Caught In Between: Jacob Hamblin and the Southern Paiutes During the Black Hawk-Navajo Wars of the Late 1860's

By EDWARD LEO LYMAN

During the first decade of their Southern Indian Mission, located in southern Utah and northern Arizona, Latter-day Saint missionaries, mainly led by Jacob Hamblin, enjoyed much success cultivating friendship and proselytizing the Indians of the vicinity. Some converted Southern Paiutes living along the Santa Clara River called themselves “Paiute Mormons.” They worked with the missionaries in marked harmony improving their lives and agricultural operations in what was soon called Utah's Dixie. However, much of this cordiality essentially disappeared near the time of the horrible Mountain Meadows Massacre in 1857 in which members of both groups participated. During this time of growing mistrust, other Native Americans took advantage of the continued tension between the

Edward Leo Lyman is a retired college history professor now residing in Silver Reef, Utah.

Mormons and the federal government to engage in extensive raids on southern Utah and elsewhere in the territory. Southern Paiutes of the region often bore the brunt of blame and hostility for actions in which they were at best usually only peripherally involved or responsible.

The general hostilities in central Utah were known as the Black Hawk War, named for Black Hawk, a northern Ute, which persisted from 1865 until 1870. At the same time renegade Navajo and allied Indians extensively raided the livestock herds of Dixie’s ranchers. During this conflict church leaders intentionally kept many of the Black Hawk War developments and associated thieving in southern Utah from public notice. They did not wish to invite U. S. Army involvement in that region. Brigham Young confided to Apostle Orson Hyde, “our policy has been to say as little to the troops or to the officials of government respecting our Indian difficulties as we could possibly help. We prefer settling them ourselves, for their interference would very likely be hurtful and might precipitate a general Indian war.”

Some of the details of the Indian conflict in southern Utah and subsequent peace treaty (1870) established by Jacob Hamblin, Major John W. Powell, and Indian agent Captain Frank Bennett have been discussed briefly before, but many details regarding the conflict and its termination are herein discussed for the first time.

The Tonequint band of Paiutes, who had engaged in corn growing for years prior to the coming of the Mormons, were some of the first people Jacob Hamblin was called to work with. On an early visit among them, Mormon church authority George A. Smith counted thirteen different irrigated Native American corn fields along the Santa Clara River, and commented that Hamblin and his associates were “doing much for the benefit of Indians.” Hamblin recalled the Tonequints had accepted the challenge to work for a living and also “promised to be honest.” For a time they agreed to live by a code which stipulated that anyone who stole would either pay the full price for whatever was taken or would be punished by fellow Paiutes—with Hamblin sometimes prescribing the severity.

After a notable attempt to follow missionary precepts and live as exemplary church members, Hamblin recalled an occurrence he apparently set in the winter of 1856-57 when his charges among the Tonequint Paiutes informed him, “we cannot be good, we must be Paiutes.”

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2 Brigham Young to Orson Hyde, June 11, 1867, Brigham Young Papers (letterpress copybooks), Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, hereafter LDS Church Archives.


expressed hope the missionaries would continue to assist them and affirmed that perhaps some of their children could be as “good” as the Latter-day Saint lifestyle prescribed. In a most telling statement of the extent to which Paiute tradition controlled their lives, they decreed: “we want to follow our old customs.”

There are several other reasons for this change as well. Santa Clara sub-chief Jackson stated to Major James H. Carleton that he at least had some impatience with former Mormon allies both for blaming them too much for the Mountain Meadows bloodshed and also for taking more than their share of the loot from the attack. Apostle George A. Smith reported to Brigham Young after the tragedy, “I have been told that since the transaction [massacre] many of the Indians who had previously learned to labor have evinced determination not to work, and that the moral influence of the event upon the civilization of the Indians has been very prejudicial.” Under the circumstances, there are good reasons to have expected this.

Many Mormons shared the goal of eastern reformers of trying to culturally assimilate the American Indian into white society. This it was thought by reformers might closely parallel agricultural and economic development of the Indian in the American West as well. Hamblin and other Indian missionaries in Utah’s Dixie worked to improve the Southern Paiutes agricultural skills and enjoyed more success with them than with other Indians of the region. Some later observers consider this initial success with the Southern Paiutes to be the greatest ever in Mormon proselytism among Native Americans. But the success was not permanent. Older cultural ways reasserted to end the process and recent scholars have concluded that such assimilation asked too much in requiring native...

1 Little-Nibley, Hamblin, 229-32, 240-41. This included fights between factions representing claimants for the hands of particular marriageable Indian women—in which the bride often received the brunt of the injuries. See also Pearson H. Corbett, Jacob Hamblin: The Peacemaker (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1968), 64; Milton R. Hunter, Utah Indian Stories (Salt Lake City: Mountain States Bindery, 1946), 136-40, 250-53.


1 George A. Smith to Brigham Young, August 17, 1858, in Historian’s Office Letterpress Copybooks, LDS Church Archives. An example of the changed attitude is that Chief Coretio of the Cedar City area demanded Indian farmer John D. Lee give him a beef, ammunition, a shirt and other items, reportedly appearing “stiff and saucy” during the exchange. Lee held an extensive discussion about the Indian leader’s departure from past promises to work for a living and to help maintain cordial feelings toward the Mormons. Coretio admitted he had changed his attitude and actions and agreed Lee was correct in chastising him, after which he promised to resume his former positive leadership. See Robert Glass Cleland and Juanita Brooks, eds., A Mormon Chronicle: The Diaries of John D. Lee, 2 vols., (San Marino, CA: The Huntington Library, 1955), 1: 167-68.
peoples to abandon their deeply held cultural traditions.

