 7th Infantry as they marched through the city streets to the stirring music of the regimental band. “There is attached to this corps two experienced photographers, Mills and Yagiello, with apparatus complete for taking views of the scenery, etc., along the route,” wrote one resident who watched the military parade. “They have, I understand, secured some very fine pictures on the road between here and the frontier of Missouri.

After three and a half long months on the road, the topographical party finally arrived at Camp Floyd on September 15, but there was no time for rest. Simpson immediately sent Smith and his party back to the field to help establish a new road between Camp Floyd and Fort Bridger through Timpanogos (or Provo) Canyon, and they spent several months surveying the boundaries for the new military reservations at Fort Bridger, Camp Floyd, and Rush Valley. Returning to Camp Floyd, Simpson and his crew then drafted a lengthy report describing the roads of Utah Territory, complete with a detailed map.

As the survey team finally settled in at Camp Floyd for the winter, Mills and Yagiello were provided with a room for use as a photographic studio in one of the numerous adobe and wood structures just built at the post. Up to this point, the photographers had only produced “negative impressions on glass.” Now inside their jury-rigged darkroom, they began creating paper prints from the negatives, though Simpson was determined to maintain strict control of their distribution. He declined the request of an officer from Fort Laramie who had written to ask for a print of the image taken of that post, and he gave strict instructions to Mills to turn over to him all paper copies that he produced, even those that had not turned out well. “You will take particular care that no more photographs are taken than are above authorized,” Simpson cautioned, “and that none go out of your hands, into the hands of others.” He ordered that six sets of prints be made up from each of the negatives, after which all the glass plates were to be carefully packed up for shipment back to Washington, D.C.

Simpson did recognize the political value of presenting a few photographs to senior officers, though. As his young subordinate Lieut. Putnam created a detailed map of Camp Floyd, Simpson helped Mills select locations from which he wanted views taken of the sprawling military encampment, at that time the largest military garrison in North America. He then had two sets of booklets made, each containing sixteen prints, to present to Johnston and his quartermaster, Lt. Col. George H. Crosman, “to give a good idea of the style and magnitude of the post.” He also sent a single photograph of about Simpson’s new road through Provo Canyon, see John D. and Nila J. Eldredge, Historic Sites Along Captain James H. Simpson’s Wagon Road, Camp Floyd to Fort Bridger (Riverton, UT: privately printed, 2009).

36 Lee diary, July 25, 1858, Lee-Palfrey Family Papers.
37 Dispatch dated Salt Lake City, September 20, 1858, in Sacramento Daily Union, October 9, 1858.
38 U.S. Congress, Senate, Report of the Secretary of War, communicating, in compliance with a resolution of the Senate, Captain Simpson’s report and map of wagon road routes in Utah Territory, 1859, 35th Congress, 2d session, 1859, S. Doc. 40, serial 984. For additional information

39 Capt. J. H. Simpson to Lt. G. W. Hazzard, November 29, 1858; Capt. J. H. Simpson to Lt. H. S. Putnam, December 24, 1858; and Capt. J. H. Simpson to S. C. Mills, January 11, 1859; all in Simpson letter books, 1:59, 124, 135–36, Field Survey Records, RG 77. The photographic studio was also used on Sundays as a chapel, with services led by Captain Simpson, until they outgrew the facility and moved into the Fifth Infantry’s theater. National Intelligencer, May 17, 1859.
40 Capt. J. H. Simpson to Maj. F. J. Porter, February 10, 1859, Camp Floyd file, Consolidated Correspondence, Entry 225, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, RG 92; also in Simpson letter book, 1:144–46,
Camp Floyd to secretary of war John B. Floyd for whom the post had been named.\textsuperscript{41} His selective distribution of photographic prints reveals that the officer considered his camera to be not only an engineering instrument but also a useful public relations tool for promoting the success of his Utah expedition (fig. 6).

By early 1859, Simpson was increasingly concerned about his rapidly dwindling supply of photographic chemicals. Unable to find replacements in Utah, he asked for assistance from the department paymaster, Major Henry Prince, who had been ordered to travel to California to secure the next payroll for the troops in Utah. Simpson provided a list of required chemicals—silver nitrate, hyposulphate of soda, and pyroxyline among them—but worried whether Major Prince and his escort would return before the Topographical party was required to depart on the next leg of their explorations.\textsuperscript{42}

Simpson was also concerned about the dependability of his photographer. The previous summer, a traveler had encountered the survey team on their way to Utah and described Mills in his diary as “a gentleman,” but “fond of his whisky.”\textsuperscript{43} At Fort Laramie, one of the officers provided Mills with several bottles of Longworth’s Sparkling Catawba “and the whole party spent the evening in his tent and had


\textsuperscript{43} Richard Thomas Ackley, “Across the Plains in 1858,” \textit{Utah Historical Quarterly} 9 (October 1941): 197.
quite a jovial time.”44 A teetotaler, Simpson had grown increasing impatient with Mills’ habits and warned him on several occasions after he had become too incapacitated to perform his official duties. Finally on January 19, 1859, following another incident at Camp Floyd, Simpson terminated Mills’ employment with the expedition. “I have no other recourse to protect the Government and my-self from imposition and wrong,” he wrote.45

Mills panicked. He was two thousand miles from home with limited resources to return on his own and embarrassed that his actions had caused him to lose his position with the government expedition. He pleaded with Simpson for a second chance, promising to abstain from overindulgence. Simpson finally acquiesced but with a stern warning. “It is proper however for you to understand that the like revocation must not be expected under another dismissal for a similar cause.”46

The following day on January 20, a small delegation of Utes led by the prominent leader and Mormon convert Arapeen, arrived at Camp Floyd to meet with General Johnston. “The council broke up very harmoniously, the Indians shaking hands, &c.,” Simpson noted in his diary. “They then adjourned to the photographic room where I had their likenesses taken in a group.” The following day, Mills produced a portrait of Arapeen and at least one view of the delegation standing in front of a Sibley tent, the earliest surviving photograph of any Ute (fig. 7).47

44 Lee diary, August 3, 1858.
47 Simpson field journals, January 21–22, 1859, Field
Looking back on his photographic experiment two years later as he compiled his final report, Simpson characterized the overall experience as a failure. Omitting any mention of his problems with his civilian photographer or the depletion of his chemical stock, the officer attributed the shortcomings to the technology itself, explaining that the camera took too long to set up, that it performed unpredictably in the weather extremes he often encountered, and that it could not sharply capture the large landscapes of the West. “The cause lies in some degree in the difficulty, in the field, at short notice, of having the preparations perfect enough to insure good pictures,” Simpson explained, and “chiefly in the fact that the camera is not adapted to distant scenery.”

Yet the surviving photographs seem to be anything but failures. Mills’ views of Fort Laramie and Scotts Bluff, for example, are well executed and could have easily been used by an artist to create the lithographs needed for his final report. The historian Martha A. Sandweiss speculates that Simpson’s judgment was shaped by his expectations that the camera would surpass the detailed illustrations provided by traditional topographical drawings. “There remained the longstanding gap between the technological capacity of the photographic medium and the cultural demands placed upon it,” she concluded; “wet-plate photographs still fell short as tools of scientific documentation and instruments of narrative drama.”

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Concluding that the camera was not well adapted for use in the field, Simpson instead argued that “a good artist, who can sketch readily and accurately, is much to be preferred.”

But as he prepared for the next phase of his expedition, this time heading west across the Great Basin to central California, the topographical engineer wondered where he was going to find such an artist in the remote regions of Utah Territory.

While stationed at Camp Floyd during the winter of 1858–59, Simpson socialized with several officers at the post, including Captain Henry Little, commander of Company E Seventh Infantry. Both were dedicated to their military careers and shared similar challenges over the extended absence from wives and children. On one occasion during a visit to Capt. Little’s one-

room adobe quarters, Simpson noticed a number of pencil sketches pinned to his wall, drawn by Private Henry Sommer, a soldier who served in Little’s company. Given his need for a sketch artist to accompany him across the Great Basin, the engineer asked about the possibility of borrowing this soldier. “Walked with Capn. Simpson,” Little recorded in his diary one evening in March 1859. “[He] wants Sommer to go with him.”

Born in Germany, the twenty-seven year old soldier had enlisted in New York City in December 1857, giving his name as Henry Sommer. He was initially sent to Governors Island for brief training and then in March 1858 transferred to Fort Leavenworth with some two hundred other recruits assigned to fill out the ranks of the Seventh Infantry before its departure to Utah. For

51 Little diary, March 16, 1859.
the next three months, the regiment marched overland. Passing through Fort Bridger in August 1858, Private Sommer created a credible drawing of the Mormon fortification (fig. 8) and in November, Capt. Little sent him to visit the Mormon community of Nephi “to take [a] sketch.” Over the next several months, the soldier created a number of other drawings for his company commander, including both an exterior and an interior view (fig. 9) of the officer’s quarters at Camp Floyd.52

Simpson soon learned that the soldier’s real name was Henry V. A. Von Beckh. After graduating from a polytechnic school in Hesse Cassel, Germany, he had immigrated to the United States, hoping to use his skills as a draughtsman or architect to find employment. But the financial panic of 1857 made this difficult for many immigrants and the young man felt compelled to enlist in the U.S. Army, probably changing his name in an effort to blend in. Simpson described him as an educated man: “His tastes are refined & his manners gentlemanly, and I doubt not his present condition [as an enlisted soldier] is one which must be very disagreeable to him & at times very galling.”53

The request for Private Sommer to accompany the expedition was approved and he was assigned the duty “of sketching the country, in a manner to illustrate its common as well as peculiar characteristics.”54 Because the paymaster had not yet returned with the needed photographic chemicals, Simpson decided to leave his camera behind at Camp Floyd. “It will therefore be unnecessary for you to accompany the expedition,” he wrote to his troublesome photographer, “and you are hereby directed to remain at this post, in charge of said property till the return of the party.”55 Assistant photographer Edward Jagiello would go along to help with instrument observations. Simpson was now dependent upon his sketch artist to produce all the needed illustrations for his westward survey across the Great Basin.

The expedition departed Camp Floyd on May 2, 1859, accompanied by a small escort of infantry and dragoons under the command of Second Lieutenant Alexander Murry. As they headed west across the virtually unexplored Great Basin, Simpson took special interest in directing his artist for the specific views he wanted drawn, just as he had done previously with his photographer. For example, on May 11, he was struck by the beauty of the mountains surrounding Antelope Valley and “ordered a sketch.”56 The engineering officer frequently had illustrations made of the various Indians encountered, including a view of a Goshute camp as well as a portrait of the noted Shoshone leader Shokapee. On at least one occasion, Sommer was instructed to copy a rock art panel that they had discovered. When the party finally reached the westward extent of their explorations, Sommer created a sketch of the party riding into the small community of Genoa, Nevada Territory. “As we came into the town, the American flag was raised and a salute of ten guns fired,” William Lee commented in his diary.57

During the expedition, Henry Sommer appears to have been treated as a member of Simpson’s civilian team of specialists. Rather than being assigned on “detached service,” a typical Army practice for soldiers on a special military detail, Sommer was instead given a furlough or leave of absence.58 This allowed him to wear civilian clothes and to even receive pay as a civilian employee. He appears to have rarely been referred to by his military rank. For example, while most of the expedition rested in Genoa, Simpson made a quick trip over the Sierra
Nevada to Sacramento and then on to San Francisco. He provided the editor of the Sacramento Union with a list of the members of his survey party, giving the name of his artist as simply “Mr. Beck.” The surviving documents suggest that Simpson set aside Sommer’s social status as an enlisted soldier for the duration of the expedition.59

Returning to Genoa on June 23, Simpson and his party soon began the long trek back across the Great Basin, taking a month and a half to pioneer an alternate route south of their outbound journey. As before, Sommer created several “fine sketches,” including a view of Little Canyon named by Simpson in honor of his friend Captain Henry Little.60

Simpson’s party arrived back at Camp Floyd on August 3 and began preparations for their return east. On their way, however, the topographical party had one final task, to explore the possibility of a wagon road from the Round Prairie near the new settlement of Heber to the Green River through the Uinta Valley. Knowing that he still needed sketches, Simpson brought Henry Sommer along and had him produce drawings of the mouth of Timpanogos Canyon and of Bridal Veil Falls. Writing to Captain Little from the Round Prairie, Simpson apologized for possibly keeping his artist a few days beyond the end of his furlough. “If he should overstay his leave for the purpose, I trust you will throw the responsibility on me and consider the reason sufficient.”61

Captain Little himself secured seven days leave and traveled up to the Round Prairie to join Simpson’s party. They enjoyed several days of hunting and fishing, and they explored the hot springs near present Midway, Utah. “We then rode to Rattlesnake Hill which is a large mound grown up with brush and weeds,” Little noted in his diary. “Made war on the rattlesnakes by shoving the sheltering rocks off their den & kill-

59 Sacramento Daily Union, July 2, 1859. While Capt. Simpson was absent, part of his civilian crew traveled to Lake Bigler, today known as Lake Tahoe, where Sommer also created sketches.

60 Little diary, August 5–6, 1859.


Sommer created a sketch of their experience for his commander. Captain Little soon bade goodbye to his friends and returned to Camp Floyd, with Private Sommer following several days later.

After his return to Washington, D.C., Simpson worked on his final report. Presumably the glass negatives arrived safely but he had abandoned his original idea of creating a guidebook for the main emigrant trail through Nebraska Territory, instead focusing on his road survey across the Great Basin.53 The accompanying scientific reports did include descriptions of natural history specimens from the entire length of the trip. Simpson paid D.C. artist John J. Young to transform Sommer’s rough sketches into lithographic plates for his publication. After submitting his manuscript in early 1861, Simpson appealed to Senator Milton S. Lantham of California for assistance in securing congressional financial support to publish the expedition report, but the Civil War soon intervened and its printing was delayed for fifteen years.64

As for Simpson’s three artists, the Civil War also interrupted their lives. Photographer Samuel C. Mills returned to Paige’s studio in Washington where he produced portraits of soldiers in the wartime capital until 1864 when he enlisted in the Union Army as a hospital steward. After the war, he bought out the studio of his former mentor and operated it “for a year or two,” as Mills later recalled.65 After studying law and passing the bar in 1872, he was appointed as a police judge in D.C., a position he held for the rest of his legal career. In later years, Mills was
an active member of the Grand Army of the Republic and the Masonic Order. The hard-learned lessons of his youth regarding alcohol may have been one of the reasons he founded a temperance organization known as the Sons of Jonadab. Samuel C. Mills died in 1911 and was buried in the Congressional Cemetery in Washington, D.C.66

Edward Jagiello, the expedition’s photographic assistant, also returned to the East Coast and lived with his sister and her husband for a time. However, as the Civil War began, the family appears to have splintered. Advocating the South’s right to succeed, Tochman remained in Alexandria. Despite her support for the Union, she was arrested in the fall of 1861 for suspected southern sympathies on account of her husband. Their beautiful 150-acre summer home, Summer Hill Farm, was seized and sold at auction in 1864. The meager evidence suggests that the couple irrevocably split. Her brother, Edward, disappears from the historical record at the beginning of the Civil War. It is unclear whether he served with an American regiment or might possibly have returned to Europe.67

For Private Henry Sommer, his participation in the Simpson Expedition earned him some recognition. Captain Little persuaded his father-in-law, Lt. Col. Pitcairn Morrison, to offer the soldier a coveted detail as a clerk at the regimental headquarters.68 Several months later, however, Private Sommer appealed to Simpson in Washington, D.C. for his assistance in securing an early discharge. Simpson wrote to the secre-

dary of war on his behalf and Private Sommer was released in March 1860.69 But he must have still found it difficult to secure employment because he returned to the Army four months later. During the Civil War, Sommer rose from private to regimental sergeant major in the 2nd U.S. Infantry, and in 1863 he was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the same regiment. He was awarded brevets for his “gallant and meritorious service” during the Wilderness Campaign and at the Battle of Spotsylvania Court House where he was wounded so seriously that he never again regained full use of his left arm. Promoted to first lieutenant, Sommer resigned from the Regular Army in May 1868 and settled in Philadelphia where he died in 1894.70

After being held as a prisoner of war for a month and a half in 1862, Simpson spent the remainder of the Civil War assigned to a variety of railroad surveys and repairs. For two years immediately after the war, Simpson was back in the West, this time as chief engineer for the Department of the Interior overseeing the federal government’s interests in the construction of the Union Pacific Railroad. During the last decade of his service, he was responsible for a wide range of engineering activities on projects from Florida to Maryland, Alabama to Ohio. He retired in 1880 as a colonel in the Corps of Engineers and died three years later in St. Paul, Minnesota.71


68 Little diary, August 9, 15, 1859.

69 Capt. Simpson to J. B. Floyd, December 28, 1859, Simpson letter book, 1:258–59, Field Survey Records, RG 77. Lt. Sommer’s consolidated military officer’s file S318-CB-1868, Letters Received by the Commission Branch of the Adjutant General’s Office, RG 94 (M1064, roll 418, index 295–382). Sommer apparently remained at Camp Floyd or Fairfield for at least a month after his discharge. On April 29, Little noted in his diary that “Somer took my likeness.” While he may have been referring to a sketch, it is also possible that Sommer had found temporary employment at the branch photographic gallery of Edward Covington in Camp Floyd. Salt Lake City Mountaineer, February 11 to June 23, 1860; Palmquist and Kailbourn, Pioneer Photographers, 186.

70 Regimental Returns, Seventh Infantry, September 1859–February 1860; Registers of Enlistments in the United States Army, 1798–1914, RG 94 (M233, roll 28); Francis B. Heitman, Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), 908; Pension File Application No. 135288, Records of the Veterans Administration, RG 15, NARA.

71 Cullum, Biographical Register, vol. 1, 514–16. One of Simpson’s uniforms is preserved at the Minnesota
By the time that Simpson’s report and accompanying artwork were finally published in 1876, the transportation network of the American West had fundamentally changed with the completion of the first transcontinental railroad. While Simpson initially promoted his new route across the Great Basin as promising, it was eventually supplanted by other roads and rail lines. Today, U.S. Highway 50, designated as “the loneliest road in America,” follows a portion of his original survey across Nevada.72

Simpson’s pioneering effort to incorporate photography as a survey tool in 1858 deserves special recognition. While he was not the first Army engineer to experiment with the new technology, his images remain the earliest surviving photographs from along the Oregon-California trail and document the sprawling Army post of Camp Floyd in Utah Territory. Despite his prediction that the camera was ill-suited for the field, its expanded use during the Civil War by Mathew Brady and others contributed to its growing popularity. As the country again looked west after the war, artists became an important part of the documentary efforts, from railroad photographers such as Andrew J. Russell, Arundel C. Hull, and Alfred A. Hart to government survey photographers such as Timothy O’Sullivan, John K. Hillers, and William Henry Jackson. The names of Samuel C. Mills and his assistant, Edward Jagiello, ought to be added to the list of important western photographers.

