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The Mormon Battalion, Cooke's Wagon Road, and the Making of the New West

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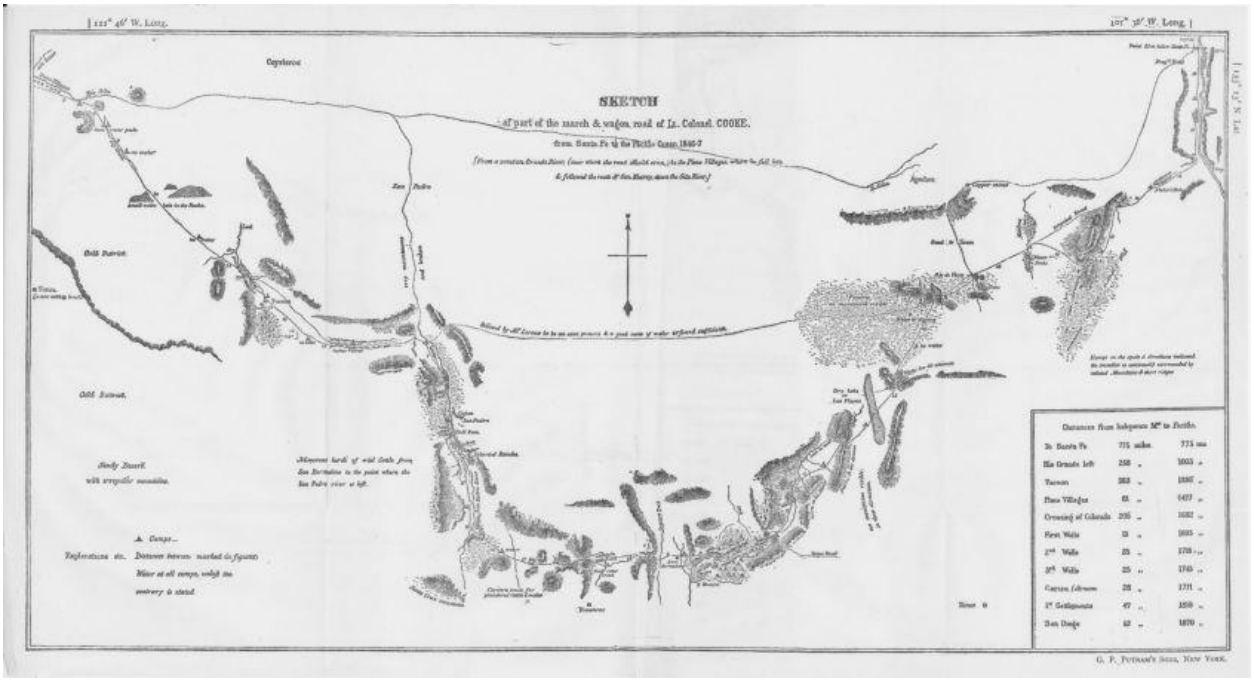

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[1] Philip St George Cooke, map, *No. 3, Sketch of Part of the March & Wagon Road of Lt. Colonel Cooke: From Santa Fe to the Pacific Ocean, 1846-7* (New York: H. Long, 1849).

Chapter One: Introduction

The Mormon Battalion was formed as the first and only religious-based military unit in United States history. Facing increasing persecution for their religious beliefs, 500 Mormons agreed to enlist in the United States Army and help defend California during the Mexican-American War in exchange for the government's help in settling out west. The Mormon Battalion contributed to westward expansion in many ways. These contributions include the construction of Cooke's Wagon Road.

It should be noted that there were two separate trails followed by the Mormons. The first of these is that which Brigham Young led the Mormons on their exodus from Nauvoo, Illinois to their new home in the Utah Territory. The second trail, called Cooke's Wagon Road, is the road built by the Mormon Battalion during their two thousand mile march across the country to San Diego, California. This trail is named for Philip St. George Cooke who commanded the battalion from Santa Fe onward. While my research has shown that these two terms are sometimes used interchangeably, the focus of this dissertation is Cooke's Wagon Road.

Other contributions by the Mormon Battalion include their role in the discovery of gold in California, the construction of the transcontinental railroad and the building of the transcontinental telegraph to name but a few. As a result, the battalion played a role not only in developing the West but also in helping the United States build the strongest economy in the world.[1]

The Mormon Battalion has been studied by many historians since its mission terminated in Los Angeles, California in 1847. However, there are areas that have been little researched which will be the subject of this dissertation. The first area in need of research is why President

[1] Charles Mackay, Joseph Smith, and Henry Mayhew, *The Mormons, or, Latter-Day Saints with Memoirs of the Life and Death of Joseph Smith, the "American Mahomet."* (London: Vizetelly and Company, 1852), 154-155.

Polk agreed to help the Mormons in the first place. The second area is the role of the women that accompanied them as well as that of their guides and how both contributed to the success of the mission. The third is the role of the battalion in bringing about the California Gold Rush in 1849 and, as a result, helping to bring the state into the Civil War over a decade later. The fourth area in need of further exploration is the role of the battalion in the growth of the American West.

The success of the battalion hinged on several factors, the first of which was aid from President Polk and his administration. The second was the two groups that saw the battalion through its history-making 2,100-mile march, the first of which were the women who accompanied them on the first half of their journey. The women served as launderers and thus kept all clothing clean and in repair, they were nurses, they took care of the roughly forty children that marched with the battalion, and they filled in for men in the event they became injured or ill. These women were the ultimate working mothers. The second group was that of their guides, of which there have been at least ten documented. Through the use of their many skills as translators and frontiersmen and women, these brave individuals successfully saw the battalion to their final destination in Southern California.[2]

Lastly, the Mormon Battalion stuck steadfastly to their faith. It should come as no surprise that all members of the battalion were very devout as the battalion itself was founded on their faith. However, there have been many expeditions in American History that failed when faced with many of the same hardships that had awaited the Mormons on the trail. The fact that the Mormons remained rooted in their faith gave them an extra advantage many expeditions lacked. Their faith helped push them to keep going where others may have given up. It gave

[2] Daniel Tyler, *A Concise History of the Mormon Battalion* (Salt Lake City, UT: Rio Grande Press, 1881), 253.

them greater strength, resiliency, and sense of purpose. The deep sense of faith they exhibited on the trail was reinforced by the prophecy of Brigham Young that not one of them would die in battle, a prophecy that came true.[3]

Without the help of the federal government as well as that of these groups and their deep-rooted faith, the battalion may not have been as successful. However, little research has been done on these variables and, as a result, the nature of their effect on and contributions to the battalion remains largely unknown.