Hamblin recognized another change that took place among the Southern Paiutes during the next several years which was perhaps equally crucial in the decline in “the spiritual feelings of the Indians of southern Utah.” He recalled many “long talks around the campfires” which had helped maintain “a friendly feeling in their hearts.” However, the settlement of St. George in 1861, and a simultaneous lessening of missionary activity among the Tonequints, seemed to have induced “the feelings of the Indians toward the Saints [to become] more indifferent and their propensity to raid and steal returned.” Hamblin attributed the decline of hospitable relationship to the “great number of animals brought into the country by the settlers.” Their livestock, he reported, “devoured most of the vegetation that had produced nutritious seeds [on] which the Indians had been accustomed to subsist.” Ethnobotanists now recognize this had been their most essential food source.

Consequently, when Paiute children went hungry the ensuing winter, the Indians expended much time discussing with Hamblin and others these disastrous changes with increasingly great resentments. Mormon livestock-

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* Little-Niblley, Hamblin, 299; Angus M. Woodbury, “A History of Southern Utah and Its National Parks,” Utah Historical Quarterly, 12 (July-October 1944): 167. Robert A. Bye Jr., “Ethnobotany of the Southern Paiute Indians in the 1870s: With a Note on the Early Ethnobotanical Contributions of Dr. Edward Palmer,” in Don D. Fowler, Great Basin Cultural Ecology Symposium, Social Science No. 8 (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1972): 88-91 states, “the exploitation of the natural resources in the environment indicates that the Southern Paiutes were not pawns of a harsh environment, but a culturally adapted people in an area with varied natural resources, [and that the]...seeds collected, parched, ground, and prepared in various forms...” were an essential part of the Paiute diet.
men did not understand that almost in a single year their cattle essentially destroyed the grass seed supply that had been the staff of life for many of the native inhabitants. The Dixie pioneers also had difficulty making a living and adding to their burden they found themselves besieged by the begging of their impoverished Indian neighbors. Hamblin noted that, "those who had caused the troubles were completely oblivious to what had occurred." He confessed having grieved many times to see the Indians with their little ones "glaring upon" the plenty enjoyed by the settlers. He attempted to raise the sensibilities of the Latter-day Saints on the matter and encouraged more generosity toward the neighboring Indians, but lamented he had experienced little success.

On at least one occasion Hamblin also complained to Apostle George A. Smith that it appeared Brigham Young sought to "deprive the original settlers on the Santa Clara, or the Indians of the water" of the river and to "build up St. George at the sacrifice of [Santa Clara and Tonequint]." Smith assured Hamblin this was not true, but promised to discuss his concerns with the church leader. It is doubtful the situation improved before Hamblin was transferred to the Kanab-Pipe Springs area. Already the church had called a relatively large group of Swiss converts to settle at Santa Clara, requiring even a larger share of the already-scarce irrigation water. The Paiutes were clearly not the major concern of President Young in this course of events. Deprived of water and other resources needed for the band to survive, most of the Tonequints, during the succeeding years, died from hunger and disease, an almost forgotten tragedy. With many of their familiar food resources destroyed by whites, Native Americans of the area felt justified in butchering and eating some of the livestock ranging on their traditional lands. Even before Hamblin's move to Kanab, those Indians who were innocent of wrongdoing still "desired to be friends," yet, he noted, they had, "almost invariably been the ones to suffer," mainly blamed for cattle that were stolen. The guilty, were "on the alert, and have got out of the way," while those who remained unoffending


"Little-Nibley, Hamblin, 290-91: George A. Smith to Jacob Hamblin, November 3, 1863, copy in Historian's Office Letterpress Copybooks, 2: 9, LDS Church Archives.

"Pamela A. Bunte and Robert J. Franklin find that "During the later decades of the nineteenth century, many Southern Paiutes literally starved to death when their water sources and farmlands fell into the hands of whites and even wild plant and animal resources were depleted by cattle grazing and other Anglo economic activities." Mormons had already subjugated virtually all of the other existing Southern Paiute communities and thereby set in motion the political and economic process that would reduce these Indians to utter poverty by the early twentieth century." Pamela A. Bunte and Robert J. Franklin, From the Sands to the Mountain: Change and Persistence in a Southern Paiute Community (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987), 5, 53.
“have been the sufferers.”

After a period of considerable tension with the Mormon settlers in central Utah, neighboring disgruntled Ute Indians followed Black Hawk and began launching raids on Mormon settlements in April 1865. Individual members of related tribes and bands, including some Southern Paiutes, joined in what was a protracted conflict. However, most Southern Paiutes remained at least neutral and were often innocent and wrongly-accused victims of a seemingly blind hatred toward all Native Americans—whatever the doctrines of Latter-day Saint faith concerning the matter—whether those particular Indians had done their neighbors any harm or not.

The first group to suffer at the hands of the Mormon militia were members of the Koosharem band of central Utah, sometimes called “horseless Utes,” but who were consistently regarded as Paiutes. In July 1865, while camped near Glenwood, Sevier County, a group of them were warned by a Mormon bishop that the territorial militia was on the lookout for Black Hawk and his followers, and urged them to move their camp elsewhere. By happenstance their new camp was in a juniper thicket surrounded by meadows where a patrol of Mormon militia, who presumed they were on Black Hawk's trail, also made their camp. When the Mormon pickets discovered that the cedars were “full of Indians,” they attacked the band of Koosharem Paiutes killing ten and capturing two members of the band. Later in the conflict a group of women were also killed. The unfortunate episode, which occurred near present Burrville, became known as the “squaw fight.” The actions taken by the militia demonstrated the worst that such a war could inflict upon innocent bystanders.

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13 Little-Nibley, Hamblin, 290-91.
14 For a full treatment of the Black Hawk War, see John Alison Peterson, Black Hawk War (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1998).
15 See Brooks, “Indian Relations on the Mormon Frontier,” 2-4, for a good summary of Mormon teachings and early experiences with Native Americans.
17 Peterson, Black Hawk War, 166; LaVan Martineau, The Southern Paiutes (Las Vegas: KC Publications, 1992), 54-57, 149-53.
In late 1865, Black Hawk formed an alliance with some of the Navajo Indians who had earlier avoided being captured and moved to eastern New Mexico by Kit Carson and the U.S. Army. Perhaps as many as two thousand Navajo along with a considerable number of their sheep avoided being captured and made their way to the isolated Navajo Mountain area of extreme southeastern Utah. These Navajo included Utah-born Manuelito, one of the nation’s most prominent raiding chiefs. Spaneshanks was another of the Navajo chiefs making the same area a refuge.