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WEB SUPPLEMENT

Visit history.utah.gov/uhqextras for color photographs and sketches from the 1858–59 expedition.

Historical Society.

Pearl and Earl Douglass under Lone Tree on their homestead in the Uinta Basin.

J. Willard Marriott Library
On a hot summer Sunday in August 1909, a caravan of several dozen people from the small community of Vernal, Utah, headed toward the twisted portal of Split Mountain Canyon about twenty miles east of town. The townsfolk had ventured out on the Sabbath to see the fossilized remains of a giant dinosaur, discovered only a few days before by a paleontologist named Earl Douglass who was working for the Carnegie Museum of Pittsburgh. The skeleton was embedded high up in one of the jagged hogback ridges that ripple around the flanks of Split Mountain. “For a time,” Douglass wrote in his diary, “the rocks that never had the impress of a woman's foot and seldom that of a man swarmed with people of all ages.” Some were disappointed after the hot climb up the steep ridge to find only a row of darkened knobs protruding from the cliff, hardly recognizable as the sixty-five-foot monster Douglass had described when he had gone into Vernal to report his find. But for Douglass, a small, wiry man tanned by uncounted days under the sun spent in the search for fossils, the discovery at Split Mountain represented the apex of a long, difficult personal and professional journey. Scientists and historians have duly noted Douglass’s discovery of the great cache of dinosaur skeletons that are now part of Dinosaur National Monument. But little has been written about his personal life or the path that brought him to Utah and the many years he spent trying to make both

1 Earl Douglass, August 22, 1909, Diary 25, Earl Douglass Papers, 1879–1953, Special Collections, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah (hereafter cited as Douglass Papers); Vernal (UT) Express, August 20, 27, 1909.

Wallace Stegner described Earl Douglass’s work at the quarry in *Mormon Country* (1942; University of Nebraska Press, 2003), 302–318. For a lengthier discussion that addresses Douglass’s life, as well as his discovery of the quarry, see R. G. Beidleman, “Administrative History: Dinosaur National Monument,” (typescript, n.d.), digital copy available at http://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/hi/nps/NPSHistory/adminhistory.htm?d, accessed July 17, 2015. Douglass and his family believed that he never received proper recognition for his work. His son Gawin spent many years preparing a biography of his father, typescripts of which are housed in the Douglass Papers; none are dated. Some sketches are titled “Personality,” but there are multiple variations of these and most are not paginated. Many sketches have no title and are referred to here simply as “Reminiscences.” For additional biographical information, see W. J. Holland, “Earl Douglass: A Sketch in Appreciation of His Life and Work,” *Annals of the Carnegie Museum* II (June 1931), 279–92, and “Earl Douglass—A Summary of Events,” undated, Douglass Papers. See also G. E. Douglass, *Speak to the Earth and It Will Teach You: The Life and Times of Earl Douglass, 1862–1931* (n.p., 2009). The book consists of a compilation of Earl Douglass’s diaries, notebooks, correspondence, and poetry, along with Gawin Douglass’s memories of his father.

Born in Medford, Minnesota, in 1862, Earl Douglass came from a hardscrabble farm family, far removed from the august eastern halls of science, both in geography and intellectual stance. Looking back on his childhood, Douglass vividly remembered the wonder and beauty of the natural world that was so intimate a part of his farm life—the smell of freshly turned earth, icy crystals clinging to the jack oak on cold winter mornings, and the tiny fossils of strange creatures embedded in the rocks of a nearby quarry. Nature beguiled Douglass from an early age, but agricultural life was never satisfying to him, either financially or intellectually, and Douglass doggedly sought to make a place for himself in a different world. Typical of young boys in rural America, Douglass did farm work in the summers and attended school during the winter months. In later life, Douglass recalled learning little from his elementary education in the Medford school, but he was an avid reader, devouring books on wide-ranging subjects whenever they came to hand or when he could find the money to buy them. In high school, Douglass developed a passion for poetry, which he read and wrote throughout his life. He once confided to his diary that he hoped someday to be “a poet, an author, an orator, . . . a traveler, a scientist, an artist, and a naturalist.” In 1882, he passed the examination for a teaching certificate, and for several years he taught in Medford-area schools. He continued to work summers as a hired agricultural laborer. But neither teaching nor farm work earned him much money, and Douglass was determined to get a college education.

Money wasn’t the only reason that Douglass was intent on leaving the agricultural world of his childhood. Of his youth, Douglass later wrote, “I reveled in wasteness and wildness and dreariness . . . . Someone has said that hell is from the old Anglo-Saxon word helled which means walled in. I had been walled in and, perhaps, like Satan, I entered chaos, but there were at least large spaces[] great possibilities and freedom, that most poetic and fruitful conception.” Douglass had an inquiring mind and his quest for knowledge did not always sit well with the settled assumptions of a nineteenth-century rural
Douglass's rejection of his father's faith began during a youthful visit to a rock quarry near the family farm. The quarryman showed Douglass fossils of strange creatures embedded in the rock layers. “That to me was one of my first chapters in the genesis of my mind—my first lesson in geology, the beginning of my thoughts to explore into the mysteries of a strange world in which we are suddenly plunged ignorant and wondering,” he recalled. Evidence of an ancient earth inhabited by long-vanished animals ran contrary to the interpretation of the Bible on which he had been raised.

The belief in the account of creation in six literal days was too completely driven into my consciousness and was too thoroughly bound up with our eternal fate. The people with whom I was raised were commissioned by the almighty and the angels of Revelations to proclaim the last message of mercy to a dying world . . . . To declare, then, that the world was more than six thousand years old and was made in more than six days was, therefore, to deny God and his Word and the sacredness of the Sabbath. In fact it would be to be . . . branded with that name too awful to mention without horror—an infidel or athesist [sic].

Though it seemed to go against all that he had been taught, indeed to challenge the very order of good society and family ties, Douglass could not resist the desire to learn about new theories in geology and the latest discoveries being made by biologists and paleontologists as they dug into the earth’s ancient past. “If heaven was nearer in my infancy and studying into the mysteries which surround us has been following the Devil,” Douglass noted sardonically in his reminiscence, “I have gone towards perdition but the way has been fascinating.”

Douglass continued to have great affection for the poetry of the Bible, which, he bemoaned, the religious dogmatists of his youth too often ignored. And he believed there were important moral lessons behind Biblical mythology. But he rejected the traditional religion of his Midwestern rural upbringing in favor of a new kind of spiritualism rooted in sci-

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9 Ibid.
ence. “Better it seems to me not to have a definite belief in a personal god,” he wrote, “and let virtue, love, truth, mercy, and justice rest on their own merits.”

Douglass’s enthralment with science was tinged with a deep emotionalism, and he found not merely knowledge but spiritual sustenance in his study of nature. By the time he entered adulthood, he was convinced that in science lay the path to what he believed constituted truth.

Pursuing that path proved to be a challenge. With few financial resources, he struggled to piece together more education. In 1882, he left Minnesota and joined his sister, Ida, on her homestead in South Dakota. Again, he did agricultural work in the summers, taught school in the winters, and saved his money. In 1888 he attended one term at the University of South Dakota at Vermillion and then transferred to South Dakota State College at Brookings where he studied geology and botany. A summer collecting expedition to Mexico with one of his instructors led to a job at the Missouri Botanical Gardens in 1890. But Douglass’s first love was geology, and in 1892 he returned to South Dakota to continue his studies.

Following a favorite professor, Douglass moved on to Iowa State College, where he completed a bachelor’s degree in the fall of 1893. A college degree fulfilled Douglass’s thirst for knowledge, but it did little to improve his economic circumstances or to provide him a new profession. Having graduated, Douglass returned to school teaching, taking work during the winters in small, rural schools. But now Douglass had other plans for his summers. Rather than taking on farm work, he determined to spend his summers collecting. Douglass was not yet a scientist in the modern sense of a professional who makes a living by practicing a trained discipline within an institutional setting. He was a “naturalist” in the older tradition of an amateur who pursued his interests as an avocation, making a living from other means. For nearly a decade following his graduation, Douglass devoted his summers to exploring, collecting geological specimens and interesting fossils, returning to teach school in the fall.

Douglass taught mostly in Montana. One of the professors he had studied with in South Dakota had taken a position at the newly established agricultural college in Bozeman, and he encouraged Douglass to come study the geology of the Madison and Gallatin valleys. He helped secure a position for Douglass in a tiny, one-room school about thirty miles southwest of Bozeman. Over the next few years, Douglass taught in various small Montana schools. He was quickly fascinated by the region’s geology. Even during the school years, weather permitting, he would head out after classes to pick at rocks. He made meticulous notes and sketches, recorded everything he found, and soon had a good reputation among the state’s small scientific community for his work as a field geologist. But ancient flora and fauna were not the only features of the rural Montana landscape that captured Douglass’s attention. He was thirty-two years old and unmarried. An ardent diarist, Douglass, who by nature was generally taciturn and solitary, began to make occasional entries about the young women he encountered in his work and travels. In 1896, while teaching at a school in the Ruby Valley, Douglass fell in love. From their very first meeting, Douglass later said, he found Pearl Goetschius to be “just the one I had all my life wished that I might find.” He told her mother that “since I first knew Pearl no other girl has had any lasting influence on my affections. . . . With her acquaintance a new element—an unspeakable happiness came into my life.”

Actually it took quite some time for that happiness to flourish, nearly ten years, in fact. Pearl

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10 Douglass, October 28, 1915, Diary 31, Douglass Papers.

11 Douglass rejected atheism, which he understood was one possible conclusion when accepting science over a literal interpretation of the Bible. He believed in God as the creator of the universe and as the “source of the best in men.” Douglass, October 18, 1915, Diary 31 Douglass Papers. Douglass wrote frequently about religion in his diaries, poems, and essays. Several good examples can be found in his reminiscence entitled, “The First Chapter of Genesis,” and his poems “Picture of Gethsemane” and “The Great Unknown,” all in Douglass Papers. Beidleman says in the “Administrative History” that Douglass was active in the Unitarian Church (p. 8), but beyond a few references to attending unidentified church services in his early diaries, there are no documents in the nearly twenty-two linear feet composing the Douglass Papers indicating that Douglass was a member of any church during his adulthood.

12 Douglass’s interest in women is difficult to discern from his diaries, which he partially wrote in shorthand. But the scattered references to “beautiful girl,” “longing for,” “admire her,” “dreaming of” suggest the gist of his interest.

13 Earl Douglass to Mrs. Goetschius, April 10, 1904, Douglass Papers.
may have been the light of Earl’s life, but in 1896 she was also one of his students, barely sixteen years old. He was thirty-four. Although none of their early correspondence survives, it seems clear that Pearl took a liking to the shy geologist with a fondness for poetry. But Earl, smitten as he was, had sufficient presence of mind to realize that the relationship was not likely to be acceptable, most especially to Pearl’s parents. He left the Ruby Valley, taking up school posts elsewhere in Montana, and over the next few years he continued his summer expeditions. On occasion, those trips took Earl back to the Ruby Valley where he visited the Goetschius family ranch. Try as he might, he could not put Pearl out of his mind.\textsuperscript{14}

While Earl conducted a tentative courtship of Pearl, he decided to try once again to advance his education. He wanted to pursue his collecting full-time, and only a job with a museum or university would provide that opportunity. He enrolled at the University of Montana and, as before, taught school to raise money, took courses as long as he could afford to, and then returned to teaching. In 1900 he earned a master’s degree and the following year was awarded a fellowship to study at Princeton University. “Here I am in the neighborhood of 40,” he wrote in his diary not long after his birthday in 1900, “and still struggling to get an education. . . . About all I possess are books, bones and team wagon [sic]. I am about where I ought to have been 15 years ago. But I am still a student because that is all that satisfies me.”\textsuperscript{15} He spent a year at Princeton working with John Bell Hatcher, one of America’s leading paleontologists. When Hatcher was hired by the Carnegie Museum in Pittsburgh, he encouraged the museum to also hire Douglass. In the spring of 1902, Douglass moved to Pittsburgh. He never completed his degree at Princeton, but with the Carnegie job Douglass was at last a professional scientist being paid to do the work he loved. It had been a long road from that stone quarry in Medford where he had first seen fossils. Although Douglass lived in Pittsburgh part of the year and worked with the Carnegie’s other scientists to study and write about the museum’s collections, he had been hired as a field paleontologist. His job was to go out and find fossils.

The fossils that the Carnegie particularly wanted to find were those of dinosaurs. The Carnegie Museum, founded in 1896, was a relative newcomer to the field of vertebrate paleontology. Since the 1860s two wealthy “gentlemen” scientists, Edward Drinker Cope and Othniel C. Marsh, had presided over a series of spectacular fossil discoveries that had greatly expanded scientific knowledge of dinosaurs. But it was the work of one of Cope’s former students, Henry Fairfield Osborn, that caught the attention of Andrew Carnegie. In 1891 the American Museum of Natural History in New York City hired Osborn to oversee its new department of paleontology. Sensitive to a growing public interest in dinosaurs, Osborn worked with the artist Charles Knight and the museum’s staff to fill the exhibition halls with dramatic paintings and skeletons reassembled into lifelike poses. The popular press of the day often carried news of Osborn’s work, and in the fall of 1898 Andrew Carnegie sent a copy of one such newspaper article to William J. Holland, director of the new Carnegie Museum. Holland, a distinguished entomologist, later recalled that the clipping was accompanied by a cryptic handwritten note from Carnegie: “Buy this for Pittsburgh.”\textsuperscript{16}

\textsuperscript{14} Earl’s infatuation with Pearl can be traced, with difficulty, in his diary for the period March 15, 1896, to June 5, 1897. The diary frequently switches into shorthand, an almost sure indication that a girl was on his mind. The name of Pearl Goetschius is recorded among the thirty-two names of his students. In the diary, Douglass notes that he likes the new school he is teaching at but “probably cannot stay long.” He writes that “there is one . . . that I think a good deal of.” He notes that she is “younger than me” and he uses the word “infatuation” but also says he “must keep looking” at her. “I can’t very help saying something would tell what her but will not do see her coming across the field happy inspire happy day alas leaves no course cause pleasure so long as friend friend [sic] may every worthy of it.” The quoted entries are from Douglass, September 16, October 16, November 1, and November 17, 1896, Diary 14, Douglass Papers.

\textsuperscript{15} Douglass, October 30, 1900, Diary 17, Douglass Papers.

and each summer Holland sent crews out into the field to hunt for fossils, any fossils, but most especially for dinosaurs.

In the summer of 1902, Douglass's first field expedition for the Carnegie Museum took him back to Montana. He visited Pearl in the Ruby Valley, and emboldened by the security and status of his new job and by the passage of time, he openly declared his love. After his return to Pittsburgh they continued to correspond, awkwardly at first and then more ardently. Pearl had another suitor, but Earl was persistent. He visited the Ruby Valley again in 1903, and sometime during the summer the two became secretly engaged. Earl had hopes that Pearl would soon join him in Pittsburgh to begin married life. He bought and furnished a small house, but Pearl’s father died suddenly, and she was reticent to leave her mother alone to work the ranch and raise her younger brothers. Having after so many years finally come to a mutual love and decision to marry, the delay and separation were excruciating. “If only my own sweet girl could be here,” Earl wrote, “if only for this afternoon. How sweet to rest—together with my arm around her and her dear hand in my own and her head leaning on my shoulder! Dear heart your womanly nature is starving for the manifestation of that love which is all yours. How many hundreds of things I want to say to you yet maybe if you were here we wouldn’t say much but rest warm and happy close together.”

For nearly a year they kept their engagement secret, until April 1904, when Earl wrote to Pearl’s mother, formally asking for her hand in marriage. Wryly noting that the couple could not be accused of being overly hasty, Earl said that their decision to marry was based on mutual love. “That love that began to be felt when I had seen her but a few times, I never could conquer and now, after all these years, it is part of my very being and without it it seems that life would be unendurable. I think that without it too she would be very unhappy. We do hope that we may have your willingness and consent that when things can be satisfactorily arranged we may be each other’s for life.”

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17 Earl Douglass to Pearl Goetschius, April 10, 1904, Douglass Papers.
18 Douglass to Mrs. Goetschius, April 10, 1904, Douglass Papers.
another year, but in the fall of 1905, Earl returned to the Ruby Valley, and they were married. Pearl returned to Pittsburgh with Earl, where they settled in to the little house he had bought. Throughout 1906 and 1907 they lived in Pittsburgh. The Carnegie Museum was constructing a new exhibition hall, and Douglass worked with his colleagues to prepare exhibits for the new building. Early in 1908, Pearl gave birth to a son, whom they named Gawin.

The two years following his marriage, culminating with the birth of his son and the opening of the new museum, were among the most rewarding in Douglass's life. Yet the city was not really where he wanted to be. He yearned to be out in the wide-open spaces of the West, roaming the hillsides, hunting for fossils. Douglass was a field man, not a museum curator or laboratory scientist. Nor was he particularly comfortable working under the close tutelage of William Holland, whose management style could be imperious and dictatorial. Douglass's son Gawin later recalled that with the death of John Bell Hatcher in 1904, “things were not to be the same” at the Carnegie for his father, and over the coming years the relationship between Holland and Douglass grew fractious. Following the birth of his son and the completion of the exhibit hall, Douglass wanted badly to get back into the field. Although much of the Carnegie’s field work up to that point had been in Wyoming and Montana, Douglass now proposed that he spend the summer of 1908 in Utah.