The battalion also had a direct role in the discovery of gold in California in 1849, the construction of the transcontinental railroad and transcontinental telegraph lines, the Indian Wars in the Utah Territory, as well as in the Civil War. While some research has been done in recent years on the battalion's role in these events, there are questions that remain. How did the gold rush affect westward emigration and settlement? How did the gold rush bring California into the Civil War? What role did Cooke's Wagon Road play in laying the groundwork for the Pacific transcontinental railroad? What role did the Mormons play in Indian War? What roles did they play during the Civil War and why were they so important?

As with any subject, one of the best sources of information is primary sources. Given that the Mormon Battalion disbanded well over a century and a half ago, primary sources would come in the form of diaries, journals, and letters. As many of the battalion members kept such records, many of which found their way to publication and/or in archives, primary sources related to the battalion are plentiful. Such sources will be relied upon heavily in researching this dissertation.

[3] William Hyde, "The Private Journal of William Hyde" (Unpublished manuscript), typescript.

As the battalion was a unit in the United States Army, military and political documents will be relied upon as well. Such sources would come in the form of governmental documents, treaties, military orders, and so on. As they served in the Mexican-American War, have the unique and extremely notable designation of being the only military unit in American history affiliated with any religion, and were also political pawns for James K. Polk in his quest to acquire territory from Mexico, there is no doubt ample government documentation relating to the battalion.[4]

This dissertation involves events such as the Mexican-American War, the California gold rush of 1849, and the Civil War. Given that these were all national events, newspapers will prove to be an important source. As there were many operating newspapers around the country, such accounts would give local and regional perspectives relating to the impact of these events. These articles will not only provide such insight but will provide context as to how these events affected the nation on a larger scale as well.

As with the study of any period of history, researching secondary sources will also play an important role. In doing so, one gains insight into the various perspectives of other historians who have written about the same period or event. These sources will yield valuable information regarding other potential sources.

Given the nature of the Mormon Battalion and the major events in which it took part, this dissertation will contain elements of both military and political histories. As such, it will rely heavily on narratives, personal histories, possibly some oral histories, and secondary sources. It

[4] *Acts and Resolutions Passed in the First Session of the Thirtieth Congress of the United States with an Appendix* (Washington, DC: Ritchie and Heiss, Printers, 1848), 3.

is also possible that it may integrate theoretical analysis based on previous work by other historians as well.

In its brief history, the Mormon Battalion had many achievements and touched many different areas of American history. As such, it has a multi-faceted historiography as well. As previously noted, the history of the battalion incorporates religious history, military history, the history of westward expansion and manifest destiny, and indirectly, its involvement in the Civil War. Given that the history of the battalion is somewhat complicated, it comes as no surprise that historical interpretations of it have changed and evolved in the nearly 175 years since it disbanded.

Initial study of the Mormon Battalion relied heavily on first-hand accounts, and rightly so. It is to the benefit of historians that so many of the members of the battalion kept diaries or journals from which much has been learned. Many of these accounts, however, did not begin to surface until well over a century after the battalion disbanded. Unfortunately, these accounts sometimes conflict with one another, thus adding further complication in attempting to interpret them.

In examining the changing historiography from the religious perspective, many have turned to the work of Daniel Tyler, who was a member of the battalion himself. His book *A Concise History of the Mormon Battalion in the Mexican-American War, 1846-1847*, a period study first published in 1881, has become something of a springboard for historians studying the battalion.

In addressing the religious aspect of the battalion, Tyler notes the fact that the Mormons had faced great persecution. He paints the battalion not only as an army unit during Mexican-

American War but also as pioneers fighting for their faith. This and other early accounts discussing this perspective of the battalion portray them as pioneers going to great lengths to fight for the right to worship as they pleased.[5]

The interpretation put forth by Tyler continues to persist, as evidenced by the works of historians such as Dr. Eugene Campbell. Campbell, a former professor of history at Brigham Young University, authored the book *Establishing Zion: The Mormon Church in the American West, 1847-69* (1988). In his work, Campbell stresses that the Mormons were inherently peaceful people. However, he notes that they displayed a strong will and the determination to live free and independent lives at whatever the cost, hence their arduous migration westward for a better life.[6]

Historian Dr. Todd Kerstetter, a professor of American history at Texas Christian University, also focuses on this perspective. In his book *Inspiration and Innovation: Religion in the American West* (2015), he stresses how faith led many, Mormons and otherwise, to move westward for various reasons.[7]

However, work in the latter half of the 20th Century also began to focus on the conflict resulting from the intermarrying of the military and church hierarchies within the ranks of the battalion. The fact that the battalion members were assigned to positions in the military inconsistent with their rank in the church resulted in internal conflict as the military structure meant superior officers were sometimes giving orders to those who were their superiors within the Mormon church itself. This new perspective of conflicting hierarchies within the battalion has been put forth by scholars such as David Bigler and Will Bagley. Bigler was an independent

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[5] Tyler, *A Concise History of the Mormon Battalion*, 351.

[6] Eugene E. Campbell, *Establishing Zion: The Mormon Church in the American West, 1847-69* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1988), 326.

[7] Todd M. Kerstetter, *Inspiration and Innovation: Religion in the American West* (West sussex: John Wiley & Sons, 2015), 99.

historian while Bagley held a degree in history from the University of California, Santa Barbara. They presented this perspective in their book *Army of Israel: Mormon Battalion Narratives* (2000).[8]

Because of the nature of the Mormon Battalion, interpretations focusing on its military history are inextricably linked to those focusing on the growth of the American West and manifest destiny. Initially, military histories of the battalion, which were again largely based on first-hand accounts, focused primarily on its march across the country as a military unit and its involvement in the Mexican-American War. Again, Tyler's book served as a starting point for such studies. As such, it should be noted that Tyler was himself a sergeant and, as previously mentioned, he was a member of the battalion. Thus, it comes as no surprise that his work would have a dual focus on both the military and religious perspectives.