These two chiefs and other Navajos, along with closely-associated Southern Paiutes long residing in that area allied with Black Hawk, agreed to prey upon Mormon-owned livestock in Utah’s newly-settled Dixie country. Although Southern Paiutes have often been regarded as subordinate to the other tribes in the art of war, it is now clear that was not the case. The head chief of the San Juan band of Southern Paiutes, Patnish, loomed as one of the primary raider leaders and was prominent in his band’s domain near the future Mormon settlement of Moenkopi, some fifty miles into Arizona.

Jacob Hamblin reported that leaders of the San Juan band also exerted considerable influence over other neighboring Paiutes, particularly of the

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9 Robert S. McPherson, *The Northern Navajo Frontier, 1860-1900: Expansion Through Adversity* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988), 8-18, reports Carson’s ruthless policy included an aggressive scorched-earth destruction of cornfields, peach trees, hogans, water holes and livestock. By the next year, more than three hundred Indians had been killed as well as nearly one hundred wounded and more than seven hundred captured. A new military post established on the Pecos river, named Fort Sumner, (also known as Bosque Redondo) was poorly situated. More than three hundred Navajo died before reaching that destination; others slowly starved to death or became ill partly from homesickness and discouragement.

10 Clifford E. Trafzer, *The Kit Carson Campaign: The Last Great Navajo War* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1982, paperback, 1990), 212-21, states “of all the hostile Navajos who remained at large, none was as well known and revered by his own people as Manuelito.” He surrendered in September 1866, well before his apparent meeting with Jacob Hamblin in late 1870.

11 Bunte and Franklin, *From the Sands to the Mountain*, 50, indicate that in earlier times, the San Juan Paiutes were eminently successful in controlling Navajo incursions into their tribal lands in the Moenkopi, Arizona, area. See also Jules Remy, *Journey to Great Salt Lake City* 2 vols., (London: W. Jeff, 1861), 388, 407-408, 412-13, 426-27.

12 Bunte and Franklin, *Change and Persistence in a Southern Paiute Community*, 63-65, 67, 74-76. Besides his prominence as a raid leader between 1866 and 1870, Powell associate, Frederick Dellenbaugh, encountered the formidable Patnish two years later in 1872. Mormon leader, Anthony Ivins mentions that in 1875, two years before his death in 1877, he was playing an important leadership role for his band in Arizona. Patnish’s Paute name may have actually been Pangwits, known to have been the leader of the San Juan band in the Navajo Mountain vicinity. This same man was known as Balazchin(i) among the Navajos of that time.
Kiabab band, located closer to the Mormon settlements near later Kanab.21 Men of both these Southern Paiute bands participated in the raids on Mormon livestock, some of which resulted in fatalities on both sides. Thus there is a horrible irony that the raids, partly induced by a Southern Paiute chief, would lead to the punishment of so many innocent fellow tribesmen. While some initial reports linked this aspect of the war to Black Hawk, the Navajo conflict eventually took on a life of its own.22

Despite a few earlier isolated incidents between Mormons and Navajos, there was little actual hostility between them. The livestock raids and consequent killings on both sides certainly had much more to do with simple acquisition of livestock, probably partly justified by their losses at the hands of the U.S. Army in previous years, than from any actual animosity toward Mormon settlers.23 Some Southern Paiutes associated with the raids were probably motivated by hunger, as well as by firm pressure from neighboring Indians.

To better defend themselves against Black Hawk's alliance, Dixie ecclesiastical leader and recently elected regional commander of the local Utah militia, apostle/military commander Erastus Snow directed his people to erect forts in the various population centers from Kanab to the Muddy River, and encouraged settlers from the isolated outlying areas to gather into the safer and more fortified towns.

Snow, a relative novice at commanding troops, waged vigorous but often ineffective military operations. Fortunately, lesser Mormon military leaders were often more effective. One of the significant standing orders remained to "protect the friendly Indians from murderous Utes."24

Raids on Mormon livestock commenced in earnest in early 1866 when Peter Shirts' isolated ranch on the Pariah River twenty miles east of Kanab was attacked. Shirts had fed some two dozen Southern Paiutes through the early winter, but to his dismay, had lost most of his cattle presumably to Navajos camped nearby. They also stole his draft animals, which prevented him from evacuating his family to safety. Probably the same raiding party made off with even more cattle from Tom Smith who had refused to heed orders to gather his cattle to a safer location. As the local militia became fully engaged, they rescued the Shirts family and soon thereafter engaged some Indians in battle, reportedly killing two.25

Elsewhere, Native Americans stole a large number of sheep and cattle
from wealthy former Texan, Dr. James B. Whitmore. While investigating his losses in early January 1866, Whitmore and his son-in-law, Robert McIntyre, were killed near present Pipe Springs, Arizona, by a band led by Manuelito and Patnish, and Kiabab Paiutes who were compelled to assist them leading the party to the Whitmore cattle.

A military patrol sent to search for the missing ranchers encountered two Paiutes butchering a stolen beef. After much questioning, using considerable brutal persuasion techniques, one of the Indian prisoners led part of the soldiers to the spot where the two bodies were discovered buried under more than a foot of snow. The second captive took the other militiamen to a Paiute camp secreted in a narrow gulch. There the six Native American men, three women, and several children were greatly surprised by the sudden arrival of outsiders. In a search of the camp, the militiamen found Whitmore’s coat and other belongings of their former neighbors. Captain James Andrus shot one of the two Paiutes killed as they resisted the search.

The other Paiutes and the earlier captive guide were then taken prisoner and escorted to where their fellows were loading the frozen bodies of Whitmore and McIntyre into a wagon. At that point those ushering the prisoners “lost their patience,” turned the prisoners loose, “and then shot them.” The incident cost at least seven Native American lives.