Having heard from Hatcher about a brief Princeton expedition to Utah in 1899, Douglass believed that the Eocene beds in the Uinta Basin seemed especially promising. Douglass told Holland that he wanted to conduct “a more thorough exploration of this interesting, but little known region.” Holland agreed and Earl headed west in April 1908, dropping Pearl and baby Gawin off in Medford to spend the summer with the Fernand Douglass family. Looking back on his investigations of the Uinta Basin, Earl later recalled that he had set out convinced that he would find dinosaur fossils, but there is little in his diaries or correspondence to suggest that he was much interested in dinosaurs at the time. His specialty was ancient mammals, and once he arrived in Utah he confined his attention to Eocene fossils. In July, Douglass, accompanied by his brother-in-law Frank Goetschius, came across fragments of a very large femur. They turned their attention to the Jurassic strata near Split Mountain. Guided by the owner of a placer dredge operation on the Green River, Earl and Frank found “a huge broken femur 2 ft. across the head and 66 inches long, a fibula 4 feet long, vertebrae, part of a toe bone, another large limb bone or two etc.” At the home of a local rancher who had assembled a collection of fossils, they examined a large Diplodocus femur. Douglass found these dinosaur fossils interesting but no more so than the mammalian remains that were the focus of his attention. The Carnegie sent Douglass back to Utah for further work the following summer.

In popular retellings of Douglass’s explorations in 1909, he was said to have worked for many weeks searching for dinosaur fossils and made his great find just as he was ready to give up the hunt and return to Pittsburgh. In fact, Doug-

20 Unsigned letter addressed to William Holland, December 1907, Douglass Papers.

21 Quoted in G. E. Douglass, Speak to the Earth, 438. The appendix to Speak to the Earth reprints in full Douglass’s 1908 field notebook; the quotation is from the entry for July. There is no diary for the 1908 field season in the Douglass Papers at the Marriott Library.
22 William Holland visited Douglass in the field in early September 1908. Holland later wrote that he and Douglass discovered a Diplodocus femur; because the bone was too large to move, Holland wrote that he instructed Douglass to return the following year to collect it. Douglass’s field notebook for 1908 does not record a discovery by the two men. There are no entries in Douglass’s field notebook for the period that Holland was in the field with him, but the entry for September 9 notes that Holland had visited; the entry says that the two men visited the site where Douglass and Frank Goetschius had earlier found the Diplodocus femur. For Holland’s story of the Carnegie Museum’s work in Utah, see William Holland, To the River Plate and Back: A Narrative of a Scientific Mission to South America, with Observations Upon Things Seen and Suggested (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1913), 1–15. The story of Holland helping Douglass find a “dinosaur thigh bone” is included in McGinnis, Carnegie’s Dinosaurs, 18.
23 See, for example, Stegner, Mormon Country, 302–318; Colbert, Great Dinosaur Hunters, 156–57; Ann Zwinger, Run, River Run: A Naturalist’s Journey Down One of the Great Rivers of the West (New York: Harper and Row, 1975), 193; and Wilford, Riddle of the Dinosaur, 119–23. In his own recollection, written many years later, Douglass said that he set out in 1909 convinced that he would find dinosaur fossils; see “Story of Discovery of Dinosaur Monument,” undated typescript, Douglass Papers. His diary, however, clearly shows his focus on other fossils, as does one of the few scientific papers
lass did not arrive in Utah until late July and, as in the previous year, he devoted his attention to the mammalian fossils in the region’s Wasatch Formation. Only a scolding letter from Holland, received on August 4, prompted Douglass to pick up the dinosaur search east of Vernal. Within a few days he found a number of fragments and small bones, “but nothing good.” Then, on August 17, Douglass spotted eight large vertebrae of a “brontosaurus” exposed in a ridge face in the foothills just south of Split Mountain. “It was a beautiful sight,” he wrote in his diary that night. “Part of the ledge had weathered away and several of the vertebra had weathered out and the beautifully preserved centra lay on the ground. It is by far the best looking dinosaur prospect I have ever found.”24

Douglass telegraphed the news to Holland, who promptly named the dinosaur Apatosaurus loustae in honor of Andrew Carnegie’s wife. Holland instructed Douglass to excavate the skeleton and make arrangements to ship it back to Pittsburgh. With the help of several men hired from the nearby town of Vernal, Douglass began the task of working the fossils out of the sandstone, covering them with plaster-soaked burlap, and preparing them to be hauled to the nearest rail stop.25 After only a short period of work Douglass realized that he had stumbled on something much more important than a single skeleton. He’d found a dinosaur graveyard, filled with many skeletons representing a variety of genera—Stegosaurus, Barosaurus, Camarasaurus, Antrodemus, and Diplodocus, among others. And the skeletons were of unusually good quality. Many seemed to be nearly complete, including skulls, and were articulated, a rarity that promised to help settle long-standing confusion over dinosaur anatomy and taxonomy. Excavating the site could take many years. In anticipation of the costs of maintaining a crew in the field for a number of years and of shipping the huge fossils from Utah to Pittsburgh, Andrew Carnegie increased to $15,000 the special annual fund that he had earlier established to finance the museum’s search for dinosaurs. Carnegie also gave Douglass a personal reward of $2,000.26

As the significance of Douglass’s find became more apparent and as Andrew Carnegie’s investment in the excavation increased, Holland grew concerned that the museum might lose control of the quarry. Because the site was located on public land open to homestead and mineral entry, Holland feared that someone would claim the quarry under the public land laws and force the Carnegie Museum either to abandon its work or extract an exorbitant fee to allow Douglass to continue his labors. The federal government had only a few years earlier opened sizeable portions of the two Ute reservations located in the Uinta Basin to public entry. At the time Douglass discovered the quarry, there was intense interest in agricultural settlement and mineral exploration in the area. And there was always the danger that other paleontologists would try to usurp the quarry—dinosaur hunting was a pretty rough-and-tumble competition at that time. The Carnegie Museum had already lost control of a promising site in Nebraska when a local rancher filed a claim on the land and then offered access to the highest-bidding paleontologist. In order to prevent a reoccurrence of that episode, in December 1911, Holland instructed Douglass to file a claim under the Desert Land Act for title to the quarry on behalf of the museum. “This is a matter that it seems to me should be attended to,” Holland wrote. “There certainly has been enough work done on the spot to justify us in proving up and

24 During the Carnegie’s excavation of the quarry, fossils were taken by wagon south to Dragon, Utah, the western terminus of the narrow-gage Uintah Railway. At Mack, Colorado, the fossils were transferred to the Denver and Rio Grande for the journey east.

25 When the Carnegie Museum completed its excavations in 1922, 300 specimens representing ten species had been removed. Twenty-four nearly complete skeletons had been found; two of these—the Apatasaurus discovered in 1909 and a Camarasaurus lentus found in 1922—are still considered to be among the finest skeletons ever excavated. By September 1910, Douglass estimated that he had spent between five and six thousand dollars to excavate only one skeleton. Douglass, September 2, 1910, Diary 2, Douglass Papers. On William Holland’s growing awareness of the quarry’s importance, see his “Editorial Notes” for the Annals of the Carnegie Museum VI (August 1910), 301–303; VII (November 1910), 1–4; VIII (December 1911), 1–4; VIII (May 1912), 191–95; and VIII (March 1913), 380–81. On the personal reward to Douglass, see Holland, “Earl Douglass,” 283, and Douglass, February 23, 1911, Diary 28, Douglass Papers.

26 Douglass, August 6, 12, 17, 1909, Diary 24, Douglass Papers. The letter from Holland is not in the Douglass papers but it is mentioned by Douglass in his diary entry from August 6.
securing title.”

In January 1912, Douglass did as Holland instructed. But after discussion among officials in the General Land Office, the Department of the Interior, and the Smithsonian Institution (which operated the National Museum of Natural History) the federal government rejected the Carnegie’s claim. Sensitive of the need to protect the valuable quarry site from commercial plunder but unwilling to see it fall into private ownership, the government decided to designate the exact acreage in the Carnegie’s claim (eighty acres in total) as a national monument. The Antiquities Act, passed in 1906 with the support of many of America’s leading scientists, including William Holland, was intended to preserve important scientific discoveries made on public lands by designating these areas as national monuments. The government intended the monument designation of the Utah dinosaur quarry to be temporary; once all the fossils were removed, the land would revert to public entry. Douglass and Holland were initially angered by the government’s action but were quickly mollified when the Secretary of the Interior assured them that the Carnegie Museum would have exclusive excavation rights. In January 1916 the department issued the Carnegie a permit for Douglass’s work; the permit was renewed without difficulty for the next five years. No other paleontologists or scientific groups were permitted to work at the quarry. Although the monument came under the jurisdiction of the newly created National Park Service, its director, Stephen Mather, deferred oversight of the Carnegie’s permit to the Smithsonian Institution. No money for management of the monument was allocated in the park service budget, and no agency official was stationed at the site or even visited the quarry. No signs indicated that the quarry was a national monument and people who visited the site considered it to be the Carnegie Museum’s private property, a misimpression that Douglass and his employers did little to set straight.

With the Carnegie Museum’s control of the quarry secured, Douglass settled into the job of excavating, packaging, and shipping fossils back to Pittsburgh. He also began the task of creating a home. Within only a few months of his initial discovery in 1909, Earl had been joined in Utah by Pearl and baby Gawin. She quickly fell in love with the place and determined to stay with her husband as he and the small crew of local laborers worked the quarry. Conditions were rugged at first, but within a year the canvas tent they lived in was replaced by a log cabin. Pearl

27 For Holland's concerns about title to the land, see his letters to Douglass of December 9, 1911, February 12, and March 12, 1912, Douglass Papers. The quotation is from the December letter.

28 The Antiquities Act gave the president authority to set aside lands as national monuments in order to protect “objects of historic and scientific interest.” The law was motivated primarily by a concern among professional archeologists over the collecting of artifacts from prehistoric Indian sites by private commercial interests. However, President Theodore Roosevelt and fellow conservationists realized that the law also could be used to preserve areas of scenic interest without the political complexities of congressional approval because the law gave the president power to create monuments by executive order. Roosevelt and subsequent presidents used the Antiquities Act to set aside many scenic areas such as the Grand Canyon, Zion, and, most recently, Grand Staircase-Escalante national monuments. The government’s decision to create Dinosaur National Monument in 1915 was based solely on the scientific importance of the fossils; there was no discussion of the area’s scenic qualities (this concern emerged only decades later during the New Deal when the monument was expanded to include the Green and Yampa river canyons). The government intended the national monument designation to be temporary; once all the fossils were excavated the government would return the land to public entry. On the history of the Antiquities Act, see Hal Rothman, Preserving Different Pasts: The American National Monuments (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989). For a full description of the Carnegie’s effort to claim the land and the government’s decision to proclaim the area as a national monument, see Susan Rhoades Neel, “A Monument in Name Only: The Debate Over Dinosaur National Monument, 1909–1929,” Journal of the Utah Academy of Sciences, Arts, and Letters 84 (2007), 201–8.

29 The National Museum of Natural History wanted to excavate at the Utah quarry, which was why the Smithsonian Institution had favored the decision to reject the Carnegie’s Desert Land claim in favor of national monument status. However, the National Museum lacked funding to mount an excavation until 1923. The University of Utah also wanted access to the quarry, but the Department of the Interior denied it a permit until after the Carnegie had finished its work. See Neel “A Monument in Name Only.”

30 The Douglasses returned to Pittsburgh for the winter of 1910–1911 and again in 1913; Earl remained in Pittsburgh during 1913 and early 1914 (to assist in the unpacking and processing of the first shipment of fossils from the Utah quarry), but Pearl and Gawin spent the winter of 1913–1914 alone at the Utah homestead in order to fill the residency requirement under the Homestead Act. The family remained at the homestead until 1923, never returning to Pittsburgh. Douglass sold his home in Pittsburgh to help finance the homestead.
planted a garden and cooked for the crew. Earl bought a milk cow, several pigs, and chickens to feed everyone. The crew cleared a rough access road in order to transport the fossils to the railhead and this made travel to the little town of Vernal easier. By the spring of 1911, the Douglasses began to consider establishing a permanent home near the quarry. “These scenes and this country . . . have grown so dear to me,” Earl confided in his diary. “I want to plow, to sow, to reap, to garden, to have fine animals about me, to see things grow and blossom. I want to get at the real significance of things and help my fellow man to arise and come into the light of freedom and truth. . . . I want Pearl to be happy and contented,” he wrote. Earl located a spring nestled among the cliffs west of the quarry about a mile and a half, surrounded by fifteen acres of flat land that seemed ideal for growing corn, fruit trees, and fodder for a herd of beef cattle. He reasoned that a herd could graze on the flats lying southwest of the quarry along the Green River near a stand of large cottonwood trees growing so closely together that locals referred to the spot as Lone Tree. Confident that he could be both a paleontologist and a rancher, Earl filed a claim under the Desert Land Act on the area surrounding the spring (called Orchid Draw) and a separate homestead claim on the Green River land.31

Earl resettled his sister, Nettie, and their elderly, blind father, Fernando, from Medford, Minnesota, to the new Utah homestead, which the Douglasses called Dinosaur Ranch. With the help of a hired man, Earl cleared fields in Orchid Draw. Over several years he put in crops of corn, potatoes, and wheat. The household garden was expanded with fruit trees and flowers. Construction of a two-story stone house near the Lone Tree began. In a notebook, Pearl jotted down what she wanted in the new house—a lawn with trees, a “conveniently and economically planned” pantry. “O to have a homey home,” she wrote; “How grand it would be.”32 Earl bought a small herd of sheep and a good-sized cattle herd, including four expensive purebred shorthorn

31 Both claims lay outside the boundaries of the eighty-acre national monument. After the expansion of Dinosaur National Monument in 1938, the original Douglass holdings were transferred to the federal government.

32 “Things I want to have and about our new house,” written by hand in bound notebook labeled “A Few Reflections by Pearl Douglass,” n.d., Douglass Papers.
cows and a bull. A corral and stable quartered several horses including a team for the white-topped buggy that Earl bought for Pearl. “Our object is not at all to raise grain, vegetables, fruits, stock etc to see and get money,” he proclaimed. The money would be welcome, he admitted to his diary, but the “main object of all is to live better and more truly.”

In many ways the life that the Douglasses built at Dinosaur Ranch was idyllic. For Earl, there was the satisfaction of doing the great work he had always dreamed of, living amidst the raw beauty of nature yet filled with intellectual challenge. He read and wrote endlessly. Although little of his work was ever published, his personal papers are filled with poetry, scientific investigations, essays about the natural world, musings on the meanings of life and the universe—his restless mind found expression. He summarized his sentiments in a poem, “Hymn of the Wilderness”:

Here, freed from man’s contending thought,
That makes a din of hate and strife,
I find what long in vain I sought,
A nearness to the source of life;
Where scenes are fresh and thoughts are free
My deeper self returns to me.34

For a man who had spent much of his life wandering, alone, always searching, Douglass had finally found what he was looking for. In the fall of 1914, as the world descended into a terrible war, Douglass wrote, “At last I am where I have longed to be and where I intend to spend a greater part of the rest of my life. I am far away from sights, sounds, suffering and degeneracy of a great city. I am out where the air is pure and sweet; where we have fresh food and something of freedom and independence.”35

With Pearl at his side, Earl was happy as never before in his life. Few of Pearl’s personal records remain from this period, but it seems she was content as well. On her tenth wedding anniversary, she wrote how quickly the years of their marriage had passed: “the secret of the shortness of time was our happiness.”36 She enjoyed the company of a growing community as more homesteaders settled near Jensen and along the Green River, including some of the quarry workers who moved their families to the area. The Douglasses joined with their new neighbors to establish a school with Pearl serving as the teacher. Pearl was active also in the Lone Tree Betterment Society, an informal association of local homesteaders dedicated to the study of important local issues, the occasional scholarly lecture (given mostly by Earl or scientists who visited the quarry), and a goodly amount of picnicking and friendly socializing.37 Pearl watched carefully but happily over her only child. On his birthday each year she recorded in a special notebook how much he had grown, what he had accomplished in his studies, and the gifts he received, simple things like his own china plate and mug painted with calla lilies, a poem written just for him by his father, and, on several birthdays, his own cow (by fourteen, Pearl noted, Gawin had three cows).38 Gawin recalled a child’s paradise at the Dinosaur homestead. Left on his own most of the time, he and his dog Taft scrambled over the rocky terrain, waded along the shallow banks of the Green River below the Split Mountain portal, and excavated his own cache of pretend dinosaurs. He delighted visitors with a precocious knowledge of the quarry workings: “Being the only child in camp and listening daily to ‘dinosaur talk’ filled me with scientific knowledge far beyond my years,” he explained. Gawin helped with the garden, of course, and, as he grew older, with the livestock. But as he later characterized his childhood, “life was one continual round of pleasure for me.”39

33 Douglass began a separate diary for matters relating to the homestead in January 1914. Most entries are by Earl, although Pearl occasionally wrote in the notebooks that Earl labeled “FARM.” These are actually two separate books, the first covering the period 1914–1916 and the second the period 1916–1920; they are listed as diaries 31 and 35 in the Douglass Papers. In Speak to the Earth, Gawin Douglass quotes from what he refers to as his father’s “farm books.” These appear to be the same items in the Douglass Papers identified as Diary 31 and Diary 35.

34 “Hymn of the Wilderness,” Douglass Papers.

35 Douglass, September 2, 1914, Diary 30, Douglass Papers.

36 Douglass, October 20, 1915, Diary 30, Douglass Papers.


38 “Record of Gawin Earl Douglass,” hardbound notebook with handwritten entries, Douglass Papers. The notebook contains annual entries from 1914 to 1927.

39 For Gawin’s personal memories of his childhood, see Speak to the Earth, chapters 32 and 33, 353–67. The quotations are from Speak to the Earth, 353 and 366.
Yet life at Dinosaur Ranch could be difficult as well. It was blisteringly hot in the summers and bitterly cold in winters. Quarrying, for all the great scientific value of the fossils, was mostly just hard, dirty, tedious work, and Douglass was frequently exasperated by it. “I cannot put in a full day at manual labor at the quarry and do all the planning, writing ordering and/or/other things. That is out of the question, and if I am expected to be a mule and a manager at the same time . . . I can’t stand it.”

From Pittsburgh Holland sent Douglass a steady stream of hectoring letters about the pace and cost of the work. He was especially critical of Douglass's bookkeeping, constantly demanding receipts and account reconciliations for expenditures and fossil shipments. From Douglass’s perspective, Holland was an imperious easterner who had no idea what it took to move tons of rock by hand in a remote corner of the West where it was dry, windy, and, depending on the time of year, either scorching hot or twenty degrees below zero. “I have served the museum a good many years with the hope of rising in the work—getting a share of honor due, and a living salary,” he wrote in his diary; “I have not gotten the things I hoped nor is there any prospect near that I will get them. I see very well that the policy which governs does not include independence honor or comfort for me.”

Even more disheartening to Douglass was his inability to make a success of the homestead. Like so many homesteaders in the arid West, Douglass overestimated the land’s productive capacity. The natural spring he initially believed capable of supplying sufficient water for the crops did not. He built small reservoirs to store the water but these quickly silted up with mud or were washed away by the infrequent but torrential summer rainstorms typical in canyon country. The only reliable source of water, he eventually concluded, was the Green River and that would have to be pumped up to the fields. Reluctantly he ordered expensive pumping equipment, but it proved difficult to install and never provided adequate water. The constant need for more or better fencing, the extra winterfeed for the cattle when his own hay crop was insufficient, and the shipping costs for supplies were expenses difficult to bear on his modest Carnegie salary. Douglass had to give up on the sheep herd when protecting it from the local mountain lions and coyotes proved futile. The cold winters took a toll on his cattle, especially the expensive purebred shorthorns. The stone house remained unfinished, and the family continued to live in the log cabin they had inhabited since the quarry work began. Douglass managed to prove up on both of his claims by 1918, but the following year drought destroyed all his crops. This was followed by an especially long and cold winter during which most of the cattle died. With the end of World War I, agricultural prices plummeted, and the Douglass homestead never recovered.

That same year Andrew Carnegie died and the annual support he had provided the Carnegie Museum for fieldwork ended. William Holland retired several years later, and the new director, Douglas Stewart, began to scale back the Carnegie Museum’s costly fieldwork. Work at the Utah quarry was especially problematic because the Carnegie's exclusive control of the site was beginning to face criticism from other institutions. The Smithsonian Institution had initially agreed to the exclusive permit arrangement for the Carnegie, largely because its National Museum of Natural History could not afford to conduct its own excavations at the site. But

40 Douglass, October 26, 1914, Diary 32, Douglass Papers.
41 Ibid.
42 The decline of the homestead can be traced through Douglass’s “FARM” diaries (Diaries 31 and 35), Douglass Papers. From the beginning in 1914 the diaries show a series of crop failures and problems with the livestock that became especially acute by the summer of 1917. Most of these problems were typical of dry-land farming, especially the quixotic climate and perpetual need for more water. Some problems, however, seemed to have arisen from Douglass’s decision making (delaying the construction of fences around his fields, for example) and the division of his attention between the fossil quarry and the homestead.

43 The original cabin had been expanded over the years with several wood plank additions. When Douglass sought an insurance policy for the home in 1926, he listed it as having five rooms, “part logs and part lumber” worth $800. In the same application, he noted that the stone house had cost $1,500, but had no roof or windows. Douglass to E. A. Manker, October 11, 1926, Douglass Papers.
44 In the January 11, 1920, entry of his second “FARM” diary, Douglass noted with dark humor, “I am still contemplating writing a story giving my ideal of a farm if only for my own amusement.” Diary 35, Douglass Papers. Gawin noted in his recollections of this period that “no further work was done on the ranch after 1921.” Speak to the Earth, 373. There are no entries in the “FARM” diary after January 1920.
by 1921, the National Museum’s fortune had improved and the Smithsonian told the Department of the Interior that it wanted access to the quarry. The University of Utah had also begun agitating for access, on the grounds that the state should retain some of the fossils found within its territory. After meetings in Washington early in 1922, Stewart realized that there was little likelihood that the Carnegie’s permit would be renewed. He ordered Douglass to stop excavating, pack up his tools, and return to Pittsburgh. Douglass could not bear the prospect of returning to the East. He asked the Carnegie to assign him other fieldwork in Utah or Colorado, but the museum, after years of funding expeditions all around the world, decided it was time to concentrate on processing and studying the collections it already owned. Stewart declined to keep Douglass in the field and after nearly twenty years in its employ, Earl parted ways with the Carnegie.

By the time he quit, Douglass had grown bitter not only about the Carnegie’s treatment of him but also what he came increasingly to see as the museum’s determination to simply plunder the quarry for its own aggrandizement. Over the

45 Charles Walcott to Secretary of Interior, January 30, 1922; Secretary of Interior to Charles Walcott, January 31, 1922, Permits File, Central Classified Files, Records of the Office of the Secretary of the Interior, Record Group 48, National Archives, Washington, D.C. See also Douglas Stewart to Earl Douglass, October 9 and November 7, 1922, Douglass Papers. For Douglass’s resentment over his treatment by the Carnegie Museum, see Earl Douglass to Pearl Douglass, January 13, 1926; Earl Douglass to Harry Ratliff, March 7, 1927; and Earl Douglass to O. A. Peterson, April 19, 1927, all in Douglass Papers.
years Douglass had come to believe that the quarry itself was worthy of preservation. His appreciation for the unusual beauty of the Split Mountain area, combined with a conviction that one could find in nature important moral and spiritual lessons as well as scientific ones, led him to envision the construction of a unique kind of museum at the quarry. “How appropriate,” he wrote in his diary in 1915, “that [the fossilized dinosaurs] be exposed in relief as they were buried, to show the tragedy of their death and to reveal something of their lives and surroundings. . . . How appropriate to build a fair sized building over them to protect them, to have this a thing of substantial [sic] beauty modeled after nature, to have this large enough to contain related fossils and other curiosities.” Here, he believed, people could learn to appreciate nature in a manner impossible in those august eastern institutions, like the Carnegie, where nature was cleaned, sorted, cataloged, and displayed behind glass. Douglass was convinced that a living museum, one literally carved out of rock, would attract people from far and wide.  

Boosters in the town of Vernal embraced Douglass’s concept of an in situ museum. Enlisting the support of Utah’s congressional delegation, they urged the federal government to undertake the

46 Douglass, October 28, 1915, Diary 33, Douglass Papers. Douglass first wrote in his diary about the possibility of a museum at the quarry on August 14, 1912, but at that time he envisioned only conventional exhibits. By 1915, he was thinking about the unique, in situ museum that was eventually constructed in the 1950s.
When asked for his advice, William Holland scoffed at the idea, calling it nothing more than a plot by a few local people to get rich at the government’s expense. “I do not . . . think that the people of the United States would be justified in undertaking any such wild scheme,” he wrote the park service in 1921. “In my humble judgment [sic], as a citizen of the United States and as a heavy tax-payer, I could think of nothing more scandalous [than] appropriating money simply to preserve intact what is in truth only a ‘hole in the ground.’” The National Park Service agreed with Holland. “Your letter . . . reflects very succinctly our own impression as to the conditions in the Dinosaur National Monument,” assistant director Arno Cammerer told Holland. “Needless to say, we have no intentions [sic] of spending one dollar of Government funds on fruitless work of this kind.” From the time of its inception, Dinosaur National Monument had been, for the federal government, nothing more than a legal contrivance to make possible the orderly, scientific removal of the fossil specimens from the site. The idea of preserving some of the fossils at the site or of making the quarry itself the object of interest was absurd. “This monument is in truth nothing except a gash in the . . . mountainside,” Cammerer said, from which scientific specimens were being removed for proper study in accredited museums. Dinosaur, he said, was a monument “in name only.”

With the Carnegie’s announcement in 1922 that it would quit the quarry, the National Museum of Natural History and the University of Utah sent in crews for quick excavations intended to retrieve only enough fossils for public displays. With these institutions satisfied, activity at the quarry came to an end. The federal government, which had authority over the quarry because of its status as a national monument, had no plans to provide even for the protection of the now-abandoned but still fossil-rich quarry from the ravages of weather or vandals. For a time Douglass kept a watchful eye on the quarry, stopping cars as they passed by his homestead. But after 1924, Douglass spent less and less time in the area. He hoped to find employment with the University of Utah, but the assistance he provided to the university’s team during their quick dig did not lead to a permanent job.

The failure of the homestead and the end of Earl’s employment with the Carnegie left the Douglass family in dire financial circumstances, so much so that the little family was split apart. Douglass’s father had died at the homestead in 1916 at the age of eighty-six. Just a few months after the Carnegie told Earl of the decision to end work at the quarry, his sister Nettie suffered a stroke. She lay incapacitated for months in the Douglass cabin with Pearl tending her. She died in March 1923. Soon Pearl’s health deteriorated, undermined by the long years of hard work and cold winters at Dinosaur Ranch and, perhaps, by the stress of the couple’s declining fortunes. Doctors recommended a warmer climate and lower altitude. With what little money he could muster, in the fall of 1923, Earl sent Pearl to California to recuperate. Gawin went with her, while Earl remained in Utah. She spent nearly two years there, but still ill, she returned to her family in Montana. For the rest of the decade, Pearl lived mostly in Montana, with extended visits to Salt Lake City, where Gawin was enrolled in high school. Earl took what work he could find, mostly prospecting for minerals and oil, in Utah, Colorado, Wyoming, and as far away as Arizona and Texas. He visited Pearl in California and Montana when he could. The Dinosaur Ranch was abandoned. It is surely sometimes seems a hard proposition and worse than vain.

47 William Holland to Arno Cammerer, November 8, 1921; Arno Cammerer to William Holland, November 9, 1921; Arno Cammerer to William Anderssen, May 17, 1922, all in Dinosaur National Monument File, Central Classified Files, Records of the National Park Service, RG 79, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

48 Douglass took out a five-year mortgage on the homestead property in 1921 but by 1926 he was behind in repayment. He also fell behind in paying taxes on the property. In 1927 the state began foreclosure proceedings. Douglass sought an extension of the mortgage loan, but documents in the Douglass Papers are unclear about the outcome. Gawin said that “the homestead eventually reverted back to the government.” See Speak to the Earth, 373. In the exchange of correspondence concerning overdue taxes and the state’s foreclosure effort, Earl Douglass noted that the land was no longer used and the buildings were vacant. See Earl Douglass to J. T. Oldroyd, State Land Office, November 11, 1926, Douglass Papers. The Desert Land claim on Orchid Draw remained in place until the 1990s when the National Park Service acquired it from Douglass’s heirs.

49 Earl Douglass to Pearl Douglass, February 4, 1926,
In all the long years before their marriage, Earl and Pearl had sustained their relationship through letters, separated by distance but finding love in words. Now, again separated, they tried desperately to maintain their connection through correspondence, but the long absences, economic strain, and poor health made it very difficult. “I wish I could see you,” Pearl complained, “and talk to you as I feel, this writing is so unsatisfactory.” Earl found it increasingly difficult to write to his wife. He was deeply ashamed of his inability to provide for Pearl and Gawin. “I won the hand of a girl to be my life partner . . . and though that love now is the most sacred thing in my life was it not selfish and wrong on my part,” he wrote. “Her faithfulness to me and my ideals has ruined her . . . . My wish is to provide for her and shield and protect her and the fates have been against me. . . . This pains and humiliates me.” As a young man, Earl had hoped someday to be a “great man, ‘great’ like the poets,” but that now seemed only a cruel dream. “I have accomplished something in my life that will endure [but] am left to starve so far as the world is concerned. . . . [I]t seems that our troubles and disappointments are more than I can bear. It seems that everything, almost, has gone against us. . . . I see all our hopes in desert dust.”

Pearl, deep in her own despair and loneliness, grew distraught by Earl’s distance. “With all the other bad luck I felt I was losing the interest and sympathy of my life companion,” she wrote in December 1926. “When your letters become fewer and shorter I thought this hard luck financially was crowding out all love.” He tried to console her. “Do not think for a moment, My dear Pearl that for a single moment I ever ceased to love you, and disappointment makes me realize it still more deeply,” he wrote. “I wanted to be an honored and gallant protector to you and the circumstances broke my spirit.” She fretted that her poor health had created extra hardship for the family: “I have often wondered that you did not give me up—that my ill health has made me a burden to my family. The last few years you have given all you had for my medical aid.” She declared her continued devotion: “Just because you have met back luck and failure, why should you feel yourself unworthy of the one who has tried to stay beside you and help you.” But when her brother taunted that her absent husband no longer cared for her, Pearl grew more depressed. “Some times I wonder if my boys really love me any more,” she wrote Earl. “Will we ever be together as we have been?”

Sadly, they were not. Although Earl visited Pearl in Montana and they scrimped together enough to put a down payment on a small house in Salt Lake City in 1930, Earl and Pearl lived apart for most of the remaining years of his life. The onset of the Great Depression dashed any hopes that the oil industry would begin development in the Uinta Basin and Earl continued to struggle for means to earn a living. In one of his notebooks from this period he wrote: “I feel that I have some talent. One may overestimate it. Yet all my life I have been down and those that I know are shallow have risen by pure gall. . . . Sometimes I think that when disease and sickness come, when all the phantoms of life have vanished, death after all is the best friend, a consummation most devotedly to be wished.”

Late in 1930 Douglass fell ill. He was sixty-eight years old and had long suffered from “stomach troubles” but now, according to his son Gawin, Earl developed serious prostate disease, which required surgery. Earl sold off some of his private fossil collection to pay for his medical care, but in late January 1931, he died. The last entry in his notebook of reflections for 1930 reads: “I see no reason on earth why mammal skeletons older than Tertiary not preserved. Some one will find them. Wish I could. But all right if don’t. Plenty to discover anyway.” Pearl soon sold the house.

54 Pearl Douglass to Earl Douglass, November 14, 1926, Douglass Papers
55 There are few records in the Douglass Papers from the last difficult years of Earl and Pearl’s marriage. Earl was a prolific diarist throughout his life, but the collection contains no diaries covering the period after 1928 and there are only scattered entries for the period 1921–1928. The preserved correspondence between Earl and Pearl grows less frequent after 1926 and there are no letters after 1929.
in Salt Lake City and moved to California with Gawin, where she remained until her death in 1955.

The story of Earl and Pearl Douglass is bitter-sweet. Despite a life of determination and hard work, Douglass died impoverished and largely unnoted in the scientific world he so admired and yearned to be part of. In the final years of his life nothing pained Douglass more than his inability to provide a secure and comfortable life for the woman he had fallen in love with when she was hardly more than a child. Yet Douglass was right when he said that his accomplishments would be enduring, however little they brought him and his family financial stability or acclaim during his lifetime. Today fossils from the quarry he discovered reside in many museums, some of them still considered to be among the finest dinosaur specimens ever uncovered. Visitors to Dinosaur National Monument can walk through a modern in situ museum, just as Douglass had once envisioned. No signs of the homestead that Earl and Pearl worked so hard to make into a home remain. Still, it is possible to stand on the banks of the Green River as it emerges from Split Mountain, with a gentle breeze cooling the sunset, and imagine what it must have been like to be in love among the fossils.

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This 1882 map, produced by Clarence Dutton and showing fault lines in the “Plateau Province,” is an early cartographic reference to the Waterpocket Fold (Dutton referred to it as Water Pocket Cañon).

— United States Geological Survey
Preface

The Waterpocket Fold stretches like a reptilian spine across over a hundred miles of broken desert lands along the western edge of the Colorado Plateau. This protruding geologic feature stands out in a region of impressive rock formations—heavenly spires, contorted hoodoos, canyon gorges, majestic plateaus. Geologist Clarence E. Dutton referred to it as “probably the grandest feature of the kind in the Plateau Country, so far as known, and perhaps the most typical.” The fold, also sometimes called the “reef,” occupies a central location in perhaps what is the most remote corner of the state, making it an attractive plum for backcountry enthusiasts. Only the small towns of Torrey, Boulder, and Hanksville lie in its general proximity. For three weeks in April 1980 Ralph Becker hiked the length of it, for several weeks solo, the final week with a friend. Instead of following a defined route, he generally forged his own with the aid of topographic maps, sometimes losing his way but always reveling in the experience. By his own calculation, he walked 176.5 miles along the reef

1 Qtd. in Miriam B. Murphy, A History of Wayne County (Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society and Wayne County Commission, 1999), 2–3.
and up and down side canyons—essentially the length of Capitol Reef National Park—recording his steps in a pocket journal.

In the tradition of western travel and wilderness adventure, Becker’s travels were hardly unique, and his diary not necessarily more revealing or literary than those of others venturing out into the backcountry. But as a modern account of one man’s experience in Utah wild lands and for its descriptive detail of the Waterpocket Fold and vicinity, it stands on its own. Lured by “the mystery and magic” of the canyon country, Becker set out “to walk a route never before travelled” and “to do something nobody has done.” The fold, he figured, would be the perfect stage to test his “desire to experience solitariness and self-sufficiency” in the backcountry. All the while he kept a diary, reflectively detailing his progress and observing the geologic wonders, cattle tracks, abandoned mining camp sites, and whatever else he stumbled across that caught his eye. Sometimes he lapsed into philosophical musings about the landscape. Mid-way through his trek, he wrote that his mind chattered “less and less about people,” leading him to conclude that while humans are “thoroughly social animal[s],” they also crave “an individual non-human experience.” In this journal, Becker offers one young man’s experiences in Utah’s wild country.

Becker explored the stretch of wild land bounded by the Aquarius Plateau to the west and the Henry Mountains to the east. This was terra incognita to people of European descent until well past the mid-nineteenth century. We have precious few early accounts. The earliest—and perhaps finest—description comes from Franklin Wooley, the adjutant of a military expedition led by Captain James Andrus. The party traveled north from Kanab and up the Paria River to the headwaters of the Escalante River to Potato Valley, then scaled the Aquarius Plateau for an unmistakable view of miles of broken country, including the prominent Waterpocket Fold: “Stretching away as far as the Eye can see a naked barren plain of red and white Sandstone crossed in all directions by innumerable gorges . . . Occasional high buttes rising above the general level, the country gradually rising up to the ridges marking the ‘breakers’ or rocky bluffs of the larger streams. The Sun shining down on this vast red plain almost dazzled our eyes by the reflection as it was thrown back from the fiery surface.” After surveying the landscape, Wooley recorded, “we found no trails leading into nor across this country” and ventured no farther. Instead, Andrus led his party west through Grass Valley and eventually south to St. George.3

The river expeditions of John Wesley Powell would have caught the southern end of the Waterpocket Fold (while in the vicinity Powell mused: “One could almost imagine that the [sandstone] walls had been carved with a purpose, to represent giant architectural forms”).4 The first to penetrate its core was Powell’s brother-in-law Almon Harris Thompson, on errand to retrieve a boat cached at the mouth of the Dirty Devil River. Departing from the small Mormon community of Kanab, he and “a small party” reached Potato Valley, then skirted the southern edge of the Aquarius Plateau and the western edge of Boulder Mountain. Here, Jack Hillers said they viewed “gulches and canons for miles . . . a dry country and almost impossible” to travel through. Following Pleasant Creek along an Indian trail over what Frederick S. Dellenbaugh, a young oarsman for the Powell expedition, called “strange country,” the party encountered a band of Red Lake Ute. The Indians directed the men to a route through the Waterpocket Fold (so named for the “water pockets”—sandstone “pockets” that catch and hold water—they found there), probably in the vicinity of Notum, Utah. Thompson and Powell’s men went on to scale the Henry Mountains and locate the cached boat. From there some of the men floated down the Colorado to Lonely Dell, John D. Lee’s outpost on the Colorado near the Utah-Arizona border, while others

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2 These quotes, taken from his “preface,” are not included in the excerpts below. A copy of Becker’s entire diary is housed at the library of Capitol Reef National Park’s visitor’s center in Fruita.


returned overland, essentially the way they had come. Significantly, that expedition, in the words of the geologist Herbert E. Gregory, “recorded for the first time the salient features of the Aquarius Plateau, Circle Cliffs, Water Pocket Fold, and the Henry Mountains.”

Becker descended from a broader tradition of backcountry travel and exploration going back to Wooley, Powell, and Thompson, but he had more in common with the youthful desert travels of other folks. These included Everett Ruess, the famous artist and wanderer who mysteriously disappeared in Davis Gulch in late 1934, and his lesser-known contemporary, Clyde Kluckhohn, the author of two books describing his forays into the backcountry, including a delightful trek to the top of Wild Horse Mesa (the Kaiparowits Plateau). But unlike Ruess and Kluckhohn’s sometimes romanticized accounts, Becker’s diary offers a modern perspective. Certainly, his reasons for venturing into the backcountry and hiking the entire length of the Waterpocket Fold were quite different from those of many who came before. Despite his unique route, he did not “discover” new territory or produce new geographic or scientific information. His was an engaging adventure in a region known at the time of the national park’s creation as “one of America’s least visited or known scenic areas.” By the time of Becker’s trek, a major highway—U.S. 24—afforded passage through the reef and Lake Powell and the marina at Bullfrog Basin nearly inundated the Rincon, the reef’s southernmost end. But for three weeks he satisfied his need to escape, albeit briefly, modern society, giving readers a glimpse into wilderness travel in the late twentieth century. It is also a record of the fold in its early days as a national park, prior to upgrades to the Burr Trail and heightened park visitation.

Presented here is an abridged transcript of Becker’s diary. The original is in Becker’s possession; editors of the Utah Historical Quarterly stumbled across a copy at the visitor’s center at Capitol Reef National Park in Fruita, not realizing that it was authored by the now mayor of Salt Lake City. As with most editing projects, completeness, accuracy, and significance were the guiding principles directing the editorial hand. We retained the author’s construction, spelling, and punctuation. Duplicated words, slips of the pen, and minor cross-outs were silently deleted. Where Becker added material above a line, we indicated it by employing <carrets>. Crossed-out words are shown using the strikeout modification. When needed for clarity or readability, we inserted words in square [brackets] and added explanatory information and context in footnotes. Deleted material within entries is indicated with ellipses. Readers should note that Becker had the practice of writing in his journal about the previous day’s events.

The Diary

Bullfrog Marina–Hall’s Creek | Saturday, April 5, 1980

I’M HERE.

Hall’s Creek | Sunday, April 6

A.M – It took about 10 minutes yesterday to ride by speedboat from Bullfrog across the bay to Hall’s Creek, where I begin my trek. A friendly concrete pourer from Rifle, Colo. zoomed me into the edge of the Waterpocket Fold.

This is where the geologic and scenic wonder, the Waterpocket Fold, begins. Today it dives gently into Lake Powell and drowns—there is...
Map of Ralph Becker’s travels along the length of the Waterpocket Fold, from Halls Creek Bay on Lake Powell as far north as the foot of Thousand Lake Mountain. Becker estimated covering 176 miles during a three week period in April 1980.

Deb Miller, Utah Division of State History
no trace of it on the south side of the Colorado River (Lake Powell).\footnote{The southern end of the fold, now partly inundated by Lake Powell, is actually the island in the center of the Rincon.} 

Relying on intuition that the clouds would dissipate after sundown, I passed up a south-wall overhang for a camping spot where I would have a clear view of the east-sunrise. A big waterpocket mostly filled with Navaho sediment and covered with junipers, grasses, yuccas, and prickly pear provided my demands.

Scallions, mushrooms, carrots, bell peppers, and green beans supplemented Top Ramen beef-flavored noodles for my evening feast.

\textit{Hall’s Creek | Monday, April 7}

I completed a full day’s hiking yesterday.

From my camp, a few hundred feet above Lake Powell I hiked straight up the Waterpocket Fold in a southeasterly direction to the ridge, almost 2000’. On top I was treated to spectacular views of Navajo Mt., the Straight Cliffs, sets of cliffs to the east extending many 10’s of miles, and occasional views into the Escalante drainage and Stevens Canyon, and the Henry Mts. to the North.

After walking a few miles \textgreater{north} along the ridge top, I decided to traverse back down the Fold to Hall’s Creek. It took me most of the remainder of the day. Steep canyons continually sprang \textless{down} up in my path. I would have to back-track, ridge walk, or follow the canyon bottom for awhile, only to begin again the sequence upon encountering an insurmountable drop. At one point I had to lower my pack about 8’ in order to continue down a precipitous ridge. Learned—don’t trust the topographic maps on the fold. Hundreds of canyons appear

Panoramic photograph overlooking Halls Creek Bay with the Henry Mountains looming in the background.

\textemdash Ralph Becker
and end without ever being accounted for in the maps.

The Navajo sandstone, which makes up this lower portion of the Fold, offers endless variety.10 Water pockets are everywhere at this time of year. Some are 30’–40’ in diameter and the depths are seemingly fathomless. Large frogs croak and dive for shelter upon my arrival. . . .

Hard driving winds blew relentlessly, at times throwing me off-balance. A stream of clouds whipped by from the west and showers were visible throughout the day on the Henry’s. Sand worked its way into everything—my lunch, camera, water, all by my belongings, ears and eyes.

As the day wore on the wind began to shift northward, with gusts on occasion from the northwest. A large cloud appeared shortly before sundown. Although I believed the front was passing, I played it safe and camped under a big cottonwood tree.11

Miller’s Creek | Tuesday, April 8

The morning of April 7 brought crystal blue skies. After housekeeping and a quick snack of dried fruit and chocolate, I hurriedly threw on my pack to work out of me the morning chill.

The wind was relentless, driving hard, and cold from the north. I plowed through it for several miles up Hall’s Creek to Miller’s Canyon.12 Tumbleweeds rushed madly at me, filled creek bottoms, and clung desperately to sage and rabbit brush. When I had to walk through a bramble of them, the tumbleweeds knawed at my legs and arms. I soon grew weary enough to them that I would walk well out of a normal route to avoid their barbs. Finally, I resorted to boulder hopping as I crisscrossed Hall’s Creek.

At one point during the trek across a bench I encountered a fresh pool of blood. There was no other trace around. A bird or ground squirrel had no doubt met its demise. . . .

In one creek bottom I was surprised to see downed cottonwood trees. They appeared to be carved towards the center like a beaver’s work.—possible?

I finally reached Miller’s Creek. Although almost all of the gulches had water at this time of year, Miller’s Creek distinguished itself

Water pockets similar to this one give the reef its name. The namesake came from Almon Harris Thompson’s 1872 party, which camped near “two water pockets” while trying to find passage through the geologic formation.

— RALPH BECKER

10 In 1922 John Widtsoe, while traveling by wagon to the mouth of Hall’s Creek as part of a party of men working on what became the Colorado River Compact, had a similar reaction to the landscape, finding “magnificent scenery, and a remarkable variety of forms.” See A. R. Mortensen, ed., “A Journal of John A. Widtsoe; Colorado River Party, September 3–19, 1922,” Utah Historical Quarterly XXII (1955): 195–231 (qt. on 203).

11 Despite Becker’s belief that he “played it safe,” camping under a cottonwood is never a good idea, especially during a violent storm, because of the danger of falling limbs.

12 This is the first of “over two dozen narrow canyons and their tributaries cutting through the tilted strata and huge sandstone domes of the reef” between here and Pleasant Creek.
with a flow that almost matched Hall’s Creek and contained a heavy outwash. I traversed a ledge of alluvium, abandoned my pack for a daypack and slipped my feet into jungle boots, the finest for wandering in and out of water and onto rocks. The light load on my feet, and shoulders, and hips was a welcome relief.

Miller may have been a uranium miner. I crossed an occasional board and well-eroded and overgrown road. Near the head of the canyon I discovered his abandoned mining site—rusted cans (including some Becker beer cans), old catalogs and Life magazines (dated August, 1957), a rusted wood stove, some charred foundation and cracking rubber hose to the creek bottom marked the spot. He must have been a sturdy individualist and determined to eke out a fortune. With all of the chinle exposed, (though I didn’t notice outcropings of uranium-bearing shinarump), there must have been loads of hope in this canyon.

I did cross several large pieces of petrified wood, always an exciting find. On the way out I took my first bath (my nose said thank you) and washed some socks. It was sunset by the time I left the canyon. I camped at the mouth in plain circled by sage-covered hills. The wind had died down.

Coyotes wailed at dusk. Beef stew and hot chocolate for dinner—delightful.

This morning I patched my shorts—for me an accomplishment if it holds. I’ll see if Hall’s Creek narrows is passable this time of year today.

Hall’s Creek above the Narrows | Wednesday, April 9

After repacking my backpack, I started north again in Hall’s Creek.

On the east side of Hall’s Creek a cliff rises 800′–1100′. The wingate sandstone provides its foundation. A layered chocolate brown siltstone makes up the largest vertical area (Summerville formation?). In this portion of the Creek there are only one or two ways out to the east, and they involve major scrambling efforts and careful route selection. The Waterpocket Fold provides the western side of the Creek. Gentle hills of the carmel formation initiate the climb upwards. The navaho sandstone erupts in domes, cross-bedded slabs, and twisting canyons to the sky. Properly named, the USGS map called the canyon Grand Gulch.

Following cattle trails, I made good time to the Narrow[s]. A still, sunny morning with a cool breeze made the hiking easy. Approximately two miles from Miller’s Creek, I crossed into Capitol Reef National Park. Other than an occasional boundary sign, one would not notice the transition. Occasionally, I spot the old road to Baker Ranch and Hall’s Crossing. Yet these two areas are managed by the Park Service very differently. In the recent Glen Canyon National Recreation Area Management Plan, Hall’s Creek was not recommended for wilderness status. Surely, there can be few areas as pristine or scenic in GCNRA (including lower Escalante). “Man’s imprint” is essentially unnoticeable, and where there are some quaint reminders of man, e.g., the abandoned uranium

13 Grove Karl Gilbert, a nineteenth-century geologist, described the “narrows” as “a place where the creek turns from the open canyon of the shale and enters a dark cleft in the sandstone. He can follow the course of the water (on foot) and will be repaid for the wetting of his feet by the strange beauty of the defile. For nearly three miles he will thread his way through a gorge walled in by the smooth, curved faces of the massive sandstone, and so narrow and devious that it is gloomy for lack of sunlight; and then he will emerge once more into the open canyon.” For Gilbert’s report, see Report on the Geology of the Henry Mountains, 2nd ed. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880), 132.

16 Becker’s journey began in the Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, established in 1972. At this point, he crossed into the southernmost border of Capitol Reef.

17 This is a reference to the Bureau of Land Management’s 1979 initial wilderness study inventory that identified more than 6.3 million acres statewide for more intensive review. Those lands on the inventory ultimately recognized as exhibiting wilderness “characteristics”—currently 3.2 million acres—are managed by the BLM as though they were designated wilderness until Congress acts to designate or delist them. See Jeffrey O. Durrant, Struggle Over Utah’s San Rafael Swell: Wilderness, National Conservation Areas, and National Monuments (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007), 44.
mining venture in Miller’s Creek, they do not detract from the wilderness quality of the area. And if they did, the area is easily restorable with a couple of man days work.18 Is the mineral potential of the area great? We need consistency in management here. The land borders a National Park.

Lower Muley Twist Canyon | Thursday, April 10

Yesterday I hiked the about 12 miles up Hall’s Creek to the mouth of Muley Twist Canyon. At times it was arduous as the hot sun parched my skin. Even more difficult was passing by the inviting little canyons that entered the base of the Fold and disappeared behind a corner. Only sweeping curves high in the walls of the fold revealed where they may have gone.

I basically followed cattle trails and the old Hall’s Crossing road up the Creek.19 This is winter grazing ground for the ranchers in Boulder.20 When researching my master’s thesis I came across a series of newspaper articles describing the fury of the town when Lyndon Johnson extended Capitol Reef National Monument from 29,000 acres to 250,000 acres (approximately today’s size) in 1969 as one of the last acts of his Administration. The Boulder Town Council, fearing they would lose their winter grazing territory and thus their ranching livelihood, renamed their town Johnson’s Folly.21 As I recall [in] the Park legislation of ’71, grazing will be terminated for the rancher’s after 1 more 10-year leasing period.22

The cattle represent an annoyance to most hikers. One cannot drink from their despoiled water, the vegetation is diminished (sometimes the landscape is almost denuded), and the smell of cow pies lingers in the air. On the whole though, I believe that permitting grazing is one compromise backpackers should make. Grazing is an historic way of life in the West. If properly managed, the damage is minimal and reversible. And cattle’s terrain is limited to relatively flat, vegetated areas. And By sticking to wilder country, cattle can to a large extent be avoided. However, in National Parks or other areas where preservation of the natural ecosystem must not be violated, grazing has to be eliminated, despite the burden on individual ranchers.23 . . .

18 Here Becker hits on a major point of conflict in debates over wilderness: the existence of abandoned cabins, mine tailings, roads, and stock ponds in wilderness areas. Although some wilderness opponents favor a definition of wilderness as “pristine,” the framers of the Wilderness Act of 1964 did intend wilderness designation in areas with histories of human use and even habitation. In debates over passage of the Endangered American Wilderness Act of 1978, Congress explicitly rejected the idea of wilderness untouched by people. See Kevin Marsh, Drawing Lines in the Forest: Creating Wilderness Areas in the Pacific Northwest (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004), 3, 125.

19 Becker followed a historic road, labeled a “jeep trail” on topographical maps. First used by Mormon pioneers in 1881 as an alternative to the east-west crossing of the Colorado River at Hole-in-the-Rock, it served as an important transportation route until yet another route farther north at Hite Crossing replaced it. Cornelia Perkins, Marian Nielson, and Lenora Jones, Saga of San Juan (n.p.: San Juan County Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1957), 78.

20 Somewhat unusual among Mormon-settled towns, Boulder depended not on farming but on cattle ranching. The first ranchers arrived in the 1880s, grazing their cattle herds on public range lands free of government control. At summer’s end, area ranchers commonly drove their cattle from Boulder Mountain east to the lower elevations.


23 At the time of Becker’s writing, an environmental assessment on grazing phase out at Capitol Reef, reportedly drafted by Park Service, attributed “disappearance or severe depletion” of large game animals and other ecological impacts to grazing. In particular, the document mentioned grazing overuse near water holes in the Waterpocket Fold, near Fountain Tanks and Muley Twist Tanks. “Capitol Reef EA, Reservoir Maintenance and Grazing Phase Out,” [ca. 1982], 10, 17, box 1, fd. 4, Series: Capitol Reef National Park, Record Group:National Parks, MSS 200, Utah Wilderness Association Records, Special Collections and Archives, Merrill-Cazier Library, Utah State University, Logan.
At one point on the walk it looked like the fold may go through a major change. In the red slide area slabs of Wingate began to push up on the west side of the creek and the purples and greys of the Chinle formation were also exposed to the west with a significant slant paralleling the Fold. However, 2 miles further up canyon, the Wingate and Chinle had receded to their previous posture.

In the hottest part of the day after losing track of how far I had hiked, when hot dry and swearing at my foot, I discovered a little paradise. Hall’s Creek had opened up into a broad valley and I was hiking on the west side. <I had not seen water for miles> There on my left side the edge of the fold in the Navaho water glistened over the lip of a water pocket. I scrambled to the water took a refreshing bath, ate lunch, did some laundry, and at once was at peace with the world.

After looking at the map I surmised my spot—Muley Tanks. Muley Twist Canyon was less than a mile away. I stopped to look into a cavern flowered by chert chippings and an occasional pottery sherd (sp?). Vehicle tracks and boot marks were here <recently>. Were vehicles permitted? These guys must have been looking to pillage. Several “test holes” had been dug.24 I wandered further up the little canyon to its head to be certain. I was not in Muley Twist. It was a delicate, finely sculpted canyon. At one point it was so narrow I had to chimney across a 15 foot pool. At its head was a large, round cavern with a deep, blue pool. Upon leaving I looked to the names carved and written on the cavern wall. Included among them was Moffitt <from Manti, Utah> of a USGS survey dated 1923.25

Last night I ate Mt. House Chili & Beans—not recommended.

Burr Trail | Friday, April 11

I reached the Burr Trail just before sunset and quickly found a suitable camping spot and my cache. Quite a feast last night—canned plums, tiny shrimp, chicken stew, and hot chocolate. This morning I have a can of strawberries, but I’m not sure my digestive tract will accept them.

I noticed last night some snow on the north-facing slopes here. This morning it flurried and there is a cold wind. I have heard a couple of cars pass below on the Burr Trail—civilization.26

I have now completed the first of three parts of my trek. I easily could have spent my entire time to this point. Ideas have been seen for many future, shorter hikes.

Upper Muley Twist Canyon | Saturday, April 12

Yesterday was extraordinary.

It was too cold to spend a morning of leisure as I had originally intended. Snow flurries kept blowing into camp and the wind didn’t permit me to get warm—even by the fire. Finally I resolved myself to pack up my week’s gear and start up Upper Muley Twist Canyon.

While packing one huge gust of wind blew my sleeping bag, socks, poncho, and other assorted items into the fire. Frantically I pulled everything...
out. Scratch one pair of socks and major damage to my sleeping bag around the hood. With some emergency repair tape, I halted the damage. My poncho-groundcloth will have to survive with some small holes. . . .

Upper Muley Twist Canyon is a fine work of art. Tremendous navaho sandstone fins rise steeply to the east, creating the backbone of the Waterpocket Fold. The kayenta sandstone, a pinkish and tan ledgy rock, begins making an appearance just under it. Wingate sandstone is becoming a dominant formation. It rises in great humpbacks and provides, for the most part, the western edge of the Canyon. In the wingate, arches appear everywhere. Some are high up the walls, others are near the stream. They come in all sizes and shapes.

About 3 miles up canyon I follow a trail for a view of strike valley (Hall’s Creek) and some lunch. The wind on top is so strong I must crouch sometimes. The view of the Henry Mts. and to the north (Capitol Reef itself) and south (Hall’s Creek) is incomparable, however. Blowing snow and broken light provide an exceptional treat. . . .

From the head of Muley Twist Canyon I can see to the north a heavily vegetated red rock canyon. From here I must find a way down the Waterpocket Fold. It is not quite as steep and a route looks plausible to the south. Carefully, I wound my way down through the slabs of navaho sandstone to a funnel at the bottom. Finding a water pocket I fill my water bag and find one last difficult cliff. I slide my water bag to the bottom where it bursts open like a water balloon. My pack followed (without similar results) and I gingerly shuffled and jumped to an awaiting pinyon pine. 50 yards downstream I found more water in the carmel formation, and filled my spare water bag and made camp.

**Rim of Sheets Gulch | Sunday, April 13**

I left camp yesterday morning and began the part of my walk along the base of the Waterpocket Fold to Pleasant Creek, about 3 days including distractions into some of the side canyons. The wind picked up again and blew cold from the north. I hiked up to Bitter Creek Divide and then along the top of a shale ridge capped with Dakota Sandstone. The view from this ridge was magnificent in the morning light—Henry Mts. to the east, Waterpocket Fold to the West, and great navaho sandstone towers in front of me. I was in cattle country again—they jolted upon seeing me and were particularly playful with one another.

After paralleling the Notom Road for a couple of miles, I crossed its path and began making good time—hopefully good enough to get to the Coleman Canyons in time for a late afternoon hike. While hiking up the road one person stopped and asked me if I would like a ride. I told him I was trying to get some exercise.

The Notom Road here veers away from the Fold to skirt Cedar Mesa. As I walked further and further from the Fold I grew more and more disgusted with my “walking the road.” I was no longer at the base of the Waterpocket Fold—the spot I had come to experience hike. I left the Notom Road and began hiking back towards the Waterpocket Fold.

Soon I saw and felt why this area had been bypassed. I was constantly going up and down over 100+’ high shale hills and sand dunes. This was drudgery—up and down over endless hills and in and out of countless gullies and washes. I would look up at the solid rock of the Fold and wish I had taken the high route, trying to pick my way across the top of the Fold.

I kept trudging along, telling myself I had not promised myself a picnic for 3 weeks and this was one of the unpleasant parts. At least I had a grandview view. By mid-day heavy clouds were rolling in again from the north. . . .

By the time I arrived at the confluence of the Creeks late in the afternoon, I realized it was too late to start a hike and get any further than the mouth of one of them. The clouds by this time looked ominous and I could see no effective cover from the wind or potential snow anywhere in these shale hills. So I decided to push on and hopefully get far enough

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27 This is now known as the Notom Road Scenic Byway, a paved and gravel road connecting Highway 24 and the junction of the Burr Trail.
so I could enjoy a day hike tomorrow. I climbed up and over another hills and onto the flats of the Sandy Ranch\textsuperscript{28} and dropped into Oak Creek Canyon.

As I left Oak Creek and began making my way across the sands and <carmel> shales, disappointment over slow progress and difficult trudging left me. Before my eyes, The pastels took on a richness and depth of splendor I had failed to comprehend. Overwhelming feelings engulfed me. I seemed to feel nothing, yet everything, and for a time completely lost track of even my own presence. Slowly, a darting rabbit, a frigid burst of wind, and the rim of Sheets Gulch brought me out of the state.

Those moments were one of the rare <moments> times I’ve felt that way in my life.—a blissful, treasured period of time, and the only kind of religious experience I can say I’ve known.

Anticipating a cold night, I made camp as well out of the wind as I could and where I would be able to see sunrise over the Henry Mts. I ate a tasty dinner of Mt. House shrimp creole and climbed in my sleeping bag early in search of warmth.

\textit{Burro Creek | Monday, April 14}

Spring arrived yesterday at the Waterpocket Fold. In immediate response some dainty white flowers opened up and others looked ready to burst.

As I prepared to leave camp, I kept waiting for that familiar cold wind to reappear with gusto. With only <a> light wind I left camp and made my way down the south side of Sheets Gulch to a place where the navaho had leveled out and started up towards 5 Mile Wash. Small canyons cut deeply through the soft shale of the carmel formation, but today I was prepared for them and could even enjoy my trek. I kept climbing higher and higher to avoid as many of the continuum of gullies and canyons as possible. Nevertheless, it was very slow going. At one stretch I walked through a dead pygmy forest—all of the older junipers and pinyons had died, leaving only their scraggy frames. Near the top of another gray and reddish-orange hill I encountered a large field of grass—obviously the cattle hadn’t discovered this one yet. The top layer of shale is a thin, hard, tan rock that fractures easily. When I would encounter a pile of this rock that had to be traversed, it sounded as though I was walking on broken shingles or china.

When I finally arrived at 5 mile Wash I was a little high on the canyon to traverse it. Navaho sandstone walls were still 40’–50’ high. I followed the canyon rim down 100 yards or so and saw a little break I believed I could make it down through. After started down I realized that one spot was going to involve some tricky maneuvering. Following Nancy’s Rule of Safety—if in doubt, don’t—I backtracked, went down canyon another 100 yards or so and found an easier route.\textsuperscript{29}

On the way into the canyon I observed a strange phenomenon. A flock of smallish, <or> medium-sized birds of about 30–40 came screeching and yelping down the canyon at lightning speed just above the far wall. Behind them were a few trailer birds. The first flock must have been warhooping to scare some little critters out, or at least for some good reason. But what? I saw the same flock or a similar one later in the day.

The trek to Cottonwood Wash was similar to the one from Sheets Gulch to 5 mile Wash, but the canyons seemed to dig deeper and I needed to go higher and higher. When I finally reached Cottonwood Canyon I was over 100’ into the navaho. I attempted to follow a little side canyon into the Wash but dead-ended at a 75’ drop—didn’t need Nancy’s Rule here. . . .

Before I knew it, the afternoon shadows were growing long. I quickly packed up, climbed out of my side canyon and hurried down Cottonwood Canyon to find a spot to cross. Well down canyon I found a break and promptly moved off towards Burro Canyon, scurrying to get there before dark[.]. Scrambling over innumerable shale hills, gullies, and canyons, I finally reached Burro Canyon at dusk, found a water pocket and made camp on the north ridge.

\textsuperscript{28} Sandy Ranch, located in Garfield County, is a large cattle ranch adjoining the border of the national park.

\textsuperscript{29} Nancy was Becker’s fiancée.
Capitol Wash at Miner’s Mountain | Tuesday, April 15

I experienced a remarkable day.

I began my walk through a final set of pastel carmel shale hills. It was a fond farewell to the shale that had trained my legs and soul the last couple of days.

Dropping into Pleasant Creek though was like a breath of spring in the desert. Pleasant Creek is another of the Waterpocket Fold’s perennial streams, bringing snow-melt from Boulder and Miner’s Mts. This morning it gurgled sweet and clear. Lava boulders made their reappearance. In all, a most appropriate of names.30

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As I slowly made my way up the Canyon [of Carcass Creek], I became awestruck. In its lower reaches it is a wide open Navaho sandstone canyon. Unlike the narrows and towering, at times looming, walls of others Waterpocket Fold canyons I have wandered through, the valley here in the navaho is at times a half-a-mile wide. Great sand dunes covered at times with pinyons and junipers, willows, and an assortment of grasses and bushes are well-spaced over the light tan sand. . . .

I walked and boulder-hopped more quickly, but with a well-preserved awe up a now swollen Pleasant Creek through the remainder of the navaho, kayenta, and wingate formations, and arrived at Pleasant Creek Ranch.

Here was a ranch with character—old, wooden

men camped under “some cottonwood trees” and the next morning, after a restful sleep, “in gratitude we called the stream Pleasant Creek without an attempt at originality.” Frederick S. Dellenbaugh, A Canyon Voyage: The Narrative of the Second Powell Expedition down the Green-Colorado River from Wyoming, and the Explorations on Land, in the Years 1871 and 1872 (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1908), 203.
fences and rusted farming equipment, horses viewing me with curiosity, and no more than a two lane road covered with more horse prints than auto prints. A broad valley cut out of Chinle formation lay in front of me with Miner’s MT., tree-covered, west ahead of me. On a shale hill overlooking Pleasant Creek stood the Sleeping Rainbow Motel. Maybe because this was Monday, there was nobody around. (The word sleeping rainbow comes from the Navaho (or Ute or Paiute) word for the Waterpocket Fold—certainly a better description.)

I wandered up the With Miner’s Mt. in sight now, I again sat down with my topographic map and geologic map and decided on a route up the 1800’ feet to the top. The safest route would be to follow Pleasant Creek to Sulphur Creek and then to the ridge. However, the contour lines on the topographic map were just widely enough spaced to make Capitol Wash, a considerably shorter route, look plausible. My geologic map told me I would be walking through the Moenkopi formation and the Kaibab formation.…

I walked up the two-laner a couple of miles to Capitol Wash and headed up a dry steambed, passing great slabs of ripple rock in the Moenkopi, and walking on the dry, caky soil. From the beginning I had to scramble up many a lip or through and over big boulders and rock falls. Twice, after entering the grey and tan of the kaibab limestone, I had to circumnavigate 50’ dry falls. But always there was a way through and I managed to climb higher and higher on Miner’s Mt.

As evening approached, I grew more confident I could make it up this route. At one point, I looked back down canyon, I was immobilized by a view of the Golden Throne highlighted by the intense late afternoon sun. In the glory of this view I felt triumphant. My map reading had held true and I was rewarded with a grand sight.

With the setting sun I made camp. It would be cold at this elevation tonight. I was not concerned about water—for the past couple of miles I was walking through deeper and deeper snow drifts. I would need my gaiters on top of Miner’s Mountain.

**Fremont River | Wednesday, April 16**

Under heavy morning clouds and a brisk winds, I continued my walk up Capitol Wash yesterday morning. Since leaving the road to Sleeping Rainbow Ranch, I had not even seen the print of a deer in Capitol Wash—a late spring was keeping them low.

Within a half-mile, I began encountering ponderosa pines, a tall, gallant pine with orangish bark. A wood pecker hawed at me and rattled around above. Within another half-mile I encountered a mining shaft: soon I began finding the normal signs of man—rusted cans, plastic gallon jugs, and the heavy-handed use of chain saws. Roads began branching off in every direction as I reached the plateau. This must be Forest Service country I thought—very little care for the landscape and trash everywhere.

I sloshed and slid through the snow and ice directly west across Miner’s Mountain. The wind and clouds began to concern me. If it were to rain hard on this snow, there would be flash flooding in the Fremont River, making the route even less plausible. I began to consider the alternative of going down Sulphur Creek.

As I approached the Carcass Creek drainage, signs of civilization appeared. There was a line

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31 According to Ward Roylance, sleeping rainbow was “a name applied by Navajo Indians to the varicolored Chinle rock formation of Arizona and Utah.” The Enchanted Wilderness: A Red Rock Odyssey (Torrey, UT: Four Corners West, 1986), 110. Frederick Dellenbaugh, writing fifty years after his work on John Wesley Powell’s geological surveys, observed that “the Ute and Paiute words were familiar in that region [surrounding Ticaboo Creek] as well as the Navajo,” though he acknowledged that “as a rule there were few Navajo terms north of the Colorado [River] the Utes and Paiutes dominating that region.” Dellenbaugh to Charles Kelly, November 6, 1932, box 1, fd. 4, MSS B 24, Frederick Samuel Dellenbaugh Papers, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah.

32 The Golden Throne, one of the park’s stateliest landforms, is a straight-walled Navajo sandstone formation.

33 The ranch, situated along Pleasant Creek on property settled in 1882, was privately owned and operated until the Park Service acquired it, in piecemeal, in 1974, 1978, and 1995. The ranch is now used as a science field camp for college and public school students. Murphy, A History of Wayne County, 372–74.
of telephone/power poles heading toward Grover. In another mile I saw an old ranch house, unoccupied. I was crossing fields, bypassing the road that led over the hill into the heart of Grover, and going straight down Carcass Creek to the Fremont River. As I came down the valley, a pickup truck pulling a trailer slowly meandered down a road on the other side of the valley and disappeared towards the River. Soon I saw two fine new houses on my, the east, side of the valley. I passed the first—no sign of occupation, and walked towards the second, where I could see movement. Surely these people would know the condition of the Fremont River.

Allen and his wife provided me with a superb treat. They had lived in Grover for half-the-year for twelve or fourteen years, spending the remainder of their time in California. They had just arrived for the beginning of their Grover half. Yes, they answer to my question about the feasibility of getting down the Fremont River—and they invited me to stay for lunch. Real milk, bread, delightful company. They had designed the home themselves, and it was comfortable living space. There were big south<west> facing windows with eaves and a cement heat receiving wall in the living room (passive solar), the biggest stone fireplace I’ve ever seen, a big, spacious kitchen with a little den and sleeping nook connected to it—and all with a feeling of warmth and individualism. As I left, [my hosts] gave me two plastic bags: one with a piece of chicken and the other with some cherry turnovers “that Allen didn’t like. If you don’t like them, just throw them away.” I’ve <savored> saved one for this morning.

I wandered down the valley towards the River and realized that my meeting had altered the mind-set that had been developing over the previous ten days. For ten days I had increasingly thought less and less about people, and more and more about the landscape I was walking through. It struck me how man is such a thoroughly social animal and yet is adaptable <to>, and maybe needs at times, an individual non-human experience. <(a modern day reason for religion’s viability?)>

I set myself back into the mode of mind that would get me <safely> bae down the Fremont and aware of my physical surroundings. Where Carcass Creek enters the Fremont there is a large wide valley. The River is raging and route crossings would have to be picked with unerring care. Quickly it dropped into the kaibab limestone. I found a necessary crossing to the north side about a half-mile downstream. The current was exceedingly swift, but the water never got above thigh high and with careful stepping I crossed. From this spot the Fremont cuts a sharp, deep gorge through the kaibab, leaving steep talus slopes on its sides.

I found a spot to camp another half-mile downstream, after passing some defaced petroglyphs, high on a <south-facing> talus slope above a 15’ waterfall. With chicken and turnovers to complement my freez-dried dinner, I enjoyed a feast.

Capitol Reef National Park Visitors Center—Sulphur Creek | Thursday, April 17

Packing up my last day’s belong[ing]s, I slipped into my comfortable old hiking boots and began working my way downstream. About a half mile from camp, I came to a spot where I could not continue on the north side. The Coconino Sandstone was beginning here. Unlike the kaibab sandstone, it is a harder, sharper cliff-forming tan sandstone. The formation is presents a striking cliff line near the top of the Grand Canyon, where I came to know it. Next to the redwall limestone and vishnu schist34 and granite, it is the most conspicuous of the formations there.

I found a spot where someone had downed a cottonwood tree and made their way across. I followed the route after changing into my jungle boots. Water rushed by waist high. Another quarter-mile downstream and I encountered the same predicament—no sign of help from a tree here—I found a slow, wide spot in the river and carefully stepped from rock-to-rock along the bottom until I safely made it to the other side.

By this time I was getting concerned and moved my sleeping bag to the top of my pack. Before each crossing, I tested the waters without my pack to make certain I could make it across.

This process repeated itself 9 times in an cap-

34 A metamorphic rock type.
tivatin[g] journey downstream. In one spot I thought for awhile I would have to turn back. Both walls creased together and there appeared to be no way through without swimming—my pack could not withstand that punishment and some of my belongings would be ruined. Furthermore, I was uncertain whether things would get worse before they the canyon exit.

To make matters more discouraging, the underbrush by the river was nasty too my legs. But I did not want to change into my long pants, for I would have no dry pants for the cool night ahead.

By the time I arrived at the Fremont River Canyon exit, I had lost my ensolite sleeping [pad] in the river, was numb cold, and scratched merci-lessly about the legs and arms. It was a welcome relief to see the canyon open up and the Coconino sandstone and kaibab disappear behind me.35

Sulphur Creek/Calf Canyon | Friday, April 18

After packing for the final week and enjoying a can of red rasp[b]erries and a can of crab (lots of mmm's and aah's here), Joan [Degiorgio]36 and

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35 Although the Fremont River is one of “four points known where [one] can effect a passage” through the reef, in the words of the geologist Grove Karl Gilbert, “the way is difficult,” as attested by Becker’s account. See Report on the Geology of the Henry Mountains, 16.

36 Degiorgio joined Becker for the final week of his trek. She later had a career as a natural resources planner for state and federal agencies and the private sector. She is currently Northern Mountain Regional Director of the Nature Conservancy.

I started up Sulphur Creek, which comes in right at the Visitor’s Center. The lower stretches were dreamy. It was a warm, clear day with a light breeze. We waded through pool after pool of refreshing, clear water. The water was warm down here in the Moenkopi. It had run for miles over flat, sun-warmed rocks. In spots there were gentle waterfalls and brief cascades. Joan had brought good weather and [it is] nice hiking with her.

We passed through a long stretch of the kaibab limestone. Like the walls of Capitol Wash and the Fremont River its fractured, tan, des-
fire, and ate a quick breakfast, and packed up. We were hiking by the time the sun hit us.

We walked across a broad valley where Hwy. 24 passes and made our way across Moenkopi flats to rejoin Sulphur Creek, passing the Rimrock Motel, its inviting pond, horses, <and> red-winged blackbirds and other wildlife.

Sulphur Creek climbs steadily up Thousand Lake Mt. through the Chinle formation—pleasant, easy hiking.

Joan and I reached a wingate narrows that appeared to be impassable near the top of Sulphur Creek. We spent the next hour scrambling up a steep chinle gully that was soft with mud and snow to the canyon rim. The safety of Joan’s company made our route possible—falling rocks and sliding feet were the norm. Unfortunately this was one spot of wingate the U.S. Geological Survey missed in putting together the geologic map for the Capitol Reef area.

From the top we followed a Forest Service road for about a mile until we found a trailhead leading to Paradise Flats. We dropped in Sulphur Creek for a leisurely lunch. It was another delightful day. Even at more than 8000’ the sun was warm. We felt confident because here on the southeastern side of Thousand Lake Mt. there was a little snow. On north slopes the snowpatches were knee deep, but we had anticipated worse conditions. Our view from the vantage point would have been utterly breathtaking—I could see down the Fold to the

Ralph Becker standing alongside petroglyphs in Paradise Flats. — JOAN DEGIORGIO

The Canyon opened up considerably in several spots upstream providing broad valleys and a sense of openness and light sensations. As the late afternoon shadows softened the canyon walls and highlighted features, Joan and I hiked in calm bliss up canyon.

Ridge above Paradise Flats | Saturday, April 19

We began the day early yesterday. With first light we started up our
Golden Throne and the Henry Mts provided a backdrop. But the visibility was poor today and the haze left the Henry’s only a bluish shadow in the distance. Joan and I pondered whether visibility was poor because of a seasonal condition, power plant emissions, or some long distance transport from an urban area.

We left our lunch wearing gaiters. As we moved north the snow drifts would grow deeper. The trail had not been used this spring, but with the aid of cairns and a set of horse prints, we were able to follow it to the ridge between Water Canyon and Paradise Draw.

The shadows were growing longer. Joan and I were sinking into deeper and deeper snow with each north-facing slope we descended. Once I fell through the snow up to my hips and floundered in it until I could extricate myself.

Today we drop into Paradise Flats and Deep Creek. This marks the end of the Waterpocket Fold’s northward culmination. From our vantage point at the tail end of the day, topographic maps, and a flight over the area, it represents the wildest part of the Fold. The navaho is thrust skyward in huge and at times contorted domes, spires, and fins. I am excited to see this least frequented of places and enjoy it as a dessert of my journey through the Waterpocket Fold.

Deep Creek | Sunday, April 20

We awoke early again yesterday. It had been a warmer night than expected, but I had a hot breakfast of oatmeal and hot chocolate. We used, throughout our camp, snow from a neighboring bank for our water source.

We dropped down off the ridge onto Palisade Paradise Flats. It was a tricky little scramble through snow on slick kayenta sandstone. Without snow we would have been glued to the sandstone and easily traversed the hillside. But the term slick rock applied to this country comes from the condition we faced in the morning—wet sandstone, from snow or water, is like walking on banana peels.

The top of Palisades Flats is formed out of kayenta. Standing rocks of all sizes and shapes dot the landscape with waves of pastellic pinks and tans. A maze is created with the high points and low points not seeming to drain in any particular direction. We decided to make camp in a high, east facing area surrounded by spires, pin heads, whales, and contortions of rock that spurns the imagination.

We spent the remainder of the morning and day exploring the uppermost portion of Deep Creek.

Joan and I worked our way carefully through the kayenta into the navaho, leaving cairns and boot prints so we could find our way back to camp. Dropping down through the north slopes of the navaho, the footing was treacherous. In addition to the slickrock phenomenon of the kayenta, navaho crumbles easily when wet. Ledges for footholds are therefore particularly questionable. Frequently Joan and I would find ourselves breaking off chunks of navaho and slipping and stumbling downhill for several feet. Fortunately, there were only large patches of snow on north-facing slopes and deep in canyons.

Deep Creek is all-over-the-place country. In attempting to follow what we thought was Deep Creek, we climbed up a steep canyon only to find another canyon leading downward behind it. We moved deep into the heart of upper Deep Creek, following streambeds to dead ends and then following another route.

We rather easily found our way back to camp. The topographic map of this area is virtually impossible to read, but on the way back to camp, I believe we finally determined our location and where we had been for the day.

Mouth of Water Canyon | Monday, April 21

Paradise Flats is a sagebrush valley of sand and lava boulders with domes and fins of kayenta and navaho sandstone rising out of the floor.
As we meandered through the land of the giant standing rocks, we followed, for the most part, a web of heavily used deer trails. Then we spotted them—a herd of nine, another of four. We came within 40 yards of the first herd before they spooked and bounded off. I had seen some deer earlier in the trip at the Coleman Canyons, but they appeared much more cognizant of the dangers of man and did not remain in sight. We watched these deer, as they watched us, for ten minutes before we finally walked out of sight.

Near the bottom of the sagebrush designated Paradise Flats I spotted a petroglyph of a bighorn sheep on a distant wall with my binoculars. Joan and I trotted over and discovered a magnificent array of petroglyphs—Bighorn sheep, men shooting bows and arrows, deer, large figures possibly representing gods, symbols, wheels, and the alleged water symbol (spiral symbol). For 50 yards the walls were scratched with scrawl and maybe artwork of a people who lived off the plentiful bounty this land offered. From the ledge we had a view of the Henry’s and the lower end of Paradise Flats. (Unfortunately, others felt obliged more recently to add their handiwork. Several names were carved in the rock next to the petroglyphs, probably cowboys who brought the herds through here to winter and summer grazing above and below this valley. One name, though, was of particular interest—Wm. Hickman, 1929. A Hickman of that era was a strong backer of the creation of Capitol Reef National Monument (1936), and Hickman Natural Bridge is named after him in the Park.)

37 This is one of a few impressive rock panels within Capitol Reef National Park, the best known along Highway 24 and in Capitol Gorge. This was largely the handiwork of the Fremont, who occupied the eastern Great Basin and western Colorado Plateau from about 650 to 1250 A.D. See David B. Madsen, Exploring the Fremont (Utah Museum of Natural History, 1989), ix. For the meaning of this rock art, see Alex Patterson, A Field Guide to Rock Art Symbols of the Greater Southwest (Boulder: Johnson Books, 1992).


We proceeded across a ridge and dropped onto a second path of standing rock. A pinyon-juniper vegetative cover gave us a different perspective. We were also troubled during this stretch by an almost solid cover of cactus—little ones that jumped up and grabbed boots, socks, and legs. The little devils had no inclination to stay in the ground. Again, however, the panorama of standing rocks filled us with the glory of the sunny day.

After lunch we wandered downstream and immediately saw hopeful signs—a steep canyon to the north and a general opening of the canyon. Soon we entered Deep Creek and rejoiced.

Deep Creek is a big, broad canyon here. Filled with lava boulders and a hard, dense siltsone (meta-morphosed?) layered whites and pinkish purples, it is a stately sight. Massive navaho walls line its downward path. To the northeast, in spots, carmel shale walls can be seen.

We soon passed Water Canyon, dropping into the kayenta again. Pleasant Boulder hopping and sand waddling made the trip downstream to our camping spot at an unnamed 3-mile side canyon an enjoyable trek.

Mouth of Water Canyon | Tuesday, April 22

Yesterday was again a most pleasant of days. We left camp to day-hike the canyon above us. The wind blew a cool morning breeze and the sun struggled through for brief moments.

Upon arriving at a side spot in the canyon with a large pool, Joan and I bathed and laundered. With no sun and a brisk breeze, it was an eye-opening, skin-bumping experience. We sat for a spell at this spot. The kayenta walls were carved in intricate configurations, webbed and pock-marked like colorful swiss cheese. I spotted a large arch halfway up the kayenta wall on the north side of the canyon.

The streambed was filled with an assortment of black and red lava boulders, chunks of kayenta, and lying on a bed of white, tan, and orange sands.

We slowly picked ourselves up and gradually moved up canyon. We were not in a small water-
pocket of snow melt here. A hard top layer of the purple and blue-grey of the chinle was exposed and a stream with large pools flowed. . . .

We stopped for lunch in a niche of the kayenta to escape the gusts of cool wind. With the amount of water in this canyon, I had begun to think that this must be Water Canyon—that I had misinterpreted the map. With all of the water and a major junction in the stream just ahead of us, my beliefs inking[s] were confirmed. On the topographic map, there was nothing similar to this in no-name canyon.

I crossed over a recent rockfall with green Mormon tea39 crushed between some rocks and soon we left the stream and lushness behind. We entered the wingate formation and immediately began encountering steep ledges in the streambed. We found an old, caved in pit house (for storage by passing cowboys?) and worked our way around several a few insurmountable falls in the stream path. After re-entering the kayenta we confronted a rock ledge we could not surmount and returned down canyon. Upon viewing the kayenta walls I viewed the surrounded kayenta walls and detected a way up past this spot. From here to the head of Water Canyon (which we crossed the top of), looked plausible.

A cold wind and overcast cast sky quickend our pace back to camp. We stopped for water and our drying socks, made a fire, and set up camp. Shrimp creole last night for a repast. Passing clouds sprinkled intermittently throughout the night.

Yesterday, for the first time I could sense the end of my journey. Sadness, accomplishment, and a readiness for (at least a brief) return to home filled me a varying moments.

39 This shrub with scale-like leaves, known as ephedra, is common throughout the American Southwest.
Deep Creek at South Desert | Wednesday, April 23

We broke our camp of two nights at the mouth of Water Canyon after another leisurely sunrise breakfast, when we were entertained by two squabbling ravens.

About a half-mile downstream we found the mouth of no-name canyon, dropped our packs and day-hiked, . . .

Under ominous skies we boulder skipped and trotted to our packs at the mouth of no-name canyon, pulled them on with ponchos in easy reach, and began our trek out of the gorge of Deep Creek. Cool, hard winds and blue-black skies increased the startling contrasts and stark beauty as we quickly made headway through the widening meanders of Deep Creek. We passed out of the kayenta, back into the domes and towers of the navaho, and finally into the carmel foundation. In this northern most portion of the Waterpocket Fold the carmel is startlingly thrilling. It takes on a range of colors broader than the imagination can fathom—browns, tans, oranges, reds, greys, purples, yellows, blues, and greens. Rounding each corner was like entering a new world of color. The deep, dark clouds contributed to contrast and splendor.

The rain came. Intermittently we felt a few drops throughout our jaunt down Deep Creek. But near the bottom of the carmel a burst of rain sent us scrambling under a convenient overhang for cover. Sheets of water blue past us up the canyon amid rolling thunder and lightning. A half hour later the shower stopped as suddenly as it had started. The sweet smells of wet sages and moisture filled us. Sunlight glinted off boulders and vegetation—a delightful spring cloudburst.

We broke out of Deep Creek onto a large valley, the South Desert. For the last mile we could see an enormous tower of entrada sandstone. It marks the exit of Deep Creek to the wide-open desert, a gate-keeper several hundred feet high. The light occasionally silhouetted it, giving the tower an even more prominent appearance.

We walked a few miles down the South Desert (still on Deep Creek) with reddish-purple and grey shale walls to the east, the carmel of the Fold to the West, and the Henry Mts. to the south. Behind us Thousand Lake Mt. was shrouded in a cloud. Light broke through the clouds in various places, highlighting one feature or another. Rainbows hung over formations, adding to the majesty.

We made camp at dusk, attempting to set up some protection from the rain we anticipated, using our ponchos and lava boulders. There were no trees or hard rock to find cover under. After a fire of sage and assorted brush roots and branches, we crawled in under our makeshift protection and as it began to rain. A steady rain fell for most of the night. Sleep was difficult and I became damp, but our protection, for the most part held up. . . .

Deep Creek in its canyons, for both Joan and I, was the wildest country we had ever been in. We did not see one human footprint for five days of hiking. Only the petroglyphs and some limited, decrepit signs spoke of man's prior presence. And in our visit we could only catch a glimpse of the wonders of that region. It comforts me to know that vast and spectacular spots like Deep Creek remain for us with an adventurous twinge.

Thursday, April 24

The cool, wet morning helped quicken our steps as we began hiking down Deep Creek through the South Desert to the Fremont River and the end of the trip. Despite less sleep than I had become accustomed to, my adrenaline pushed me tirelessly as we crisscrossed the meanders of Deep Creek . . .

The rain had packed down the sandy and clay soil, making walking easier—we could step out rather than be bogged down. Cattle trails (more winter grazing territory here) helped us pick the best route through the Deep Creek valley.

As we rose above the intermittent stream on to benches and hills, views of the Henry Mts. to the south, Thousand Lake Mt. behind us to the north, and as we moved further south, Capitol

40 Written one day late, this entry is dated April 25.
Reef, brought on waves of nostalgic feeling for the land I visited for the past three weeks. From the beginning the Henry’s had been my landmark and guide of northward progress to the east. I was on my last stretch—it seemed appropriate to be walking toward them.

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Ralph Becker is an attorney and planner. He is currently serving as the thirty-fourth mayor of Salt Lake City.

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Visit history.utah.gov/uhqextras for Ralph Becker’s reflections on his Waterpocket Fold trek thirty-five years later.

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RELIGION OF A DIFFERENT COLOR:
Race and the Mormon Struggle for Whiteness

BY W. PAUL Reeve

New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. xi + 335 pp. Cloth, $34.95

W. Paul Reeve’s noteworthy book, Religion of a Different Color: Race and the Mormon Struggle for Whiteness, traces the racialization of Mormons from the beginnings of the church through the early twentieth century as undesirably white, Native, black, or “Oriental.” Reeve finds a clever organizational device in a cartoon printed in 1904 that adorns the cover of his book. The cartoon, a drawing of “Mormon Elder-Berry’s” family, shows a Mormon polygamist with multiracial children: six white European children, an indigenous child, an Asian child, and a black child. The book traces the process by which Mormons were first racialized as undesirable whites, Natives, blacks, and Asians, but ultimately, by the mid-twentieth century, won whiteness. These debates occurred on the battleground of the Mormon body, as outsiders to the religion made a mostly white church over into racially suspect Americans, while LDS church leaders most often defended their whiteness. Reeve’s ambitious argument thus shapes the Mormon experience “as one of race, citizenship, civil rights, identity, and equality” (7).

A section of Reeve’s book covers each ethnicity represented by “Mormon Elder-Berry’s” children. His first chapter argues that outsiders believed the undesirable characteristics of Mormons were creating a new degenerate race from white racial stock. The next two chapters examine the ways outsiders characterized Mormons either as Indians (or Indian-like white savages) or as in cahoots with Indians against America, justifying the removal of Mormons to a kind of reservation in the Utah Territory. These claims were bolstered both by Mormon savagery at the Mountain Meadows Massacre and by a Mormon theology that saw interracial marriages between Mormons and Natives as a form of Native racial uplift.

Four chapters focus on Mormon Elder-Berry’s African-American daughter, examining anxieties both within and outside the church over interracial mixing, polygamous “white slavery,” and the very nature and definition of race. Reeve traces the emergence of the bans on black priesthood and temple attendance in the context of outsiders’ racialization of Mormons as black. Outsiders, Reeve argues, simply ignored the church’s evolving position against miscegenation and accused Mormons of racial mixing and of keeping white women as slaves under polygamy, causing the racial degeneration of men, women and children. Mormons, for their part, measured their whiteness in distance from blackness, which they established by creating and upholding priesthood and temple bans and by defining race through the one-drop rule, at the expense of faithful black Mormons. Reeve shows how, in the early twentieth century, church leaders came to misremember the introduction of the priesthood ban as divinely ordered.

Over the course of the twentieth century, Mormons went “from not securely white in the nineteenth century to too white by the twenty-first century” (3). The conclusion of the book examines the implications of this victory in the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries, arguing that “Mormons again found themselves on the wrong side of white” (272). In an era of civil rights, Mormons waited until 1978 to lift the ban on black priesthood and temple attendance. Contemporarily, Mormons remain too white, so much that the church anxiously broadcasts its diversity through such media campaigns as the recent “I’m a Mormon” advertisement series.
While most of Reeve’s intellectual progenitors do appear in his footnotes, the text of the book itself treats the racialization of Mormons as though it is entirely new territory. Nonetheless, Reeve’s book makes intriguing and important contributions to Mormon history and the history of race and whiteness in the United States. Most notably, he places Mormon otherness into a broad national context, as well as local Mormon contexts, demonstrating the symbiotic relationship between national and local histories. His work will be valuable to scholars and lay readers alike interested in the history of race, whiteness studies, Mormon studies, and religious studies.

However, some aspects of the national context for the book are a bit underdeveloped. The book is largely built on the assertion that nineteenth-century Americans equated whiteness with democracy, fitness for self-government, and citizenship. Reeve takes for granted the definitions of democracy, fitness, and citizenship and their connection to whiteness without really theorizing or questioning either.

Reeve’s narrative is one of restoration and redemption, restoring Mormonism to its universalist roots and redeeming it from the racism of its past. Reeve shows that, initially a universalist faith under Joseph Smith’s tenure, the church only became racist under Brigham Young’s leadership as church leaders inaugurated policies banning African American men from holding the priesthood and both black men and black women from receiving saving temple ordinances. Increasingly after 1978, Mormonism overcame its own racism in an era of globalization by returning to Smith’s universalism in an era of global expansion. This narrative presents the contemporary church as redeemed, as though its historical racism has disappeared and is no longer consequential. I would be curious to see the extent to which people of color, both within and outside the church, agree.

— CHRISTINE TALBOT
University of Northern Colorado

WE REMEMBER, WE CELEBRATE, WE BELIEVE:
Latinos in Utah

BY ARMANDO SOLÓRZANO


Latinos are the largest and fastest growing minority population in Utah, yet relatively little has been written about their presence and impact on the state. Armando Solórzano’s book, We Remember, We Celebrate, We Believe: Latinos in Utah, is timely in its endeavor to recreate a people’s history of Utah Latinos. The creation of the book itself spans years of research, offering readers an important synthesis of sources, including previously published literature, oral histories, maps, and, most importantly, photographs that provide a visual storyline of this group. The book’s nine brief chapters, which are presented in both English and Spanish, chronologically detail Utah’s complex and deeply embedded history of Latinos.

Solórzano’s first chapter begins with the history of the Utah area before the nineteenth century. Here Solórzano connects the diverse ancestral background of Utah Latinos with indigenous populations in both Mexico and the United States. The second chapter details the establishment of Monticello, a small city in southern Utah, where Latino families settled and navigated the religiously divided terrain between Mormons and Hispanic Catholics. The next three chapters detail the new economic opportunities—including mines, railroads, and agriculture—that pushed Latino families farther north after World War I. The onset of World War II ushered in a new wave of Latino workers, including Puerto Ricans and Central and South Americans. While Latinos were discriminated against in all three sectors, Solórzano reveals how they persevered and contributed to both the development of Utah’s economy and the diversification of Utah’s social and cultural environment.
The sixth chapter explores the contributions of Latinos as soldiers. In small cities like Monticello, Latinos enrolled in the army at higher rates than their Anglo American counterparts. As revealed in chapter seven, many returning veterans became visible leaders during the Chicano movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Unique to that movement in Utah was the 1967 development of the Spanish-Speaking Organization for Community Integrity and Opportunity (SOCIO), which worked to represent the interests of Latinos across all of Utah by lobbying for educational funding and political inclusion of Latinos. As Solórzano argues, “SOCIO left an impact on the social, political and economic institutions of Utah, one which remains unsurpassed by other Latino organizations” (151). In the final two chapters, Solórzano explores the new waves of immigrants who arrived in Utah after the late 1970s, many with ties to the LDS church, who in turn have further diversified the ethnic makeup of Utah Latinos. As the Latino population continues to grow, Solórzano reveals contemporary concerns facing Latinos today, including questions related to the stances of the Catholic and LDS churches on undocumented immigrants and why there are still barriers that impede Latinos full integration into the life of the state.

Solórzano states in his introduction that the pictures are meant to reconstruct the experience of a group that has “in silence helped to build the foundation of the Beehive State” (xiv). On the contrary, it seems that the pictures reveal the very visible and powerful ways in which Latinos were an integral and necessary part of the Utah landscape. At its core, Solórzano’s book carries an important message about the presence and underappreciated history of Utah Latinos. The short chapters and illustrations make it readable for many different audiences, and, while it is not meant to be a comprehensive history, it definitely provides a strong foundation on which future scholars can build.

— JENNIFER MACIAS
University of Utah

HONORING JUANITA BROOKS:

A Compilation of Thirty Annual Presentations from the Juanita Brooks Lecture Series, 1984–2014

COMPILED BY DOUGLAS D. ALDER


The title explains exactly what this book is. In 1984, Obert C. Tanner—businessman, philanthropist and philosophy professor at the University of Utah—endowed an annual lecture series at Dixie State College (now University) to honor his friend Juanita Brooks, the great historian of southwestern Utah who needs no introduction to readers of these pages. The lectures promise to continue into the future. The lecturers have been a stellar array of scholars, mostly in history but also in allied fields such as literature, folklore, and geography.

And what a feast these lectures are! Only a few of them deal with Brooks herself, largely because Levi Peterson’s biography is so nearly definitive that scholars have found little to add (though Levi’s own second thoughts about her, “The Saving Virtues, the Pardonable Vices,” is one of the volume’s highlights). But most, if not all, deal with some aspect of the history and culture of the Virgin River basin of Utah and Nevada that were the focus of Brooks’s work.

Reviewing a book of this size and scope is clearly impossible within a reasonable space. Most compilations of this kind have their weak and strong moments, but these essays are so consistently excellent that all this reviewer can do is to call attention to a few of his personal favorites. Other readers, though, can be assured that they will find ones to pique their own interest and delight.

Even at that, where to start? The following choices are discussed at random, not in any order of importance. An atypical example is the late C. Gregory Crampton and Steven
Madsen’s informal discussion of their research on the Old Spanish Trail. Speaking apparently extemporaneously, they tossed the dialogue back and forth, detailing not only the history, the economics, and the route of the trail, but also—sometimes humorously—their own adventures in trying to retrace it on foot, by Jeep, and in a perilous airplane reconnaissance.

Another favorite is Laurel Thatcher Ulrich’s “The Significance of Trivia,” in which she discusses her method in reconstructing the life and times of midwife Martha Ballard in the prize-winning A Midwife’s Tale. Ulrich revisited Ballard’s laconic diary, overlooked for many years because it seemed to contain so little useful information, to show that we historians are limited only by the boundaries of our imagination, and her book is a rich evocation of an early American person and community. Ulrich goes on, though, to demonstrate how her method can be applied to Mormon history by discussing several also laconic diaries of nineteenth-century Mormon women.

Essays by Glen Leonard and Richard Turley discuss their research on the Mountain Meadows Massacre; their colleague Ronald Walker also appears, but he applies his immense eloquence instead to the boyhood of Anthony W. Ivins. Employing, in the manner of Leonard J. Arrington (whose essay on the building of the St. George temple and tabernacle is included here) a team of researchers and a collaborative authorship, Leonard, Turley and Walker accomplished perhaps the single most impressive work of research and interpretation in our day.

The 1988 lecture was shared by Allen Roberts and Linda Sillitoe, who had just completed their investigation of the Mark Hofmann scandal. While the Hofmann lectures seem the least relevant to Juana Brooks, the connection is actually closer than might be apparent. The title of Roberts’s essay, “The Truth is the Most Important Thing,” reminds us why it was that Brooks’s work was such a revolutionary force in Utah and Mormon historiography. For young historians whose exposure to Mormon history had come mostly through big doses of Joseph Fielding Smith in their Sunday School classes, Brooks’s courageous commitment to Truth, even when it was ugly or inconvenient, was enough to inspire their own careers.

The only criticism I can level at this work is the occasionally sloppy copyediting. Examples occur at various places, but the most egregious one is the 1984 inaugural lecture, Charles S. Peterson’s “A Utah Moon: Perceptions of Southern Utah,” which does not appear to have passed across a copyeditor’s desk at all. It was a stumbling start to the series and a shabby way to treat one of our most eminent historians. (Chas’s second appearance, in 2012, with his “Hopeful Odyssey” essay on Nels Anderson, is much better presented.)

As the lecture series continues, one can hope that compilations like this will appear more frequently (this reviewer surely will not be around for the compilation of the next thirty). And the amazingly low price—one assumes because of a subvention from the Tanner Foundation—demonstrates that the expression “inexpensive paperback” is not necessarily an oxymoron.

— GARY TOPPING
Roman Catholic Diocese of Salt Lake City

A KENNECOTT STORY:

Three Mines, Four Men, and One Hundred Years, 1897–1997

BY CHARLES CALDWELL HAWLEY

Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2014. xviii + 369 pp. Cloth, $36.95

Charles Caldwell Hawley’s A Kennecott Story traces the development and history of the Kennecott Copper Corporation from early mining in the 1870s to the current Rio Tinto operation. He examines Kennecott’s three main mines and the four men he views as central to the company’s development and rise to prominence in the copper industry. The Bonanza Mine in Alaska, El Teniente in Chile, and the Bingham Canyon Mine in Utah became the company’s most prof-
itable properties. Stephen Birch in Alaska, William Braden in Chile, Daniel C. Jackling in Bingham, and later E. Tappen Stannard form the focus of Hawley’s study. These men, all mining engineers, led the company and its main mines and forged the necessary links between profitable copper mining and technological developments that placed Kennecott at the forefront of copper mining and its history.

From the outset, the author states his purpose and intended audience: “This account places the Kennecott story within the broader picture of the American mining industry as it evolved through its most crucial and revolutionary period. The book is intended for not only geologists and engineers but also historians and the inquisitive general reader. . . . I have tried to stimulate the reader's interest in technical subjects. . . . I want the reader to consider controversial issues of mineral discovery, operations, and sustainability in an increasingly crowded world, where resources are not distributed equitably” (xiv). The reader is left to ponder if Hawley achieved all these goals.

Overall however, Hawley’s study does succeed in placing the company in the broader national and international contexts. He discusses copper as a mineral, outlines its mining in economic and technical terms, and illustrates how Kennecott forged its activity in the American West, Alaska, Chile, and eventually throughout the world. For Utah historians and those interested in mining, A Kennecott Story sheds much light on the influence of Daniel C. Jackling (whose statue stands in the Utah State Capitol) and Kennecott Copper Corporation in the industrial and economic development of the state and its importance as a national and international player in the production of copper and other minerals.

In discussing the “operations” of Kennecott, Hawley largely ignores the workers who formed the backbone of copper mining. His eleventh chapter, “The Human Component,” pays lip service to the role of labor, especially the southern and eastern European, Asian, and Hispanic miners who toiled through the early technology touted by the author. Certain passages illustrate to this reviewer the overall insensitivity and narrow-mindedness of the author in dealing with Kennecott’s workforce. For instance, he notes that “At Bingham Canyon, Utah, laborers tended to have darker skin tones than Anglo-Saxons and were treated according to the fashion of the day” (6). What does the “fashion of the day” really mean? Similarly, Hawley writes that “by the 1920s, the lot of an ordinary miner at the Bingham Canyon Mine almost certainly had passed the norm” (115). What was the norm? He also ignores the role of women and Hispanic miners in filling World War II–era labor shortages. Yet, the author states, “The need for copper during World War II saved the domestic copper industry that, as in World War I, earned record revenues” (8). During those years Utah women proved instrumental as workers in Kennecott’s mine, mills, and smelter.

Hawley does offer excellent insight into the technical and economic impacts of copper mining, especially highlighting the importance of the Bingham Canyon Mine (and its concentrators, smelter, refinery, and power plant) in the larger context of Kennecott’s operations. However, he states incorrectly that the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad was “completed to Bingham in 1873” (62). As a company, the D&RG did not enter Utah until the 1880s. It was Charles Scofield who completed the Bingham Canyon and Camp Floyd line in 1873.

Despite shortcomings, this study is very much worth the read. Charles Hawley places Kennecott Copper Corporation in the broader context and, by looking at both the history and contemporary scene, presents the reader with a more complete view of the company and its vital place in the history of Utah, the American West, and world copper production.

— PHILIP F. NOTARIANNI
Magna, Utah
THE POLYGAMOUS WIVES WRITING CLUB:

From the Diaries of Mormon Pioneer Women

BY PAULA KELLY HARLINE

New York: Oxford University Press, 2014. xi + 244 pp. Cloth, $29.95

Paula Kelly Harline's *The Polygamous Wives Writing Club* joins a long shelf of books that have broadened and deepened our understanding of nineteenth-century Mormon marital practices. Its primary accounts complement recent works like Kathryn M. Daynes's *More Wives than One* and B. Carmon Hardy's *Doing the Works of Abraham*. Harline is evidently aiming for a general readership interested in Mormon history as well as scholars.

The book's premise is promising: Harline chose twenty-nine diaries and autobiographies of women in plural marriages between 1847 and 1890 who were neither prominent leaders nor married to prominent men and who did not leave the LDS church. In this way, she seeks to find through their own accounts “how common folk [i.e., women] understood and lived polygamy” (4). She imagines that these women belonged to a “writing club” that shared its stories, a device that she hopes will capture the interest of general readers. Each chapter groups two or more women in similar circumstances, such as second wives or women who lived near one another. That device has its strengths but sometimes feels distracting, as Harline repeatedly posits hypothetical meetings between her subjects. Those imagined meetings also undercut one of her major findings: the lack of social support that many of these women experienced.

Harline’s introduction lays out three general conclusions from her evidence: first, “wives never felt comfortable with polygamy because, despite their efforts to convince themselves otherwise, there still seemed something adulterous about it” (4). This claim is problematic. The excerpts Harline provides offer any number of women's complaints (e.g., poverty, overwork, sexual jealousy, and neglect or physical abuse from a husband) but little evidence that those women specifically thought plural marriage was somehow “adulterous.” Harline makes some dubious general claims along these lines, such as “even while living polygamy, inertia pulled wives back to their cultural DNA—Adam and Eve alone” (22).

Harline is on more solid ground with her second claim—that women felt little sisterly affection for other wives—for which her sources provide plenty of support. The third claim, that women’s lives became “especially uncomfortable and inconvenient” during the federal antipolygamy campaign of the 1880s, is also well-supported, although “uncomfortable and inconvenient” seems euphemistically mild (5).

Several of the accounts Harline includes, especially those of Catherine Rogers and Annie Day, offer rich, perceptive, and sometimes hair-raising insights into the trials of plural marriage. We might wish for longer excerpts, as Harline uses many sentence fragments interspersed with her analysis. Harline’s admirable focus on her female subjects ironically means that she underplays the disparity of power in this time period. Several of her subjects were coerced by parents, older men, or LDS leaders into marriages they didn’t want or even understand and that they came to hate. Harline acknowledges this but hesitates to draw conclusions about the hegemonic nature of patriarchal power that her evidence suggests. For example, she quotes Angelina Farley’s diary, in which she describes speaking bitter words against her husband for taking another wife, then blames herself for losing verbal control. Harline blithely accepts this self-criticism, suggesting that Farley “was in a bad mood, as we would say today.” Farley even wished that she could “put a bit upon” her tongue (63). A few pages later Harline quotes Brigham Young preaching against complainers. It seems likely that women like Farley took such warnings by powerful men to heart.

Harline’s evidence (from a small pool, as she admits) adds up to a strong “no” to one question she poses: “Were polygamous wives content with their sacrifice?” (5–6) But she handles
her evidence so cautiously that she only hints at that conclusion. And instead of considering her materials as documents of the variety of individual human relationships (a point nicely made by Annie Clark Tanner in a brief excerpt on p. 186), Harline writes about polygamy as a sort of monolithic institution in which many women found themselves fitting poorly. For example, she notes “private writings show that polygamous wives could not thoroughly or comfortably incorporate polygamy into their lives” (58). Similarly, she writes that Angelina Farley “just felt that polygamy didn’t work in her day-to-day life”; and Catherine Rogers, Olive Potter, and Lynette Conover “could not defend polygamy and weren’t sad it fell apart” (63, 181). Polygamy wasn’t an “it” to these twenty-nine women: they had separate, individual experiences with men and other women.

Harline concludes with a brief summary of post-1890 plural marriage, in practice and in Mormon belief. She ends her fascinating but sometimes frustrating account by imagining a Sunday prayer meeting where “a few wise old polygamous wives” are “patiently waiting to tell their stories” (215). Some of those stories are here, and they aren’t pretty.

— JEFF NICHOLS
Westminster College

GATHERING AS ONE:

The History of the Mormon Tabernacle in Salt Lake City

BY ELWIN C. ROBISON WITH W. RANDALL DIXON


Gathering as One: The History of the Mormon Tabernacle in Salt Lake City represents a long overdue and much-needed one-volume history of one of Utah’s most significant buildings. Elwin C. Robison’s work shows how a building can reveal itself as a primary source when in the hands of a structural engineer and architectural historian. This book should inspire professionals and amateurs alike to study other significant Utah buildings in more detail.

One of the book’s strengths is the breadth of its narrative and of its contextual understanding of early Latter-day Saint architecture. The first portion of the book describes early Latter-day Saint worship spaces from Kirtland to Salt Lake City. It explores the evolution of Latter-day Saint worship and changes in building design to accommodate expanding church membership. Gathering as One describes how earlier buildings influenced and informed design and construction of the great tabernacle. Of particular interest is a discussion about the first tabernacle on Temple Square. Robison shows that this building became an architectural training ground for Brigham Young, Truman O. Angell, and others to practice ideas for the tabernacle to come. Part two of the book provides fantastic detail about design and construction of the larger tabernacle. Richly illustrated with historic and contemporary photographs and architectural plans, this section of the book will give readers insight not only into the history of this building but also into nineteenth-century construction practices. Students of Utah history will appreciate details throughout the chapter including information on the procurement of building materials such as timber from canyons around Salt Lake City and iron salvaged from military wagons. Structural engineers will especially appreciate the chapter entitled
“Design and Construction of the Great Tabernacle Arches.” The explanation of king trusses, joints, pegs, bolts, arches, lattice trusses, and many more structural elements provides a level of detail that has never been fully described before. Non-engineers will need to pay close attention to the diagrams and keep a dictionary handy to make complete sense of some of the discussion. This chapter demonstrates why the tabernacle is worthy of inclusion as a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark, one of only three engineering landmarks in the state of Utah.

The final portion of Gathering as One describes uses of the building and changes to its structure and design to accommodate those uses. This book is the best single source to date for a critical understanding of the history of the great tabernacle organ. It also describes well the introduction of modern technologies like plumbing, electricity, broadcast equipment, and elevators into the building and is one of the best summaries I’ve read of the baptistry constructed in the basement of the tabernacle in 1890. Historic preservation aficionados will appreciate the complexities of the 2006 seismic retrofit. Reading about the project may inspire discussion about historic preservation principles for buildings that have been constantly evolving for over a century.

While this book provides a good understanding of the tabernacle, it falls into a similar trap that other studies of Mormon architecture do. Robinson’s excellent work would be improved by placing it in the context of other large congregational worship spaces in the mid-nineteenth century. Tabernacle-building was not unique to Utah but was part of a larger evangelical trend in worship. This contextual critique in no way mars an excellent study of one of Utah’s architectural masterpieces. I will be using this book frequently in my own work to understand Utah architecture and to aid in the preservation of this landmark building.

— EMILY UTT
Salt Lake City

For a review of Gathering as One by W. Ray Luce, visit history.utah.gov/uhqextras.
BRIGHAM YOUNG:  
_Sovereign in America_  
BY DAVID VAUGHAN MASON

New York: Routledge, 2015. xiii + 184 pp. Paper, $34.95

David V. Mason’s _Brigham Young: Sovereign in America_ is an installment in the Routledge Historical American series, which offers short biographies of significant Americans in a style and format appropriate for U.S. history courses. Accordingly, _Brigham Young_ is essentially a textbook with two main parts. Its first section consists of seven chapters that outline the story of Young and the nineteenth-century Latter-day Saints, from the religion’s origins to what Mason calls “Brigham’s Kingdom.” Its second section contains eight key documents by Young, Lilburn Boggs, General Clark of the Missouri State Militia, and Alfred Cumming. The volume also has features useful to students, including a timeline, a bibliography, and a companion website.

LEGENDS, LORE, AND TRUE TALES IN MORMON COUNTRY  
EDITED BY MONTE BONA


_Legends, Lore, and True Tales in Mormon Country_ brings together a diverse group of stories from the Mormon Pioneer National Heritage Area. Its nine chapters discuss the Mormon San Juan Mission and the Hole-in-the-Rock; lost treasures of the Mormon Heritage Highway; the Jewish back-to-the-soil settlement of Clarion; Duncan McMillan, the founder of Wasatch Academy, and Brigham Young; the experiences of the gunslinger Hiram Bebee, outside speculation that he could be the Sundance Kid; the ghost of Zane Grey in the Utah-Arizona Strip; the life of the acclaimed actress Maude Adams; Hans Ulrich Bryner Jr., a LDS Swiss immigrant to Utah; and frontier crimes, including violence against women, medical malpractice, spying, and murder.

LIFE UNDER CHINA BRIDGE AND OTHER STORIES OF MINORITIES IN OLD PARK CITY  
BY GARY KIMBALL


_Life Under China Bridge_ continues Gary Kimball’s publications about the history of Park City. In its preface, Kimball notes that this is a book about minorities in the city’s past, but “the problem is that everyone in Park City was a minority” (iv). The first chapter examines Park City’s Chinatown and includes Sanborn maps of the area and an appendix of 141 names of known Chinese residents of Park City up to 1950. Other chapters discuss William Jefferson Hardin, a talented and enigmatic man who ended his life in the mining town; the renaming of “Negro Hollow” to “Treasure Hollow”; and the place of Mormons in the largely non-Mormon Park City.
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