Another such work is that of Philip St. George Cooke. Like Tyler, in his memoir *The Conquest Of New Mexico And California: An Historical And Personal Narrative*, Cooke also provided first-hand documentation of the march of the battalion along with its involvement in the war. Having two first-hand accounts deriving from the men who led the battalion was certainly valuable.

However, by the 1920s historians began to turn more to the role of the battalion not only as a military unit but as having a major impact on westward expansion. One such historian, Anthony Ivins, was an apostle of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, also known as

[8] David L. Bigler and Will Bagley, *Army of Israel: Mormon Battalion Narratives* (Spokane, WA: Arthur H. Clark Co., 2000), 96.

the Mormon church. He addresses this perspective in his work *Traveling over Forgotten Trails: On the Trail of the Mormon Battalion* (1922).[9]

Later in 1939, Dr. Milton Hunter addresses this in his article in the Pacific Historical Review titled "The Mormon Corridor." Hunter was a historian as well as one of the leaders of the Mormon Church in a priesthood called the First Council of Seventy. He points to Brigham Young as a major driving force behind the Mormons' move westward. In doing so, he notes that Young believed moving a little farther west was not good enough. He also believed that the Mormons could not coexist with other civilizations but that they must have territory all their own.[10]

Young stated that the Mormons must be "so far removed from those who have been their oppressors, that there shall be an everlasting barrier between them and future persecutions." This very idea would later come to fruition in what became known as the Utah Territory. Central to understanding this was Young's *Journal of Discourses* which spans a massive nineteen volumes. Such a plethora of first-hand accounts from Young himself was extremely valuable in studying the history of the Mormon emigration to the Utah Territory. In his dissertation, *Mormon Pioneering and Colonizing in California* (1947), Conrad Hawkins continued this trend as well.[11]

In the latter half of the 20th century, some historians began placing more emphasis on the Mormon Battalion's contribution to westward expansion and manifest destiny. They began to turn their focus toward their role in the discovery of gold in California. This discovery brought about the gold rush of 1849 which, of course, played a role in the settlement of the West coast of

[9] Anthony W. Ivins, *Traveling over Forgotten Trails: On the Trail of the Mormon Battalion* (Salt Lake City, UT,: Improvement Era, 1922), 1.

[10] Milton R. Hunter, "The Mormon Corridor," *Pacific Historical Review 8,* no 2 (1939): 179.

[11] Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses, vol. 1* (Liverpool: F. D. and S. W. Richards, 1854), 169.

the United States. These events were documented in the papers of Peter L. Wimmer and James W. Marshall in which they document the first discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill. The journal of Johann Agustus Sutter, owner of the sawmill where the gold was found, has also proven invaluable in studying this seminal event in American history.[12]

Historian Norma Ricketts, a member of the Mormon Church and a descendant of Mormon pioneers, illustrates this in her work *Mormons and the Discovery of Gold* (1966). This was also the focus of J. Kenneth Davies' book *Mormons and California Gold* (1981). Ricketts and Davies both drew from these first-hand accounts as well as many others in furthering the understanding of the myriad of events surrounding the gold rush.

The involvement of the battalion in the discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill continued to be the focus of some historians into the 21st century. This is illustrated in Fred Rosen's book *Gold! The Story of the 1848 Gold Rush and How It Shaped a Nation* (2005). In emphasizing the settlements that resulted from the gold rush, Rosen addresses the more than three hundred thousand pioneers that made their way westward in hopes of finding gold for themselves and getting rich quickly.[13]

Dr. Kenneth Owen also addresses this in his work "*Gold Rush Saints: California Mormons and the Great Rush for Riches*." Owens was a professor of history and ethnic studies at California State University, San Francisco. He argues that had some of the Mormons not settled in San Francisco after their disbandment and acquired employment with John Sutter, it is very possible that his sawmill may not have been built and that gold may very well not have been

[12] Johann August Sutter, *Diary of Johann August Sutter; with an Introduction by Douglas S. Watson* (San Francisco: The Grabhorn Press, 1932).

[13] Fred Rosen, *Gold!: The Story of the 1848 Gold Rush and How It Shaped a Nation* (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 2005), 21.

discovered. This direct connection between the Mormons, the discovery of gold, and the ensuing gold rush shows the importance of the battalion to this seminal event in American history.[14]

In the last decade or so, some historians have been turning their attention to an aspect of the Mormon Battalion that had previously gone unacknowledged. It was known and well documented that the battalion built Cooke's Wagon Road, established many settlements in the Mormon Corridor, helped secure California for the United States, and played a role in discovering gold. However, little work has been done regarding the role of the Mormon Battalion in the Civil War.

As previously mentioned, however, this trend has been beginning to change in the last ten years. Dr. Kenneth L. Alford demonstrates this in his book *Utah and the American Civil War: The Written Record* (2017). Alford is a professor of church history and doctrine at Brigham Young. His book illustrates the role of Mormon participation in the Civil War within the Utah Territory, which arguably had the greatest Mormon population in the nation. He shows Mormon participation in the war through the enlistment of the Utah Calvary Company, their defense of the Pony Express and telegraph lines and, ultimately, in the Indian Wars which were raging on at the time and had a major impact on the westward movement of the war itself.[15]

In further exploration of these events, historians began to turn to primary sources such as John Munro's *Heroes of the Telegraph* and Edward Tullidge's various regional histories of the Utah Territory. Together these primary sources helped to illuminate the part of the Mormons, among them members of the battalion, in both the Civil War and the Indian Wars within the

[14] Kenneth N. Owens, *Gold Rush Saints: California Mormons and the Great Rush for Riches* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2005), 91.