A subsequent investigation by Jacob Hamblin revealed that the Indian victims were guilty of no more than being forced to assist in the livestock stealing and accepting the incriminating clothing along with a large supply of presumably Navajo-made arrow points. Hamblin later admitted to other Navajo and army leaders that the wrong people had been punished for the two Mormon deaths.

In early April a party of thirty Indians ambushed two brothers, Joseph and Robert Berry, and Robert’s pregnant wife, Isabel, while traveling by wagon toward their home of two years at Berryville (later Glendale, Long Valley). They made a break for safety but when one of their draft horses was killed, they were overcome by their assailants. Isabel was allegedly tortured with additional arrow shots in front of her husband before each finally died. While several other Indians were reportedly killed in the attack, only one body remained at the scene.

Major John Steele reported to Gen. Snow that the Paiutes blamed the

27 Peterson, Black Hawk War, 220, 223-24 mentions the raiders were later ambushed by Hopi enemies and eleven of the sixteen were killed, also losing the livestock.

28 Journal History, January 26, 1866; Woodbury, “Southern Utah,” 168; Peterson, Black Hawk War, 220. One version of the event recorded by a daughter of Edwin D. Woolley Jr., a participant, in “Notes on Father’s Life,” Edwin Dilworth Woolley Jr. Papers, Harold B. Lee Library, Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 8, quotes the then young militiaman, Woolley, saying: “I never was so ashamed of anything in my life. The whole thing was so unnecessary.” It is possible his attitudes changed some after his own brother was senselessly murdered by Native Americans in the Mojave Desert of California three years later. McIntyre had two brothers in the group that did the Utah killing.

29 Journal History, November 21, 1870.

attack on Navajos, who also supposedly took the horses and looted the wagon. But the militia major asserted he and his associates believed “the Piedes [Utah Paiutes from closer to Cedar City] were the Navajos,” guilty in this instance, and that it was done in retaliation for some Paiutes recently killed by Berryville-Long Valley settlers when an Indian man, woman and child were caught roasting a stolen beef. However, rancher and fellow militiaman, William B. Maxwell, from Short Creek and closer to the murder site, identified the remaining dead man as a well-known old Navajo chief, Banashaw, better known among the Mormons as Spanish Shanks or Spanashanks. Hamblin agreed. This fully established the involvement by outside raiders.

Spaneshanks had formerly enjoyed a cordial relationship with Hamblin and Indian missionary, Ira Hatch, who had married his daughter, Sarah. Hunger and alienation had doubtless altered the old chief’s loyalties. Spaneshanks was a brother of Barbaneito, one of the most prominent of all Navajo chiefs, who with most of his people had been forcibly removed to New Mexico. In a later conference with Hamblin, Barbaneito acknowledged “a relative of one of the chiefs had been killed by the Mormons,” and promised that if other tribal raiders were so lost on such unauthorized missions, he would not mourn their fate.31

Some Mormon militia pursuing the stolen Whitmore livestock identified some of the Indian raiders as “Kebbits,” probably Kiabab or Shivwits Paiutes. George A. Smith, closely connected to the southern Utah militiamen, reported to Utah Territorial Governor, Charles Durkee, that the Kiabab Paiutes involved in the Whitmore killings appeared “to be in the employ and no doubt under the personal supervision of some Navajos.”32

Even those Mormons most hostile to Indians acknowledged that “the Piedes appear to want to be friendly,” though some were still suspected of thievery. Maxwell, who was sometimes among the suspicious, employed five Paiutes to track his stolen horses and if possible apprehend the murderers of the Berrys. But incidents between Mormons and Indians elsewhere assured that a fully resumed Mormon-Paiute alliance—which could have done so much good at the time—would not yet come to fruition.

On April 21, 1866, some Indians near Marysvale ambushed a small group of militiamen, killing Albert Lewis and wounding three others. The next day, a firefight occurred near Fort Sanford at the mouth of Bear Creek on the Sevier River between two other Mormon militiamen and two Indians, one was wounded on each side and the other Native American

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31 Journal History, April 8, 9, 12, 1866, November 21, 1870; Woodbury, “Southern Utah,” 170; Jacob Hamblin and some of his missionary associates had previously interacted with Spaneshanks in his own tribal domain. On at least one occasion he had overruled those inclined to kill Mormons. Later Hatch and Hamblin learned Spaneshanks had been replaced as a chief by his son and more recently both appeared disposed to participate in the raids on Mormon livestock. See also Little-Nibley, Hamblin, 267, 292.

32 G. A. Smith to His Excellency Charles Durkee, Journal History, March 11, 15, 1866. See also Corbett, Jacob Hamblin, 248, 251.
killed. Two days later, another small group of Paiute men entered nearby Panguitch and voluntarily surrendered their weapons and indicated a willingness to talk, which in light of recent developments would have taken considerable courage. Yet subsequent efforts to similarly disarm other Native Americans residing nearby led to a retaliating flurry of arrows, wounding one militiaman. Other militiamen opened fire killing two, capturing two and the others escaped. One of those killed was a Paiute shaman, Old Doctor Bill, who with some of his tribesmen believed he could not be killed by white men's bullets. George A. Smith's cousin, Silas S., reported the Indian's death "cowed the Indians more than the loss of twenty warriors would" have done.

Just days later, a group of friendly Paiutes residing north of Circleville were persuaded to come into town for a "talk." Once there they were informed they were suspected of aiding Black Hawk and were thus made prisoners. Perhaps terrified of what had happened near Burrville, some allegedly "confessed to [carrying] ammunition to the hostile Indians." Oluf Larsen recalled "a few men in the community exhibited great hatred to the Indians," and they eventually seized control of the situation. When some of the captives were reportedly discovered cutting the thongs that bound their wrists in an attempt to escape, a one-sided fight ensued in which six of the nine Indian men were killed. The captors quickly concluded that they needed to cover their deed by destroying "every Indian old enough to tell." The other three Paiute men, five women, and two older children were taken from the cellar jail and had their throats cut, perpetrating what some consider the "greatest single tragedy of the Black Hawk War" (although the "squaw fight" probably cost as many lives). Despite these incidents, southern Utah leaders were counseled to "treat the friendly Indians well, to let those who [were] 'mad' feel that they [the Mormons] mean to protect themselves and can punish aggressions; and that


13 The Oluf Larsen quote is cited in Newell and Talbot and was written to George A. Smith, A History of Pintre County, 85.

