

CORRESPONDENCE.

[For the Valley Tan. Box ELDER, U. T., August 13th, 1859.]

SIR: I have the honor to report that, having arrived yesterday within six miles of this place, I went into camp, and two hours afterwards had reliable information, that a large body of Indians were probably encamped somewhere in the canyon leading from this valley to Cache Valley. I was informed, at the same time, that within five or six days past they had stolen a number of animals from this and the adjoining settlements; and that they were the same party who had murdered and robbed an emigrant train on Sublett's Cut-off. I immediately resolved to attack them. At 10 o'clock, p.m., I broke up camp and moved quietly to this village. Here I left my wagons with a guard, and proceeded with a command of forty-two men, taking with me four pack mules with four days rations in order to be prepared, if necessary, to pursue them in the mountains. By 2 a.m., I had everything prepared for the march, and having procured a guide, who professed to know the Indian encampment, entered the canyon. After a rapid march of two hours the encampment was indicated by a number of ponies grazing, and in a moment afterwards by the Indians jumping up from their beds under the bushes, and running up the mountain sides, which were here covered with undergrowth. I immediately formed my men and charged upon the main body of them; in the charge several of the enemy were killed and wounded. They then scattered and took positions behind rocks, &c., &c. Here they were charged and driven up precipices beyond the reach of men on horses. I then dismounted my men and kept up a fire for at least an hour and a half, which for an hour was briskly returned by the enemy, but he gradually ceased to fire. The precipitous nature of the ground rendering it utterly impossible to pursue him, I drove off his horses and returned to this place. The attack commenced just before the dawn and continued until after sunrise. I am satisfied that the encampment was selected with a view to defence, and for this purpose they probably could not have found a more admirable place in the whole Wahsatch range of mountains. (It is known as Devil's Gate Canyon.) As soon as the Indians were discovered my Mormon guide "slid" quietly from his horse and was seen no more, until on my return near this town I overhauled him. He was unable to give any satisfactory reason for his desertion. I have since learned that he came into town during the action, and reported "that we never would get out of that place." The horse he rode was one I had furnished him, and strange to say was found with an Indian on his back; the latter was shot and the horse taken. If my guide had desired to lead me into a fatal ambushade he could not have taken me to a spot better adapted for the purpose. The guide and many others estimated the Indian force at from 150 to 200 warriors. The number killed was about twenty as near as we can calculate. I had no men killed, but four severely, though probably not mortally, and two slightly wounded. Nine of my horses were wounded. The number of horses taken was twenty, nearly half being American horses. It is a source of great satisfaction to me to know that one of the horses captured proved to be one which the Indians had taken from the train on Sublett's Cut-off, at the time of the massacre of July. Probably more belonging to the same train would have been captured, had not the Indian animals stampeded during the action, which could not be prevented, owing to the small guard which could be spared from the company for the purpose of securing property. I am much indebted to Lieutenant Ryan, for his services on this occasion, which were performed with a masterly intrepidity and coolness during the whole action. Assistant Surgeon J. Moore receives the heartfelt thanks of myself, as well as the soldiers under my command, for his immediate and kind attentions to the wounded on the field during the action, and his continual personal attendance since. The company behaved nobly on this occasion. I have the honor to refer the General Commanding to the list of wounded accompanying the report. It is rumoured to-day that 200 Bannack Indians arrived in Cache Valley, yesterday. These, with the number of Indians already there will make probably about 500.

large emigration is near a point on Bear River twenty miles from this (Cache) Valley. I shall wait here long enough to care for my wounded and recruit my horses, when I shall proceed to Bear River in order to prevent the Indians from interfering with emigration.

Very respectfully,  
Your obedient servant,  
(Signed) E. GAY,  
2d Lieutenant, Company G,  
2d Dragoons, Commanding.  
Major F. J. PORTER,  
Asst. Adjt. Gen'l, Dep't of Utah.

COMPANY G, 2d Dragoons.  
List of men wounded in an action with Indians in Devil's Canyon, near Box Elder U. T., on the 13th of August, 1859:  
1st Sergeant Thos. J. Durnion, slightly.  
Corporal R. F. Cordua, severely.  
Bugler Henry Winterbower, severely.  
Private Jacob Eggersteat, slightly.  
" Samuel Smith, severely.  
" Michael Tierney, severely.  
(Signed) E. GAY,  
2d Lieut., 2d Dragoons,  
Command'g Company G.  
Box Elder, U. T.,  
August 13th, 1859.