[15] Kenneth L. Alford, *Utah and the American Civil War the Written Record* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2017), 11.

borders of the Utah Territory. These sources proved to be a valuable resource for further studies as well.

This trend was continued by Dr. Carol L. Higham, a history professor at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte. She wrote the book *The Civil War and the West: The Frontier Transformed* (2013), in which she emphasizes the effect of both the growth of the American West and the Indian Wars on the war, both major events in which the Mormons took part.[16]

Despite this, there is still much research to do concerning the Mormon Battalion's role in discovering gold in California. The direct role they played in these events resulted in the United States going through many changes in a short period. As a result, there is a great deal of work to be done to fully understand their impact.

A second area that has been little explored is the role played by those who aided the battalion on the trail. The women that accompanied them on the first half of the march provided an invaluable service in cleaning and repairing their clothes, serving as nurses, caring for the children, and taking over the men's duties when they were injured or ill. In the second half of their march, their guides were vital in helping them navigate and survive the harsh lands of the American Southwest. Without the women the men would have been less comfortable on their march and without the guides their two-thousand-mile march across the country may not have been as successful. While little is known about some of them, further research needs to be done to ascertain their roles in the success of the battalion, thus helping them to reach California where they would later take part in the discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill. These areas are very much connected and need to be further researched. Doing so would result in bringing about a

[16] C. L. Higham, *The Civil War and the West: The Frontier Transformed* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2013), xii.

more complete understanding of the battalion and its many accomplishments. As such, it would provide a much better view of the "big picture," so to speak.

While initially addressed as a singular event, in the nearly 175 years since its conclusion in 1847, historians have slowly begun to break down the Mormon Battalion, so to speak. That is, they began to move away from the study of the battalion as simply a military unit and towards studying the impact of the battalion on the many events in which it took part. Essentially the historiography of the Mormon Battalion has transitioned from a model focused on the macro history of the battalion to one focused on its microhistory.

In the initial study of the Mormon Battalion, which utilized the top-down model, much was learned about their role as the first, and thus far the only religion-based unit in the history of the United States military. However, historians gradually began to examine the battalion utilizing the bottom-up method. In doing so, they began to acquire a much greater understanding of just how far-reaching the impact of the battalion really was and how it changed the United States forever.

In writing this dissertation an additional six chapters will be required in formulating these arguments, excluding the concluding chapter. The second chapter will discuss the political atmosphere in the nation, the formation of the Mormon Battalion and how President James K Polk used it to his advantage to fulfill his campaign promise of expanding the western border to the shores of the Pacific. The third chapter will address the role of the women that accompanied the Mormon Battalion on their two-thousand-mile march, their guides, and their faith as well. The fourth chapter will focus on the role of the battalion in westward expansion. The fifth chapter will address the role of the battalion in the Mexican Cession and the Gadsden Purchase. The sixth chapter will address the role of the battalion in the Indian Wars in the Utah Territory.

The seventh chapter will discuss the role of the battalion in the construction of the transcontinental railroad and the transcontinental telegraph lines and how these innovations affected westward growth. Lastly, the eighth and final chapter will be the conclusion.

In chapter two it will be shown that the Mormons were persecuted for, among other reasons, their large political influence. It will also be shown that this influence played a significant role in obtaining help from President Polk and that he used the battalion to help in bringing about the Mexican Cession and, thus, the expansion of the western border to the shores of the Pacific.

In the mid-1840s the Mormons were facing increasing persecution and, though they continually sought help from the federal government, their pleas fell on deaf ears. However, with the election of James K. Polk came a new glimmer of hope. Upon asking Polk for help in migrating westward, he agreed on the condition that five hundred Mormon troops enlist in the U.S. army. With the commencement of the Mexican-American War only months earlier, Polk saw this as an opportunity to both gain reinforcements out west as well as to gain favor with the Mormons, who held significant political influence. This was the beginning of the Mormon Battalion, the only religiously affiliated military unit in American history.

Upon reaching California, the battalion found the war all but over. However, their role in the peace negotiations led to the expulsion of Mexican forces. On their return to Mexico, they were defeated by the United States army at which point the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed, thus ending the war. The treaty also gave the United States 529,000 square miles of Mexican territory in what became known as the Mexican Cession. This land would become states of Utah, California, Nevada and parts of New Mexico, Wyoming, Arizona, and Colorado.

In researching the events leading to the formation of the Mormon Battalion, there are several questions that will be focused on. What role did the Mormons' political influence play in their persecution? Did that same political influence have any impact on Polk's decision to help them? How did Polk use the battalion to help fulfill his campaign promise of westward expansion?

In this chapter it will be shown that, in their persecution the Mormons were very much a victim of the volatile political environment in American in the mid-1840s. It will also be shown that it was this same political environment that led President Polk to help the. In doing so it will be proven that, while he wanted to help, he also used them for political gain.

In chapter three in will be shown that both the women and the guides contributed to the battalion, albeit in different ways. The women were responsible for keeping the soldiers comfortable while the guides were responsible for helping to keep them alive. Thus, it will be proven throughout chapter two that the accomplishments of both contributed to the battalion in numerous ways.

Throughout their two-thousand-mile march, the battalion was accompanied by over thirty women in the first half of the march. These women served in many capacities that made the journey less arduous for the soldiers. The women also served as companions to the men, which was of extreme importance. As the battalion faced extreme hardships along the trail, morale was often low. As a result, the men often turned to the women to lift their spirits.[17]

In the second half of the march, the battalion employed the use of no less than ten guides (possibly more). Some of these guides accompanied the battalion for only part of their journey while others stayed for the full duration of the march. Without their knowledge of the land, their

[17] Stella Cahoon Shurtleff, *Reynolds Cahoon and His Stalwart Sons; Utah Pioneers* (Salt Lake City, UT: Church History Library, 1960), 117-118.

skill as outdoorsmen and women, and their abilities as translators, the mission may not have been as successful. However, the many contributions of these brave men and at least one woman has gone unresearched and unrecognized. Further research is needed to answer exactly how each guide contributed to the overall success of the battalion.[18]

Numerous guides that accompanied the march are recorded by only their first name and in little detail. Others are much more prominent, such as Jean-Baptiste Charbonneau. As the son of Sacagawea, he is certainly the most noteworthy. As such, it is expected that this chapter will focus not on the contributions of all the guides but on the notable few for which proper documentation exists.