14 Peterson, Black Hawk War, 244-47. A seemingly patently false report of the Circleville massacre from a presumed relative of the military officer in charge of the guard perpetrated the atrocities, Major J. R. S. Allred, who was himself absent from the scene at the fateful time. The account attempted to help justify what happened by citing the common belief at the settlement that Black Hawk and his Paiute, Pahvant Ute, and Navajo allies intended to commemorate the Mormon holiday of July 24 by attacking Circleville. On the night of the killing, the correspondent later falsely informed Apostle Smith, the Indian prisoners "rushed on the guard with clubs striking them with the same. The guard killed 16 of them which was all of the band except four children which they held yet" in their custody. It is doubtful if anyone was ever disciplined for these killings, or for issuing such a fabricated account of the events. See William J. Allred to George A. Smith, Journal History, May 5, 1866.
several years of the Navajo-related conflict. During this period, the Indian policies of leading church authority and military commander Erastus Snow troubled Hamblin. There is no hint the church leader ever ignored his counsel and much that he valued it, but Hamblin was still frustrated that his own approaches to resolving conflicts and misunderstandings with local Native Americans had not been more fully implemented.

Finally in 1867, church leaders directed Hamblin to get into closer touch with the Paiute Indians residing east of the Virgin River and "do his best to pacify them." He sought out major concentrations of these Native Americans and held lengthy conversations with them, to good effect. Some of the younger men, a number of whom had dreams that Hamblin was coming among them, expressed a willingness to assist the missionary in keeping a lookout at the Colorado River crossings and nearby passes for invading Navajo and allied raiders. In the Kanab-Pipe Springs area, Hamblin cemented a firm relationship with members of the Kiabab band helping them plant corn and vegetables. He also held additional peace parleys in which he persistently urged even more cooperation in preventing further livestock-stealing incursions of Indian raiders by guarding the fords of the Colorado and associated trails leading to the Mormon settlements. The resulting surveillance doubtless helped discourage some raiding party activities. Nevertheless, in November of 1868, militia leaders still estimated from thirty to fifty "Indian thieves prowling around in two and threes." One of the finest frontier scout-Mormon missionaries, Thales Haskell, specifically described some Navajo raiders' tactics: "These Indians would cut down a small tree and with one hand hold the tree up and [would] crawl along and drive off a herd of cattle or horses before we could imagine Indians anywhere around. While our guards were looking, they with the little tree were perfectly still." Another method, he recounted, was to "...skin a yearling calf, leave its head and hoofs on, get inside this hide and let down the bars of our field and corrals and drive off our animals." Jacob Hamblin through friendly Paiutes ascertained that a large number of Navajos were then residing semi-permanently on both sides of the Colorado River, considerably north of their usual tribal lands. He also

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Corbett, Jacob Hamblin, 259, 258, 261, 263. "Nibley, Hamblin, 295; George A. Smith Diary, March 2, 1866, states "went over to Santa Clara with Bro. R. Bendly and administered to Bro. Jacob Hamblin who is still very sick..." See also Corbett, Jacob Hamblin, 248, 251.

Woodbury, "Southern Utah," 175; Corbett, Jacob Hamblin, 259, 261, 263.

Woodbury, "Southern Utah," 175.

"Journal History, November 23, 1868; Kate B. Carter, ed., An Enduring Legacy 16 vols., (Salt Lake City: Daughters Utah Pioneers, 1979), 2: 331, contributed by Irene U. Smith, material said to be "apparently written by Thales Haskell." See also Woodbury, "Southern Utah," 176, and Erastus Snow to B. Young, Journal History, December 2, 1868, which reported the "Navajos came in on foot, with their lariets and bows, and divided in squads of two or three, and operated in the night, in different quarters, so rapidly as to baffle pickets and get away with some stock..."
reported a perplexing rumor that white men were assisting, probably in procurement of arms and ammunition." Hamblin learned that some Southern Paiutes from the Unikarets and Shivwits bands residing on what was later known as the Arizona Strip, as well as Kiababs, helped comprise the raiding parties. Some neighboring Halupais were also persuaded to participate with the Navajos to raid Dixie Mormon livestock herds.

Yet Hamblin's Indian allies proved quite effective. In November 1868, they warned of Navajos near St. George. While Captain Willis Copelan was in hot pursuit of them, friendly Southern Paiutes engaged the same raiders in battle, killing two and recovering twenty horses. A month later, Royal J. Cutler, a Mormon called to settle in future southern Nevada, lost twenty-seven horses and mules from the lower Virgin River area. The always-loyal Chief Thomas of the Beaver Dam band of Paiutes led his small contingent of men in pursuit and retrieved about half of the stolen livestock. Many other stolen animals were subsequently recovered with further Native American assistance.

Other Indians, including Mose chief of the Berryville-Long Valley Paiutes and his vigilant associates, were also significant contributors to the retrieval efforts. Immediately thereafter, a gathering with friendly Indians was held at St. George at which presents were appreciatively dispensed to those who had recently assisted the Mormon militiamen. Neighboring Southern Paiutes again "professed friendship and volunteered [to continue] to resist the incursions of the Navajos." Some of these same Native Americans urged their Mormon allies to "rally" to the common defenses as they were then doing themselves.  

"Journal History, March 8, 24, 1869.
"Journal History, November 23, 1868, March 8, 24, 1869; Larson, /Was Called in Dixie, 534.
"Journal History, November 23, December 3, 4, 1868, February 25, 1869. See also Woodbury, "Southern Utah," 175.
hending and punishing the Indians, all indications were that the Mormons of extreme southwestern Utah still faced a daunting situation. Successful livestock raids continued into February 1869. Erastus Snow again ordered the region's livestock to be rounded up and herded under armed guards.

Most of the Mormon territorial militia still remained concentrated on the Black Hawk War in central Utah and northward. The historical records offer no indication that Young ever sent additional military manpower to arrest Navajo raiders and their allies in the southern portion of the territory. With the continuing feud between the Mormon hierarchy and the U.S. army, those Navajo chiefs who escaped being captured previously clearly believed they had little to fear. Young continued to oppose the idea of asking the federal government for military assistance.

By the middle of February 1867, the new Deseret Telegraph system had been completed to St. George providing an important means of communication throughout much of the Utah territory. The inexperienced military commander Snow attempted to conduct part of his operations against the Indian raiders by telegraph dispatch. Unfortunately, most telegrams appeared to arrive too late for officers to get their troops into the field in time to counteract any raiders. Snow's subordinate commanders proved more decisive and prompt in initiative and thus enjoyed more success. Still, raids by the cattle thieves took a major toll on the Mormons and their Paiute friends. In one note to Major Steele, apparently in late February 1869, Erastus Snow reported, "Indians stole horses from corrals [in St. George] last night while guards patrolled our town." The next month, Steele similarly confessed to his longtime friend, George A. Smith, that despite their being "always on lookout for intruders, . . . they [the Navajo raiders] will elude our most vigilant watch," and make off with more livestock loot.

During 1869, approximately twelve hundred horses and cattle were stolen. By the end of the year, one report cited a one-month total loss of eighty-seven animals, and a monetary liability of seven thousand dollars. This suggests that the financial impact of the southern Utah Indian "war" was most severe economically.

"Woodbury, "Southern Utah," 175-76.

Cleland and Brooks, Mormon Chronicle, 2:124 (November 2, 1869), indicates the Navajos also stole livestock at that juncture from most from County towns and Beaver. See also Peterson, Black Hawk War, 113-22, 358-60.

"John Steele Papers, Harold B. Lee Library, Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, includes section of military correspondence, mainly a packet of scratch paper transcriptions from the telegraph, partly undated. See also Woodbury, "Southern Utah," 175-76.

John Steele to George A. Smith, March 3, 1869, Young Papers, LDS Church Archives.

"Journal History, March 8, 24, 1869; Woodbury, "Southern Utah," 177. At the end of 1869, Joseph A. Young and George A. Gurgon sent a compilation by the county surveyor of "losses caused by incursions of Navajo Indians the past month, November." The itemized report noted eighty-seven animals, primarily horses, stolen, estimating the net financial loss at just under seven thousand dollars. See also James H. McClintock, Mormon Settlement in Arizona, (Phoenix: privately printed, 1921), 76, which stated the Dixie loses totaled a million dollars. There is no evidence this is any more than a broad estimate, but for the entire conflict it is probably not an overly high amount.

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In one of the increasingly less frequent dispatches to church headquarters in February 1869, Dixie militia leaders telegraphed Salt Lake City that Chief Mose and his Berryville-Long Valley Paiutes reported, “a great many Navajos in his vicinity stealing stock.” As evidence of the tremendous risk Southern Paiutes then took in siding with the Mormons against their southern neighbors, Major Steele noted that besides the numerous cattle and horses driven off from that area, one adult Indian and two “papoozes” had been killed by the raiders, presumably in retaliation for not assisting them or for helping the Latter-day Saints. The local Native Americans certainly understood their dilemma, but in the latter years of the conflict there is no evidence of any Paiutes (at least those residing north and west of the future Arizona border) siding with the raiding parties.54

The character of the southern Utah Indian war finally began to change late in 1869. Augustus E. Dodge, foreman of the Washington County grand jury, sent a petition to Colonel J. E. Tourtellotte, Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Utah Territory, complaining that the Navajo renegades and their associates had driven off at least a thousand horses, mules, and cattle and twice that many sheep, and that there had been no federal action taken against the raiders. This may well have been precisely the kind of plea for outside assistance federal government officials had been waiting for. Heretofore, they had been scrupulously kept out of involvement by the

54 Journal History, February 25, June 4, 1869. In fact, when Hamblin first received assignment from Brigham Young to commence establishing an outpost at Pipe Springs, he procured, presumably from church officials, at least twenty guns. This included eight Ballard rifles with which to arm the Paiutes who essentially maintained the stronghold midway between Mormondom and the Navajo tribal lands. That certainly proved to be a well-placed use of resources.
Mormon church hierarchy. This action, conspicuously independent of church authority by the group of Dixie citizens, finally drew the full attention of federal officials to the southern Utah situation.

Dodge's plea touched a sympathetic cord with Tourtellotte, who forwarded the complaint to the United States Indian Commission. Officials there then instructed the Superintendent of Indian Affairs for New Mexico to warn the Navajos that if they did not assert themselves to "keep the peace" their annual annuities from the government might be withheld.55 This request, however, did not yet bring about the desired result, but other efforts would soon be taken which proved more effective, mainly through similar channels and threats.

The Navajo war caused Jacob Hamblin "many serious reflections." He had always been naturally inclined to find a better means of resolving the matter than fighting. The so-called "apostle to the Indians" continued to be frustrated by Elder Snow's approach to the problems and "wished he were given full authority to go ahead in his own way."56 Late in the summer of 1869, Hamblin finally asserted himself. "I spoke to some length," to Snow, "on the policy that had been practiced toward the Red Men and of the policy that should be."57 The following summer, Hamblin was finally again made president of the southern Utah Indian mission and could at last more fully implement his preferred direct and personal approach to negotiating with the Indians.58 President Young and Apostle Snow both encouraged Hamblin's inclinations. Young also expressed desire for his people to "get along without the killing of any more Navajos."59