SAN BERNARDINO, Cal.,  
July 4th, 1859.

EDITOR OF THE "VALLEY TAN."

Sir:—Feeling that the nature of the case makes it justifiable, I ask you to excuse the freedom which I, a perfect stranger, take in addressing you, and in asking the liberty of addressing the public through your columns.

I have seen, lately, in your "little sheet," and in other papers, several articles on the subject of that notable tragedy, generally known as the "Parrish murder," in which my name is mentioned in such a way, and in such connections, as to make it likely to leave upon the public mind the impression that I had something to do with that "bloody affair."

Of that affair I have some little knowledge, which, if you will give it a place in your columns, I will faithfully, and truly, according to the best of my recollection, give to the public.

I will also, on the same conditions, give to the public my knowledge of some other matters in Utah.

Well, now for my statements.

At a certain time, during the notable "Reformation," I think in the winter of 1857, I was, as one of the Bishop's counselors, presiding and speaking in a ward meeting, at the house of G. G. (Duff) Potter, where a brother counselor, N. T. Guyman, came to the door, and said, "Brother Stewart, please to cut your remarks short; the Bishop wishes to see you." I did so, and went with him to the Bishop's council room, an upper room in his dwelling house. As this was in the night, our movements were, perhaps, observed by but very few.

The Bishop (Johnson), Guyman, and myself, and some few others whom I cannot now identify composed this council.

After all had assembled, and were orderly seated, the Bishop stated the object of the meeting, which was, that we might hear a letter which he had just received from "President Young." He there read the letter, the purport of which was about this.

He, Brigham, had information that some suspicious characters were collecting at the "Indian Farm," on Spanish Fork, and he wished him (Bishop Johnson) to keep a good look out in that direction; to send some one there to reconnoiter and ascertain what was going on, and if they (those suspicious characters) should make a break, and be pursued, which he re, quired; he "would be sorry to hear a favorable report;" "but," said he, "the better way is to lock the stable door before the horse is stolen."

He then admonished the Bishop that he (the Bishop) understood those things, and would act accordingly, and "keep this letter close," or safe.

This letter was over Brigham's signature, in his own peculiarly rough hands, which we all had the privilege of seeing.

About this matter there was no counseling; the word of Brigham was the law, and the object was, that we might hear it.

Early one morning, during the week succeeding this council, Parrish and Durfee called at my house (office), for I was the precinct magistrate, when Parrish, under oath, said his horses were stolen the night before from his stable, and required a warrant giving authority to search for them. I could find no law in Utah, making it the duty or the privilege of a justice or any other officer to grant a search warrant, yet I considered that there could be no harm in it, and therefore granted it, directing it to the sheriff, his deputy, or any constable of Utah county, requiring him to search diligently in

Utah county for such property. Parrish wished me to deputize Durfee to search, but I refused. It was at this time that Durfee aimed, as I afterwards understood it, to give me a hint of his situation. In private he said, "You know how I stand." I replied, "Yes," supposing that he alluded to his apostasy, which he had made as public as he dare; when he replied, "All's right in Israel." I did not understand him.

The next Saturday night there was a council, which I attended by special invitation. In this council were, as well as I remember, Bishop A. Johnson, J. M. Stewart, A. F. McDonald, N. T. Guyman, L. Johnson, C. Lanford, and W. J. Earl. I am pretty certain there were others present, but I cannot now name them. O yes! Potter and Durfee were present. They came in with blankets wrapped around them.

In this council there was a good deal of secret talking done by two or three individuals getting close together, and talking in suppressed tones, which I, being dull of hearing, did not understand. I did not try to understand, but some things I could not help understanding. I understood when Potter requested of the Bishop the privilege to kill Parrish wherever he could find "the damned curse," and the Bishop's reply, "Shed no blood in Springville."

During this council, to the best of my recollection, I scarcely spoke a word. I understood that blood would probably be shed, not in Springville, but out of it.

I did in my heart disapprove of the course, but I was in the current, and could not get out, and policy said to me, "Hold your tongue for the present." This was Saturday night, and, as well as I remember, I heard no more of the affair till the next (Sunday) night, one week, that is eight days, which made it Sunday night.