As important as the contributions of the women and the guides were, the success of the battalion also hinged on another important variable. While faced with extreme adversity, the battalion and the accompanying women and guides all leaned very heavily on their faith to see them through. This was extremely important as it gave them hope, strength, and resiliency. Without their faith to see them through, life on the trail may have been yet more trying.[19]

In researching the role of the women, there are several questions that will be answered. What roles did the women play? Why was the role of the women important? What were their contributions to the battalion? In researching these various guides, I intend to answer several key questions as well. Why were these guides chosen as opposed to someone else? What characteristics made them stand out, thus making them valuable additions to the battalion? What accomplishments did they have with the battalion? How did their services and actions aid in the overall success of the battalion's mission?

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[18] Philip St. George Cooke, *Report from the Secretary of War: Communicating, in Compliance with a Resolution of the Senate, of the 21st February, 1849, a Copy of the Official Journal of Lieutenant Colonel Philip St. George Cooke, from Santa Fé to San Diego* (Washington, DC: Union Office, 1849), 2.

[19] Elden J. Watson, *Manuscript History of Brigham Young*, 264.

In answering these questions, it will be proven that the women who accompanied the battalion made many important accomplishments. These achievements took on various forms, all of which demonstrate their grit and determination. These women were important in making life on the trail more comfortable for the battalion.

It will also be proven that these guides, who were chosen for their valuable skills, saw to the success of the second half of the march. For some of these guides, these skills included their ability as translators, which would have aided in communication with both the Mexicans as well as various Native American tribes they would have encountered. Others possessed skills that enabled them to live off the land and to negotiate rough terrain.

It will be proven that some of the guides went above and beyond the call of duty in their service to the battalion and, in so doing, made great accomplishments as well. One such accomplishment was finding the location of a hidden well in New Mexico near the Rio Grande. Found by guide Stephen C. Foster, who served as an interpreter, this well served to keep both the battalion members and their animals alive on a route that led them deep into the desert.

The three most well-known guides, Paulino Weaver, Antoine Leroux, and Jean-Baptiste Charbonneau had all warned of the dangers of this route. It was considered by some to be so precarious that it essentially amounted to a suicide mission. This accomplishment, as well as those undertaken by the other guides, not only kept the battalion on the right route but helped to provide valuable sustenance as well.[20]

In chapter four it will be shown that, in their march to California, the Mormon Battalion also played a vital role in laying the groundwork, literally and figuratively, for westward expansion. One of their largest contributions to the growth of the American West was the trail

[20] Tyler, *A Concise History of the Mormon Battalion*, 189.

they laid down through the barren landscape, known as Cooke's Wagon Road. Many thousands of pioneers would literally follow in their footsteps in the decades that followed.

They also established many settlements in the land that they helped the United States acquire from Mexico during the Mexican-American War. This new land largely became the Utah territory which was subsequently divided into the states of Nevada, Nebraska, Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, and parts of Oregon and California. These states, initially called the State of Deseret by the Mormons and renamed the Utah Territory by the federal government, are still collectively known today as the Mormon Corridor.[21]

The Mormon Battalion completed their agreed-upon military service in California, which terminated after successfully defending Los Angeles against Mexico. After being discharged from the military, some members of the battalion marched North where they found employment working at a sawmill owned by a Swiss immigrant named Johann Augustus (John) Sutter. It was at Sutter's Mill, not far from San Francisco, that gold was first discovered in California in 1848, resulting in the gold rush of 1849.[22]

The gold rush, in which former members of the Mormon Battalion played a pivotal role, brought a huge influx of over three hundred thousand fortune seekers into California, many of whom settled in the west permanently. With these new settlers came many new settlements and boom towns, many of which became permanent. It should be noted that some of these boom towns still exist today, some of which have become massive cities and metropolises such as Sacramento, California. As such, the Mormon Battalion had a huge impact on westward expansion through their role in the gold rush.

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[21] Daniel Curry, ed., *National Repository, Devoted to General and Religious Literature, Criticism and, Art*, vol. 2 (Cincinnatti: Hitchcock and Walden, 1877), 139.

[22] Sutter, *Diary of Johann August Sutter*.

In researching these events, several key questions will be answered. What role did Cooke's Wagon Road play in westward immigration? How did the gold rush impact expansion of the western United States from both stateside and abroad? What was the lasting impact of the gold rush?

In answering these questions, it will be proven that in constructing Cooke's Wagon Road the battalion built a much safer and much more easily traversed route for westward immigration. It will also be proven that the Mormons played a role in discovering gold at Sutter's mill and that the ensuing gold rush virtually and permanently changed the landscape of the western United States.

In chapter five it will be shown that, once they completed their record-breaking 2,100-mile march to San Diego the battalion made their way to Los Angeles where, upon both the United States and Mexico agreeing to peace, they assisted in the negotiation of the Treaty of Mesila, which led to the expulsion of Mexican forces from California upon which they were defeated. Their surrender they signed the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Six years later, the United States would go on to negotiate yet another treaty with Mexico known as the Gadsden Purchase.

Aside from ending the Mexican-American War, The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo gave the United States 529,000 square miles of Mexican territory. This land would become the states of California, Nevada, and Utah, and part of Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona. This land would also become a new home to hundreds of thousands of new settlers in the following decades.[23]

[23] Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848)," National Archives and Records Administration, accessed July 23, 2022, https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/treaty-of-guadalupe-hidalgo#:~:text=The%20Treaty%20of%20Guadalupe%20Hidalgo,the%20advance%20of%20U.S.%20forces.

The second treaty, known as the Gadsden Purchase, occurred in 1854. Named for General James Gadsden, grandson of Gadsden Flag namesake Christopher Gadsden, the purchase saw the United States gain a further 29,670 square miles of Mexican territory. This land would become part of Arizona and New Mexico.[24] Throughout this chapter, two key questions will be answered. In what ways did the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo affect westward expansion? In what ways did the Gadsden Purchase affect the growth of the American West?

In answering these questions, it will be proven that these land acquisitions were made possible in part by the Mormon Battalion. It will also be proven that these acquisitions provided a new means of settlement in the west. Not only did it provide additional territory on which to settle but, through the construction of Cooke's Wagon Road, the settlers had a new, safer way to move westward as well.

In chapter six the role of the Mormons in the Utah Indian Wars, many of them former members of the battalion, will be analyzed. Upon arriving at San Diego, the Mormon Battalion began their one-year enlistment at the end of which they split into two groups. Some went north seeking employment, eventually finding work at Sutter's Mill for a time, after which many returned to Utah through an indirect route across Northwestern United States. The second group returned to Utah immediately on a much more direct route in the direction from which they came. Upon arriving in Utah, Brigham Young formed a successor to the Mormon Battalion known as the Deseret Militia, which was active from 1847-1852. They were reorganized again as the Utah Territorial Militia from 1852-1887.[25]

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[24] Avalon Project - *Gadsden Purchase Treaty : December 30, 1853*, accessed July 23, 2022, https://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/mx1853.asp.

[25] Brigham Henry Roberts, *The Mormon Battalion: Its History and Achievements* (Salt Lake City: The Deseret News, 1919), 73-74.

These military units were very active in the Indian Wars in the Utah Territory having first seen action in what has become known as the Battle Creek Massacre on March 9, 1849. In a response to an alleged horse theft from the Timpanogos Indians, also known as the Ute Indians, the Deseret Militia confronted the tribe and demanded they surrender. Upon their refusal, the militia attacked, thus setting off a series of Indian Wars in the Utah Territory. Unfortunately for all involved, the alleged theft was simply a misunderstanding as the Timpanogos had, in fact, not stolen the horses.

That same month, Mormon settlers began building a fort on sacred Timpanogos land, and while hostile at first, both learned to coexist. However, in August 1849, relations broke down over the murder of Chief Old Bishop by several Mormons. When the Mormons refused to compensate the Timpanogos for the murder of their chief, they stole over 50 cattle. After peace negotiations broke down, war was all but inevitable. In February 1850 Brigham Young decided to declare war on the Timpanogos, thus paving the way for what has come to be known as the Battle at Fort Utah.[26]

The Battle Creek Massacre at the Battle of Fort Utah only increased tensions and thus helped to set the stage for the Walker War, also known as the Walkara War, of 1853-1854. On July 17, 1853, in what was meant to be a peaceful trade, a Mormon named James Anderson Ivey mistook the actions of the Ute Indians as hostile and opened fire out of what he believed to be self-defense. As a result, one of their tribesmen, Shower-O-Cats, was killed and several others were wounded.[27]

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[26] Brigham Young, *Manuscript History of Brigham Young 1847-1850* (Salt Lake City, UT: Collier's Publishing, 1997) 17-18.

[27] Peter Conover, *Journal*, passim.

The Utes demand compensation for the death of Shower-O-Cats fell on deaf ears and, as a result, they killed a Mormon man by the name of Alexander Keele. This effectively ended any hope of reconciliation between the two groups thus making war inevitable. After a short war of only roughly seven months, Chief Walkara, from whom the war derives its name, negotiated an end to the war with Brigham Young in May of 1854.

Despite peace negotiations, tensions remained and three years later the Black Hawk War of 1865-1872 broke out. The war began when the Ute attempted to settle a dispute with the Mormons over missing livestock. With relations already extremely strained, one Mormon decided to pull a chieftain from his horse. This would prove to be a poor decision as upon doing so the Utes promised retaliation.[28]

Throughout this chapter, several questions will be answered. How did the Mormons' involvement in these Indian Wars affect the Utah Territory? Why were these conflicts so impactful despite so few casualties? How did this affect westward expansion? Why did the federal government finally get involved?

In answering these questions, it will be proven that the Mormon involvement in the Indian Wars made immigration safer not only for those looking to settle in the Utah Territory but for those looking to push further westward as well. It will also be shown that the federal government aided the Mormons in finishing the conflict because they had an interest in further opening the west to settlement.

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[28] Orson F. Whitney, *History of Utah Comprising Preliminary Chapters on the Previous History of Her Founders, Accounts of Early Spanish and American Explorations in the Rocky Mountain Region, the Advent of the Mormon Pioneers, the Establishment of Dissolution of the Provisional Government of the State of Deseret, and the Subsequent Creation and Development of the Territory*, vol. 2 (Salt Lake City, UT: Cannon, 1892), 191.

In chapter seven the role of the battalion in the construction of the first transcontinental railroad, the transcontinental telegraph, and their use in the Civil War will be discussed. The role of the Battalion in future transportation will also be analyzed. The railroad and telegraph opened both new and much faster ways of immigration and communication to the west. These innovations revolutionized westward expansion.

The east and west branches of the transcontinental railroad were joined in Salt Lake City, which the Mormons founded. The transcontinental telegraph also followed much of this same route and was even built with the help of the Mormons, many of them former battalion members.[29]

With the outbreak of the Civil War in April of 1861, concern over the telegraph lines was of much concern as well, and rightfully so. After all these lines connected Washington with the military across the country, thus allowing the timely and effective delivery of orders from leadership, including that of President Abraham Lincoln himself. He was known to have made the War Department something of a second home, spending many a night waiting for telegraph messages from his generals in the field. Thanks to the telegraph, the Civil War was the first conflict to utilize a form of near instantaneous-communication.

However, as concern grew that the Native Americans in Utah and Wyoming may try to attack and sever the telegraph and Pony Express mail lines, the federal government asked Brigham Young for his assistance. As a result, two units of the Utah Territorial Militia were mustered into service until 1862, when Abraham Lincoln signed the Morrill Anti-Bigamy Act into law. While Lincoln did not enforce this act, he specifically told Brigham Young that the Mormons could ignore it if they agreed to stay out of the Civil War. As a result, the Mormons

[29] John J. Stewart, *The Iron Trail to the Golden Spike* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1969), 175.

protested and refused to offer any further assistance in defending the telegraph and mail lines when their ninety-day service agreement was up. Regardless, their service in doing so kept vital lines of communication open during one of the most trying times in our nation's history.[30]

In this chapter, three distinct questions will be answered. In what ways did the Mormons contribute to the construction of the transcontinental railroad and transcontinental telegraph lines? How did these innovations affect the growth of the western United States? How did their work in both building and defending the telegraph lines contribute to the war effort during the Civil War,

In answering these questions, it will be proven that they were involved in the construction of the first transcontinental railroad and the transcontinental telegraph line literally from the ground up. I will also prove that the railroad and telegraph had an impact on westward expansion in many ways, far beyond simply transporting people and personal messages. Third, I will prove that in defending the telegraph and mail routes during the Civil War the Mormons played a vital role in the war effort. Lastly, it will prove that the battalion played a role in the construction of the first highways of the 21st century, which had an impact on travel, shipping, and national defense and continues to do so today.

In the final chapter, a strong conclusion will be drawn regarding the aforementioned arguments. It will be proven that the Mormon Battalion may not have been as comfortable were it not for the tremendous efforts of the woman that accompanied them, that may not have succeeded had it not been for the immense skill of their numerous guides, and that they helped to discover gold in California. The aforementioned conclusions will be drawn utilizing many

[30] *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs: Accompanying the Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior, for the Year 1861* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1861), 135.

primary and secondary sources that adequately and fully address and answer all previously stated questions and, thus, prove the thesis of this dissertation.

Chapter Two: Birth of the Mormon Battalion

From the beginning of time, it has been human nature to be wary and afraid of that which is different or misunderstood. Joseph Smith met with such resistance when he founded the Mormon Church in 1830, before relocating it to Kirtland, Ohio the following year. After only two years in Kirtland, the residents had such disdain for the Mormons that on March 22, 1832, Smith was dragged from his bed and tarred and feathered.[1] This was only the beginning of the persecution the Mormons would endure in the subsequent decades.

As a result of their persecution, they wished to relocate out west where they could worship freely. President James K. Polk believed in manifest destiny, the idea that the United States was meant to span from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean. In the plight of the Mormons he saw the opportunity to help make that belief a reality. In the end, they played a role in the negotiation of the Treaty of Cahuenga. This treaty would lead to the expulsion and ultimately the defeat of the Mexican forces on their own soil. The resulting Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo gave the United States 529,000 square miles of Mexican territory. This territory later became California, Nevada, Utah, and parts of New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, and Wyoming.

The 1840s were a decade of increasing political tensions with the annexation of Texas, a looming war with Mexico, and the nation becoming ever more divided over the issue of slavery. Amid this backdrop, however, was yet another concern complicating the already precarious political landscape of the still fledgling United States. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, also known as the Mormons, founded the previous decade, was already sizeable in number and a force to be reckoned with. When presented with the opportunity, President James

[1] *The History of Lee County, Iowa: Containing a History of the County, Its Cities, Town, &c., a Biographical Directory of Citizens, War Record of Its Volunteers in the Late Rebellion, Portraits of Early Settlers and Prominent Men, History of the Northwest, History of Iowa, Map of Lee County* (Western Historical Company, 1879), 466.

K. Polk harnessed this force to deliver on his campaign promise to expand the western border of the United States to the Pacific Ocean.

The concern over Mormonism led to their extreme persecution in the mid-1840s for two reasons. The first reason was because of the opposition to their religious beliefs, such as polygamy. The second, more alarming reason was out of fear of the Mormons having any potential political influence. The practice of Mormonism emphasizes a strong sense of community, a strong work ethic, and helping one another in their time of need. Consequently, this allowed the Mormons to achieve a high level of success. As a result, it was believed that everyone should "associate themselves together…for the purpose of opposing an undivided front to the increasing power of the obnoxious sect."[2] It was thought such opposition to the Mormons was necessary to "keep in check the political tendency of their faith and, if possible, prevent the interests of the county from perishing under their corrupt and absurd rule."[3]

This fear of the Mormons' political power was not unfounded as the Mormons tended to vote uniformly for one ticket.[4] They were known also known to switch political parties whenever need be, thus aligning themselves with whichever showed the greatest willingness to help put an end to their continued mistreatment. Despite this fluidity in their political leanings, the Mormons most often voted either with the Whig Party or the Democrat Party.[5]

Even though the Mormons were viewed by many as a political threat, Joseph Smith stated that he held no sway over the way his congregation voted and that they were free to vote

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[2] W. H. Terry, ed., *The American Whig Review: New Series, Vol. IX. - Whole Vol. XV* (New York: John A. Gray, printer, 1852), 226.

[3] Ibid.

[4] *Miscellaneous Documents of the House of Representatives for the First Session for the Forty Fourth Congress* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1876), 171.

[5] *Report of the Governor of Arizona, Made to the Secretary of the Interior for the Year 1883* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1883), 40.

for whomever they pleased. In doing so, he stated "I am a Whig, and I am a Clay man. I am made of Clay, and I am tending to Clay, and I am going to vote for Henry Clay; that's the way I feel. But I won't interfere with my people, religiously, to affect their votes, though I might to elect Clay, for he ought to be President."[6] Regardless of whether he believed he held no sway over the way his followers casted their votes, it should be noted they still looked to him and thus he may have unintentionally influenced them.

Smith officially established the Church of Christ of Latter-Day Saints on April 6, 1830, thus beginning a troubling future of persecution for the new faith.[7] He was a controversial figure, to say the least. Regardless, he was a charismatic individual, and his teachings resonated with many. Claiming to have been visited by both Jesus Christ and God, he found himself with a large and loyal following.[8] While many converted, many more criticized the questionable Mormon beliefs. In search of the freedom to worship as they pleased, Smith relocated the church further west.

Kirkland, Ohio became the new home for the church. Again, in search of a new place to worship, in 1838 the church became split between Kirtland and Jackson County, Missouri. The following year the church relocated to what would become the city of Nauvoo, Illinois.[9] The church obtained a charter from the state to name the city Nauvoo, a Hebrew word meaning "beauty and rest."[10]

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[6] "The Prairies, Nauvoo, Joe Smith, the Temple, the Mormons, etc." *The Pittsburgh Weekly Gazette*, Sept 15, 1843.

[7] W. W. Phelps, ed., *A Book of Commandments: For the Government of the Church of Christ, Organized According to Law, on the 6th of April, 1830* (Zion, MO: William Wines Phelps & Co., 1833), 27.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Edward B. Foote, *Plain Home Talk about the Human System: The Habits of Men and Women, the Causes and Prevention of Disease, Our Sexual Relations, and Social Natures: Embracing Medical Common Sense ...* (New York: Well & Coffin, 1870), 740.

[10] Albert Carrington, ed., *The Latter Day Saints Millennial Star*, vol. 30 (Liverpool: A. Carrington, 1868), 769.

The Mormons remained in Nauvoo for a short period before again falling victim to religious persecution, such as the attempted arrest and extradition of many of them, including Smith.[11] In response to this, in the fall of 1843, Joseph Smith decided to write to numerous presidential candidates for the upcoming election of 1844 to ascertain their views of the Mormons "and what their course of action would be in relation to the cruelty and oppression that [they had] suffered from the State of Missouri, if they were elected."[12] Among the presidential candidates Smith contacted were former Vice President Richard M. Johnson, former Vice President and then-Senator John C. Calhoun, Henry Clay, former President Martin Van Buren, and Secretary of State Lewis Cass.

The letters Smith wrote to the candidates were all met with less than favorable replies. One such letter, from Senator Calhoun stated in part that if elected he would follow the law of the land as outlined in the Constitution and would treat everyone equally regardless of religion or creed.[13] This letter from Senator Calhoun was only the first response of several received from the potential presidential candidates. None of these responses met with Smith's satisfaction. One from Henry Clay, however, at least acknowledged the hardships the Mormons had endured in being constantly forced to relocate in the hopes of finding peace. In addressing this as a candidate for the presidency himself, he said it was not only "time for a candidate for the presidency to pledge himself to execute judgement and justice in righteousness…but it [was] his bounden duty."[14]

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[11] James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-Day Saints* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book Co., 1976), 180-181.

[12] Joseph L. Heywood letter to General Joseph Smith, October 23,1843, Joseph Smith Collection (JSC), Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Archives (LDS Church Archives), MS 155, Box 3, 38-39.

[13] John C. Calhoun to Joseph Smith, December 2, 1843, JSC, MS 155, box 3, folder 4, 63.

[14] Melba Porter Hay and Carol Reardon, eds., *The Papers of Henry Clay: Candidate, Compromiser, Elder Statesman, January 1, 1844-June 29 1852*, vol. 10 (The University Press of Kentucky, 1991), 61.

In the end, Smith felt there were no candidates for the 1844 Presidential election that held positions that would provide a favorable outlook for the future of the Mormon Church. As a result, he saw only one viable alternative. On January 29, 1844, he met with the Twelve Apostles of the Mormon Church about his concerns, and they voted unanimously to nominate Smith for President of the United States. Later, on May 17, 1844, a Mormon state convention convened in which Smith was officially nominated as a candidate for the presidency. The Green Bay Republican announced his candidacy stating "Joe Smith the Mormon Prophet, has formally announced himself as a candidate for the Presidency.[15]

After becoming a candidate, Smith began putting together his political platform. In stating his views, Smith noted he wanted to establish a theodemocracy, a hybrid system of government in which both God and the people had a role in governing. He also stated he would ensure the rights of life, liberty, property, and free trade would be maintained.[16]

Knowing the national sentiment toward the Mormon Church, Smith knew a Mormon presidential candidate may not be looked very highly upon by many. However, he was willing to take the risk for the betterment of his people. Taking this to heart, he said "if I lose my life in a good cause, I am willing to be sacrificed on the altar of virtue, righteousness and truth, in maintaining the laws and constitution of the United States, if need be, for the good of mankind."[17]

Persecution of the Mormons continued and in 1844 they reached a tipping point. A former high ranking church member William Law was excommunicated and formed his own

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[15] *Green Bay Republican*, February 27, 1844.

[16] "The Next Presidency – Joe Smith, the Mormon Prophet, defining his Position," *The New York Herald*, May 17, 1844.

[17] George Q. Cannon, *The Life of Joseph Smith, the Prophet* (Salt Lake City, UT: Juvenile Instructor Office, 1888), 439.

church. In retaliation he used his newspaper, *The Nauvoo Expositor,* to make false accusations against the Mormon Church and to bring to light their practice of polygamy. As a result, a group of Mormons led by Smith destroyed the printing press for *The Nauvoo Expositor*.[18] As it was determined by Illinois Governor Thomas Ford that they would not stand trial for the crime, it was decided by angry townsfolk that if the "law could not reach them, powder and shot should."[19] Smith and his brother were shot and killed by an angry mob shortly thereafter on June 27, 1844.

After the vandalism of *The Navuoo Expositor* perpetrated by Smith and his followers, Ford was apprehensive of the increasingly tense political atmosphere in the state. He hoped that with Smith's death, the Mormons would forgo voting in the upcoming election and went so far as to advise them against doing so.[20] However, did not stop there. The following year, believing it had been abused by the Mormons, state leaders revoked the charter of the city of Nauvoo, then the home of the Mormon Church.[21]

After it became abundantly clear that the Latter-Day Saints were not welcome in the state Brigham Young, the new president of the Mormon Church, wrote a letter to Daniel Webster informing him of Ford's suggestion that the Mormons should "move to a far distant country." While Ford's words to Young were met with resentment, still he knew that something must be done. It was finally decided that the church should relocate out west where they could enjoy an

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[18] Joseph Smith, *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints,* vol VI (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret News, 1912), 430-432.

[19] Mackay et al., *The Mormons, or, Latter-Day Saints with Memoirs,* 154-155.

[20] Thomas Ford and James Shields, *A History of Illinois from Its Commencement as a State in 1818 to 1847. