

## Topic



On 11 September 1857, some 50 to 60 local militiamen in southern Utah, aided by American Indian allies, massacred about 120 emigrants who were traveling by wagon to California. This tragic event, which spared only 17 children age six and under, occurred in a valley called the Mountain Meadows, roughly 35 miles southwest of Cedar City.

Because the perpetrators were members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Church has made great efforts to heal the wounds caused by the massacre. In 1999, then-President **Gordon B. Hinckley** joined with descendants of the victims to dedicate a monument at the site. Since then, the Church has worked with descendant groups to maintain the monument and surrounding property and is committed to improving and preserving the area in the future.

Also, in an effort to bring to light the details of the event, Latter-day Saint leaders opened the Church's archives to the authors of the 2007 book *Massacre at Mountain Meadows*. Speaking at the sesquicentennial of the massacre on 11 September 2007, President **Henry B. Eyring** said:

"Although they are Church employees, the authors have retained full editorial control and have drawn their own conclusions from the exhaustive body of historical material they assembled. They have been given full access to all relevant materials held by the Church. Two of the significant conclusions they have reached are (1) that the message conveying the will and intent of Brigham Young not to interfere with the immigrants arrived too late, and (2) that the responsibility for the massacre lies with local leaders of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the regions near Mountain Meadows who also held

civic and military positions and with members of the Church acting under their direction.

"Although no event in history can fully be known, the work of these three authors has enabled us to know more than we ever have known about this unspeakable episode. The truth, as we have come to know it, saddens us deeply. The gospel of Jesus Christ that we espouse abhors the cold-blooded killing of men, women, and children. Indeed, it advocates peace and forgiveness. What was done here long ago by members of our Church represents a terrible and inexcusable departure from Christian teaching and conduct. We cannot change what happened, but we can remember and honor those who were killed here.

"We express profound regret for the massacre carried out in this valley 150 years ago today and for the undue and untold suffering experienced by the victims then and by their relatives to the present time."



A landscape view of Mountain Meadows.

©2011 Intellectual Reserve, Inc. All rights reserved.

[Download Photos](#)

## Additional Resources

[The Mountain Meadows Massacre](#)

[150th Anniversary of Mountain Meadows Massacre](#)

[Book Provides an Unflinching Look at Mountain Meadows Massacre](#)

[Interviews with Authors of "Massacre at Mountain Meadows"](#)

[Church Seeks National Historic Landmark Designation](#)



---

Previous Topic

[< Mormon](#)

Next Topic

[News Media Contacts >](#)

STYLE GUIDE NOTE: When reporting about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, please use the complete name of the Church in the first reference. For more information on the use of the name of the Church, go to our online [Style Guide](#).

---

Global Newsroom