For at least three years, church leaders had contemplated a fort at the old crossing of the Colorado River at the mouth of the Paria. In late February 1869, Captain Willis Copelan dispatched a patrol of militiamen to the area to search out and locate a suitable place. A month later, John Steele, suggested the militia "blast the rocks" and thus blockade the canyon leading away from the river on the south bank "so that stock could not be driven off at that point."60 While Mormon historical sources appear silent on the

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55 Augustus E. Dodge to Col. Tourtellotte, November 9, 1869, J. E. Tourtellotte to Mr. Dodge, Journal History, December 6, 1869; Larson, Erastus Snow, 425.
56 Corbett, Jacob Hamblin, 281.
57 Jacob Hamblin, "Journal," August 3, 1869, unpublished holograph manuscript. Harold B. Lee Library, Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.
58 Hamblin, "Journal," February 16, 1869, indicates that earlier in the year, in conversations with Indians, presumably friendly Southern Paiutes, Jacob received the impression "there might be some treaty made with the Navajos."
59 Little-Nibley, Hamblin, 299-300, Corbett, Jacob Hamblin, 281, 287. There is an extreme likelihood that Brigham Young missed a good opportunity for promoting peace earlier by not following through on a report from another trusted friend of the Utes, Albert K. Thurber, who reported the former war leader, Black Hawk, was then willing to visit the Indians residing east of the Moquis (the Navajos) and talk peace. See A. K. Thurber to Brigham Young, July 26, 1869, Young Papers, LDS Church Archives.
60 Jacob Gates to Brigham Young, February 28, 1869, Young Papers; John Steele to George A. Smith, March 3, 1869, Young Papers; Erastus Snow to John Steele, January 9, 1870, John Steele Papers, Harold B. Lee Library, Special Collections, Brigham Young University, for mention of proposed fort.
matter, others mention that at some point, someone did use explosives on the surrounding rocks of the more distant passageway at the old “Crossing of the Fathers” or Ute Crossing (at present Lake Powell) almost closing it and doubtless making driving livestock past that river obstacle much more difficult.61

By the spring of 1870, Hamblin, who was now living in the Kanab-Pipe Springs area, was assisting a group of friendly Southern Paiutes to establish a forty-acre corn-field at the “Pahreer [Paria] post,” (later Lee’s Ferry) where he designated one of the Paiutes to be bishop. Occasionally, Paiute sentinels vigilant for signs of the Navajo and allied raiders summoned Mormon militiamen, but no animal stealing events occurred in early 1870.

When Major John Wesley Powell first visited the Kanab area in 1870, the year after his famous initial voyage down the Colorado River in the summer of 1869, he expressed astonishment at the losses the Dixie settlers had sustained, including those who had been compelled to abandon their homes for safer locations.62 Fully supportive of his friend Hamblin’s desire to visit the Navajos in their homelands, Powell understood that his own future explorations might also be endangered by continued Indian hostilities.63 Subsequently, through proper government channels, Powell arranged for himself and Hamblin to confer with the principal Navajo tribal leaders at Fort Defiance, New Mexico, where members of the tribe

61 Fran Kosik, Native Roads: The Complete Motoring Guide to the Navajo and Hopi Nations (Tucson: Rio Nuevo Publishers, 1996), 78, which states: “It is believed sometime between 1870 and 1880, the Mormons dynamited this ford to keep the Paiutes and Navajo from raiding Mormon communities in Utah.”


would be receiving their annual federal annuities.

Powell and Hamblin arrived at that destination on November 1, 1870. Greeted by Capt. Frank F. Bennett, then acting as Navajo Indian Agent, they learned he had called a general meeting for four days later, inviting many of the more than six thousand Navajos and all but one of the principal chiefs and two sub-chiefs. Major Powell announced to those gathered his own future Colorado expedition and at that same time praised the Mormon people for their honesty and industriousness. He then introduced Hamblin and asked the Navajos to heed his words. The "buckskin apostle" explained that the conflict between his people and the Navajo had claimed the lives of between twenty and thirty Indian raiders, as well as a lesser number of Mormons. Many of his own people, he asserted, were inclined to retaliate, but that his big chief in Salt Lake City and others had stayed their hand—at least temporarily.

Some among the gathered Navajo were well aware that Hamblin had spent most of his adult life seeking peace with the region's Native Americans and that he "despised this killing." Head chief, Barbaneito, understood the missionary to be sincere and pledged to do what he could to accomplish what the emissaries desired. After counseling through the night, Barbaneito readily admitted that some of his people had stolen stock from the Mormons, but justified that Paiutes had led the raids. The head chief informed Hamblin, Powell, and Bennett that the tribal leaders had never authorized the raids. As a gesture of commitment to peace, he pledged that all future stolen livestock, if brought to the home villages, would henceforth be returned.

When asked by Bennett how else he would prevent further raids, Barbaneito replied that, if necessary, he and his associates would request the U.S. Army to assist in apprehending and punishing the thieves. He also requested that the Mormons more carefully guard both Colorado River fords to help discourage further raids. Capt. Bennett pointedly warned that the federal government would send soldiers once more against all Navajos if the Dixie raids did not cease. Bennett specifically instructed Barbaneito to spread this warning among all of his people by Indian messengers so that there could be no chance of misunderstanding on the severity of the matter. Twenty-nine Navajo tribal leaders signed the treaty drafted to reflect the conference agreements.

"Journal History, November 21, 1870; Little-Nibley, Hamblin, 304-5; Corbett, Jacob Hamblin, 300.


"Little-Nibley, Hamblin, 306; "Journal History." November 21, 1870; Corbett, Jacob Hamblin, 302-305.

Peterson, Black Hawk War, 218, asserted Barbaneito commenced raiding Utah himself out of vengeance after his brother's death. While this appears extremely doubtful, the question certainly bears further study.

"Frank F Bennett to Whom It May Concern, Journal History, November 5, 1870, explains the Navajo pledges to church officials. See also Journal History, November 21, 1870; Corbett, Jacob Hamblin, 304-305.
finalized, Hamblin offered sheep and horses to Navajo and Hopi Indians to promote friendship and peace and "secure safety for [the Mormon] frontier settlements."8

On the journey homeward, Powell and Hamblin met with principal Navajo chief, Manuelito, who had not attended the New Mexico council. Hamblin recognized Manuelito to be the leader of many of the raids against Mormon settlers. He and his sub-chiefs had already heard the essence of the Fort Defiance accords and they now conceded full support and willingness to comply with the treaty. The returning party also met some of the Paiutes who had allied with the Navajo raiders over the past four years. By then, two of their former leaders had died, and some may have recalled the suspicions of fellow tribesmen to the northwest who believed Jacob Hamblin could cause opponents to die mysteriously if he so desired.9 These, too, pledged peace and some of the Paiutes accompanied the Hamblin-Powell group back toward Kanab to meet other Southern Paiutes who had been allied against them and with the Mormons in the recent stock-stealing warfare.

However, Hamblin's efforts to halt further Indian raids were not yet a complete success. Patnish, the San Juan Paiute chief and co-instigator of many raids in the past, refused to halt his raiding and aimed to "break up the treaty" recently concluded with the Navajos. But despite this threat, the persistent trouble-maker near the end of 1870 made overtures to Hamblin that he, too, would "preach peace," if sufficient personal gifts were forthcoming. The untrusting missionary ignored this request and advised continued vigilance, lest more livestock disappear. Realistically the Paiute chief simply no longer commanded sufficient manpower to continue his depredations. Hamblin also reiterated Barbaneito's warning that Utah settlers needed to consistently guard the Colorado fords to help thwart the incursions of the "lawless fellows," who appeared to be beyond the control of any tribal leaders.70

With Chief Black Hawk also suing for peace in the north in 1870, the better-known Black Hawk War came to an end. Hamblin's actions and negotiations, with the evenhanded treaty supported by the principal Navajo chiefs and others, along with the firm stand taken by the Navajo Tribal Council and the U. S. Army against further raids into Utah, all combined to significantly contribute to the impressively restored peace near the Utah-Arizona border. The actions of the majority of Southern

8 Jacob Hamblin to Brigham Young, March 29, 1871, Young Papers, LDS Church Archives.
9 Jacob Hamblin reported that a Navajo raid leader, Man-so-nita, had been planning another raid when he sickened and died. Adding to the two Paiute raiding chiefs who had also died, the Indian missionary stated that other Native Americans interpreted "this as a judgement placed upon them by the Mormons." Journal History, November 21, 1870. See also Little-Nibley, Hamblin, 234-38, 258.
10 Little-Nibley, Hamblin, 309-311; Corbett, Jacob Hamblin, 314. Journal History, December 24, 1870 cites George A. Smith chiding Patnish for becoming a man of peace only when he recognized how many were now prepared to cut off his escapes with his accustomed stolen stock.
Paiutes consistently seeking to promote peace must also be recognized as a contributing factor in helping restore southern Utah to a far more normalized condition than had existed in some years.

Unfortunately, peace would be threatened once again in the winter of 1874-75, when four young Navajo ventured into central Utah to trade with Ute Indians. During a severe snowstorm they sought shelter in a vacant ranch cabin and killed a calf for food. Soon thereafter, the McCarty family, who were non-Mormon and bitter Indian haters, attacked the presumed trespassers without warning, killing three and severely wounding a fourth, who escaped and made his way back to Arizona to report the tragic incident. When Brigham Young heard of the affair, he sent Jacob Hamblin to the Navajo leaders to explain that the Mormons had not been at all involved in the murders. Upon arrival in Arizona, young members of the victims' families threatened Hamblin. As always, he showed no fear. In fact, one of his com-

John Wesley Powell and Jacob Hamblin meet with Paiute Indians on the Kalbap Plateau in the 1870s. Photographed by John K. Hiller.
companions, J. E. Smith, wrote, "No braver man ever lived."71 Hamblin requested the attention of Hastele, a tribesman whom Barbancito had recommended for such purposes. When these two much-trusted representatives combined efforts the matter was resolved without further ill-feeling or violence on either side.72

Hamblin's life-long work among the Indians of southern Utah helped insure a firm foundation for Mormon presence there—eventually with even some prosperity exacted from the forbidding landscape. However, despite the great missionary's best efforts, the neighboring Native Americans did not fare so well. The Tonequint Paiutes with whom Hamblin had labored longest, formerly among the most populous bands, essentially ceased to exist within another generation, mainly because of disease epidemics, and a scarcity of food supplies. Other tribesmen fared but a little better. Through the instrumentality of church leader and Indian friend, Anthony W. Ivins, the almost undocumented move of the Shivwits band, virtually displaced by ranchers along the Arizona Strip, were brought to occupy the former Tonequint lands, bringing their name with them for the newly created reservation.73

71 The Pioche Record, February 5, 1875, quoted in Little-Nibley, Hamblin, 333.
72 Little-Nibley, Hamblin, 321-34.
73 Kate B. Carter, ed., Heart Throbs of the West, 12 vols. (Salt Lake City: Daughters Utah Pioneers, 1940), 2:440. states "President Ivins has been active in securing for Indians of this section just rights from the federal government. He as a member of the legislature of 1894, secured for the Shebit Indians their first government appropriation, moving them from the Shebit mountain to their reservation on the Santa Clara River. President Ivins has constantly fought for the Indians." The territorial legislature had no real influence in Indian policy, except to signify Utah citizens approved of the move. At that time there was considerable talk of giving what later became the Arizona Strip to the new state of Utah—an action that was not taken. Some members of the various Paiute bands and their sympathizers have blamed Mormons for the Indians' plight, but there were also some Mormon leaders who were considered friends of the Southern Paiutes. This friendship was recognized by the Paiutes at the time of Ivins' death when they held their sacred traditional "cry" ceremony for him. Another friend of the Paiutes, William R. Palmer of Cedar City, was invited to observe the ceremony. Later Edwin D. Woolley of Kanab received the same tribute as local Indians mourned the friend they considered irreplaceable. Few others in the inter-mountain region were so recognized by their Native American neighbors.