

SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE, UTAH,  
Great Salt Lake City, August 10, 1859.

SIR: Your letter of 2d ultimo was received by yesterday's mail, and it will afford me pleasure to furnish you with the desired information. It was my intention, immediately upon my return from the south (beginning of May) with the children, to give you a full statement, from facts in my possession, of the emigrant party in question, of their journey through this Territory to their final resting place, and of the children saved, but had too much other business on hand, and the care of the children.

I have, however, such a communication in progress, and intend to conclude it to-day, or before I leave to-morrow for Ruby and Deep Creek valleys, three hundred miles west. I will also furnish the attorney general with the names of the persons who I know were engaged in said massacre, and names of witnesses.

Chief Justice Eckels will commence a court in his district the fourth Monday of this month, at Nephi. The attorney general is preparing to investigate the Mountain Meadow massacre before this court. Nephi is two hundred miles from Cedar City, in which place and neighborhood nearly all the perpetrators and witnesses reside. It will be very difficult, indeed almost impossible, to bring all the parties to Nephi. Cedar City is the proper place to hold a court to successfully try those concerned in the Mountain Meadow affair. I suggested to Judge Eckels, indeed urged the propriety of going to Cedar City with his court. He seems determined not to do so.

I met Judge Cradlebaugh a few miles south of Fillmore the latter part of April, when on my way from the south with the children. The judge was traveling with a small military detachment, going south for a special purpose. I furnished him with the names of the guilty and of the witnesses.

The attorney general made a special request when I started south, that I would make strict inquiry of everything connected with this affair.

The course adopted for the legal investigation of this matter will not prove successful at the contemplated court, principally for the reason, already stated, the great distance from where the really guilty and witnesses are living.

I fear, and I regret to say it, that with certain parties here there is a greater anxiety to connect B. Young and other church dignitaries with every criminal offense, than diligently endeavor to punish the actual perpetrators of crime.

I have succeeded in obtaining a reliable history of the Mountain Meadow massacre. I will, in my next annual report, give it to the public, and also the names of the actors, if they are not sooner made known through the proper legal tribunals, to whom I have already given many valuable facts.

I remain, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. FORNEY,  
*Superintendent of Indian Affairs U. T.*

Hon. A. B. GREENWOOD,  
*Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.*

SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE, UTAH,  
*Great Salt Lake City, August, 1859.*

SIR: It has been my intention, for some weeks past, to give you a more full statement than heretofore given of the Mountain Meadow tragedy, and of the children saved from it.

July, 1858, I received instructions from the Acting Commissioner, C. E. Mix, in relation to certain children. In pursuance to which, I commenced without delay to make inquiry after the children supposed to have been saved, and living among whites and Indians. I very soon obtained satisfactory information that thirteen to seventeen children were spared at the massacre of a certain emigrant company the 8th or 9th September, 1857, in Mountain Meadow valley, Utah Territory, whilst on their way to California. Sixteen of the children were very soon collected and subject to my directions, and for whom I commenced providing immediately. It was my earnest desire and purpose to visit the southern portion of the Territory early last fall, but the safety of the United States mail on the northern California road, and the public interest generally, required my immediate presence in and adjacent to the Humboldt valley, and I returned too late from the Humboldt to travel north with so many little children. I, however, suggested to the department to have the children taken to the States by way of California and the San Francisco and New York steamers. There is no impediment at any season of the year to travel to the Pacific by the southern route from where the children were then living.

A massacre of such unparalleled magnitude on American soil must necessarily excite much interest in the public mind. From information received from various sources during the last twelve months, I am enabled to give you a reliable account of the emigrant company in question, and the children remaining, and also some of the causes and circumstances of the inhuman massacre.

The company was composed of about thirty families, and one hundred and thirty to one hundred and forty persons, and, I think, principally from Johnston county, Arkansas.

I have deemed it a matter of material importance to make strict inquiry relative to the general behavior and conduct of the company towards the people of this Territory in their journey through it, and am justified in saying that they conducted themselves with propriety.

It is generally conceded that the said company was abundantly supplied with traveling and extra horses, cattle, &c. They had about thirty good wagons, and about thirty mules and horses, and six hundred head of cattle, when passing through Provo City, Utah Territory. At Corn Creek, fifteen miles from Fillmore City, and one hundred and sixty-five miles south of this city, the company camped several days. At this place, and within a few miles of the Indian farm, (commenced a few years ago for the Pah-vant tribe, and all living on it,) it is alleged that the said emigrant company treated the Indians most inhumanly; such as poisoning a spring with arsenic, and impregnating dead cattle with strichnine. John D. Lee, living one hundred and fifty miles south of Fillmore, informed me that about twenty Indians and some cattle died from drinking of the poisoned water, and Indians from eating the poisoned meat.

Dr. Ray, of Fillmore City, assured me that one of his oxen died while the company was encamped in the neighborhood, and that his wife, while engaged rendering the tallow of the dead ox, became suddenly ill, and that a boy who was assisting her died in a few days.

I have not been apprised of any investigation at the time by the Indian officials who were then in the Territory, or of an official investigation by the proper authorities of Fillmore. It seems obvious that Dr. Ray's ox died about the time these unfortunate people were camped in the neighborhood. I cannot learn, however, of any difficulty the company had with the Pah-vant Indians while camped near them. The ox died unquestionably from eating a poisonous weed that grows in most of the valleys in this Territory, and it is by no means uncommon for cattle to get poisoned and die from the effects of this weed. One or two Indians died from eating of the dead ox, but I have not been apprised that this excited any of them against the emigrants. And after strict inquiry I cannot learn that even one Pah-vant Indian was present at the massacre. Those persons in Fillmore, and further south, who believe that a spring was poisoned with arsenic, and the meat of a dead ox with strichnine, by said company, may be honest in their belief, and attribute the cause of the massacre to the alleged poisoning. Why an emigrant company, and especially farmers, would carry with them so much deadly poison is incomprehensible. I regard the poisoning affair as entitled to no consideration. *In my opinion, bad men*, for a bad purpose, have magnified a natural circumstance for the perpetration of a crime that has no parallel in American history for atrocity.

I hear nothing more of the emigrant company until their arrival in Mountain Meadow valley, about the 2d or 3d of September, 1857. This valley is seven miles in length east and west, and one to three wide—a large spring at each end. In about the centre, and from north to south-east, is what is termed the "rim of the basin." East of this the waters go to the lakes of Utah Territory, and those west into the Pacific. The valley is well hemmed in by high hills or mountains; is almost a continuous meadow, affording an abundance of pasture.

At the spring in the east end is a house and corral, occupied in September, 1857, by Mr. Jacob Hamblin. It is due to Mr. Hamblin to say that he left home several weeks before the company arrived in the valley, and returned home several days after the massacre.

David Tulis (was living with Mr. Hamblin) says: "The company passed by the house on Friday, September 2d or 3d, towards evening; that it was a large and respectable-looking company. One of the men rode up to where I was working, and asked if there was water ahead. I said, yes. The person who rode up behaved civilly. The company camped at the spring in the west end of the valley. I heard firing on Monday morning, and for four or five mornings afterwards; if there had been firing during the day, I could not have heard it on account of the wind."

I then asked Mr. Tulis the following questions, and received answers, to wit:

1. When you heard the firing first what was your opinion of its cause?

Answer. I believed it was the Indians fighting the emigrant company camped at the spring at the other end of the valley

2. Why did you not notify the nearest settlement?

Answer. I thought or expected that the people of the nearest settlement knew of the fight.

3. Why did you suppose so?

Answer. Because I saw Indians riding back and forwards on the road.

4. Was you afraid?

Answer. I was a little timid.

5. How soon did you see white men?

Answer. Two or three days afterwards, (that is, after the massacre;) these persons looked like travelers. I think they went to bury the dead.

6. Did you see many Indians during the fight?

Answer. During the fighting the Indians continued to run to and fro on the road.

7. How many were in the train?

Answer. I suppose 70 to 100; there seemed to be a good many women and children.

8. Did you hear any talk about the massacre?

Answer. Yes.

9. What did you hear was the cause of the massacre?

Answer. I heard afterwards; because the emigrant party poisoned the spring or some cattle at Corn creek.

10. What was your own opinion of the cause?

Answer. I thought there must have been some fuss with the Indians along the road somewhere. I heard that the emigrant party had poisoned a spring at Corn creek.

11. What became of the property?

Answer. The Indians drove all the cattle and horses away. I heard they burned the wagons where they were camped.

12. What was done with the children immediately after the massacre?

Answer. I heard the Indians took them to Cedar City. I also saw the Indians drive some cattle towards Cedar City.

13. Did you ever see any of the property in the possession of whites?

Answer. No.

14. Did you ever hear any one talk about the property?

Answer. No.

15. Did you ever hear of any one escaping from the fight or massacre?

Answer. I heard of one; and he was afterwards killed at the Muddy or Los Vagos river.

This is part of the statement of D. Tulis, made to me in presence of William H. Rodgers, April 13 last, while on my trip to Santa Clara. He was traveling with us from *Painter* Creek.

I will give you a few extracts from the statements by Alfred, who is a civilized Shoshonee Indian, raised by Mr. Jacob Hamblin, and was then and is still living with him. Alfred says:

"I saw the company passing our house about sun down. It was a

large company. They camped at the spring in the other end of the valley. A day or two after passing our house, I heard firing when in bed ; it continued all day four days.

Question. Why did you not go there?

Answer. I had not time ; I was attending to the sheep. The time they were killed, I was about a mile from them. I saw some Indians killing them. They shot some with arrows and guns, and others were killed with clubs. I talked with some of the Indians (the day they were killed ;) they were mad and I was afraid to talk much to them. Some of the Indians, during the four or five days firing, rode to and fro towards *Painter* Creek settlement, about ten miles east of the Mountain Meadow valley ; they were riding over the hills, and riding very fast.

Question. Why did you not, during the four or five days firing, notify the people of *Painter* Creek and Cedar City of the fight?

Answer. I told Mr. Tulis and those at the house, when I came in from herding, about the Indians fighting the emigrants. Mr. Tulis told me to mind my business and attend to my herding. I saw the Indians killing the whites.

Question. How did the emigrants get out of the corral?

Answer. They thought the Indians had all left, and then they started out and were coming to our house, and when they were about a mile from the wagons, the Indians who were hid behind oak brush and sage fell on them. I went to the place the same day and saw the dead lying about. Some were stript and some were dressed. The Indians were mad, scolding and quarrelling. I saw the children going past our house. (Mr. Hamblin's.) All the children stopped at our house.

Question. Who brought the children to Mr. Hamblin's house?

Answer. Mr. David Tulis brought them all to our house in a wagon about dark, the same evening of the day of the massacre.

Question. Was Mr. Jacob Hamblin at home when the company arrived in the valley and the day of the massacre?

Answer. He left home several weeks before the company arrived, and returned several days after the massacre.

These persons lived at Mr. Hamblin's, and within three and a half miles of the spot where the killing was done ; yet neither were there, if one is to believe them.

I conclude from the most reliable information that the company promiscuously camped near the spring, intending to remain some days to recruit the stock, preparatory to crossing the several deserts before reaching California. They had no apprehension of serious danger when they first reached the valley, and for several days afterwards, or from Friday until Monday morning. The company then corraled the wagons and made a protective fort, by filling with earth the space under the wagons. I saw the evidences of this last April.

The Indians got into a state of tremendous excitement, through misrepresentations of the foulest character, about the supposed poisoning at Corn Creek.

The Peyute Indians, inhabiting the southern portion of this Territory are divided into ten bands, roaming from Beaver valley to the

California line, and have received and are receiving considerable assistance from the whites. Most of the Indians from the several bands, adjacent to the Mountain Meadow valley, were concentrated at or near the valley. These Indians received their instructions from white men. In pursuance to arrangements, the first attack was made on the unfortunate company by Indians on Monday morning, and continued daily until Friday morning, September 9. The camp was surrounded continually, preventing any one from leaving the corral without hazarding life, during five or six days.

It is impossible to comprehend the immense suffering. On the fatal morning two wagons approached the corral, and several whites effected a compromise, the emigrants giving up all their arms, with the assurance that the lives of all should be saved and conducted back in safety to Cedar City. The company started under the care and direction of white men; the wounded, old women, and children were taken in the two wagons. They proceeded about one and a half mile toward Cedar, when suddenly, and in obedience to a signal, the work of death commenced. The murderers were secreted in a few acres of oak brush and sage, the only thing of the kind I saw in the valley. My impression is that from one hundred and fifteen to one hundred and twenty were there murdered. Several escaped; only three got out of the valley; two of whom were soon overtaken and shot down. One adult got as far as the Muddy, and was returning with two persons from California; but he was also overtaken and shot by Indians.

From the evidence in my possession, I am justified in the declaration that this massacre was concocted by white men and consummated by whites and Indians. The names of many of the whites engaged in this terrible affair have already been given to the proper legal authorities.

I will in due time take the necessary steps for the recovery of the property, which was sold and divided among certain parties.

The seventeen little children, all that I can learn of, were taken after the massacre to Mr. Hamblin's house by John D. Lee, David Tulis, and others, in a wagon, either the same evening or the following morning. The children were sold out to different persons in Cedar City, Harmony, and Painter Creek. Bills are now in my possession from different individuals, asking payment from the government. I cannot condescend to become the medium of even transmitting such claims to the department.

I feel confident that the children were well cared for whilst in the hands of these people. I found them happy and contented, except those who were sick.

Below is a list of the children recovered by me and brought to this city, fifteen of whom are now *en route* to Arkansas, and two detained to give evidence:

John Calvin Sorel; Lewis and Mary Sorel; Ambrose Miram, and William Taggit; Frances Horn; Angeline, Annie, and Sophronia or Mary Huff; Ephraim W. Huff; Charles and Annie Francher; Betsey

and Jane Baker ; Rebecca, Louisa, and Sarah Dunlap ; William (Welch) Baker.

I remain, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. FORNEY,  
*Supt. Indian Affairs Utah Territory.*

Hon. A. B. GREENWOOD,  
*Com. of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.*

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
*Office Indian Affairs, August 15, 1859.*

SIR: From information just received from Robert B. Jarvis, Esq., late Indian agent, in Utah Territory, I learn that the children, rescued from the Indians in that Territory, and who are survivors of the massacre at Mountain Meadow, in 1857, will not probably reach Leavenworth City until sometime between the 1st and 5th September proximo. Mr. Jarvis accompanied them as far as Fort Laramie.

You are thus informed, in order that you may not be disappointed by any delay to which you may be subjected, after reaching Leavenworth City, by the non-arrival of the party in charge of the children.

In this connection, I would remark that Mr. Jarvis has furnished this office with a list of articles, received from the Superintendent of the Indian Affairs, Utah Territory, and which he has turned over to the proper officer of the expedition ; and I inclose a copy thereof, in order that you may, upon the arrival of the children, be enabled to designate such articles or utensils as may have been consumed, lost, or destroyed, and upon the remainder being delivered to you, you should give duplicate receipts for the same, one of which is to be forwarded to this office, the other to be retained by the officer now having them in charge, to whom Mr. Jarvis has stated he will write, requesting him to turn over the articles to you upon your application for them.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

A. B. GREENWOOD,  
*Commissioner.*

WILLIAM C. MITCHELL, Esq.,  
*Special Agent, &c.*

Care of Smoot, Russell & Co., Leavenworth City, Kansas Territory.

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CAMP FLOYD, UTAH TERRITORY, *August 18, 1859.*

SIR: Inclosed herewith you will find an affidavit of Captain Lynch and others, in relation to the massacre at the Mountain Meadows. This affidavit I have been permitted to forward to you for your information in relation to the sad affair of which it treats. One thing I think you may regard as certain, that is, that these children never were in the hands of Indians. Were never purchased of any one, but were parceled out among the murderers, and that Dr. Forney and Hamblin knew it.