I knew nothing of the plan, nor of the deeds having been done, until near midnight, when I was awakened, and requested to go and hold an inquest over some dead bodies. W. J. Earl, one of the city aldermen, and my predecessor in the magisterial office, made this requirement of me, and undertook to dictate me in the selecting of a jury. I considered my position for a moment, and concluded to suffer myself to be dictated to, unless an attempt should be made to lead me to the commission of crime. In that case I felt that I would try "mighty hard" to back out.

I obeyed my manager, W. J. Earl, in selecting the jury. Having summoned a part of the number requisite for a jury, and being told by Earl that the jury could be filled out after we got there, we proceeded along the main road, south, about one mile from the public square, to the corner of a field known as Childs' corner. Here laid the bodies of Wm. R. Parrish and G. G. Potter, (Duff Potter.) They had evidently been killed in the road and dragged to the place they then occupied. Not to be tedious, I proceeded to fill up and qualify the jury. The examination took place under my own observation. It was a protracted one; a minute record being kept by A. F. McDonald, foreman. Before we got through with young Parrish, Beason (so called) was discovered dead, at a distance from the other bodies of about 15 rods, in a south-east direction.—The verdict was, "That they came to their deaths by the hands of an assassin, or assassins, to the jury unknown."

The bodies were hauled to the school-house, by George McKenzie, who, by somebody's direction, as I suppose, was on the ground with his team and wagon. The bodies were guarded through the night by the police. The next morning the Bishop sent word to me to bury the bodies, which I did, and made out the bill according to the charges of the men employed. I was told to take charge of the goods, chattels, and clothes of the murdered men; which I did, and in due time delivered every article to their families, except a butcher knife claimed by Mrs. Parrish, which I did not suppose belonged to her, and which I would not give to her (professing ignorance of its whereabouts) till I could get directions from the Bishop. [She never got the knife; it was subsequently lost in my family.]

The law of the Territory made it my duty to make returns of my proceedings, in this case, to the County Court, but the Bishop told me not to do it, and I obeyed him.

Some considerable time, I don't know how long after the murder, I spoke to Bishop Johnson concerning the above named knife. I supposed, from the fact that when the knife came into my possession it was all over bloody, that it had been used by the assassin; but the Bishop thought differently. During our chat about the knife, and the murder, the Bishop asked:

"Do you know who done that job?" I replied, "No." He then asked, "Have you any idea?" "No."

"Can't you guess?" I answered, "I guess I could." He then said, "Well, guess." "I guess William Bird." He replied, "you are pretty good at guessing."

I know nothing which would naturally have caused me to suspect Wm. Bird, even as much as some others, but there was an internal prompting right at the moment, and I spoke accordingly.

I suppose I had as well say something about the Notorious "Court," in which Durfee and O. Parrish were tried, for the murder of Potter and the Parrishes.

H. H. Kearns, Captain of the Police, came to me on Monday; the next day after the murder, and told me that I must hold Court sometime that afternoon, and examine Durfee and young Parrish in regard to the murder, as he had them prisoners on that account. I understood that it was only to be done as a show, or kind of a "put off."

I ordered the prisoners before me, and, as I was directed, swore them to tell "the truth," &c., in the case then under consideration.

Durfee made his statement first, which was about what has hitherto been revealed. He of course told what he had been instructed to tell. Parrish, as might have been expected, chose not to know anything of consequence. It was certainly wise in him to be ignorant.

It would have been in order, while on the subject of the "knife," to state that what I will now state:

Before the Bishop and I had got through with our chat, Bird came in sight, and the Bishop called to him; he came to us, and during our conversation, coolly and deliberately made the following statement:

"When Potter fell, I clinched Parrish, and killed him with my knife."

I know that Parrish was killed with a knife. Potter was killed with what appeared to be one shot of four balls from a shot gun, entering just under his left breast. Beason Parrish was also killed by one or two shots in his body, the particular locality not now remembered.

Thus I have written all that I can think of of that tragical affair.

I am perfectly aware that that portion of community who have no knowledge of the under-currents and wire-workings of Mormonism will consider me a "poor concern," for suffering myself to be swayed in my official duties by ecclesiastical dignitaries for suffering myself, in the case above mentioned, to be governed by the Bishop. But I perfectly understood that to act without counsel, or to disobey counsel, was to transgress; and if I had never understood it before I could not help but understand it then, by the example of the three dead bodies right before my eyes, that "The way of the transgressor is (was) hard."

I might make some revelations, but they would not be very important, concerning the case of Mr. Forbes. I may make them at some future time.

I will now close.  
I am, &c., your humble servant,  
J. M. STEWART.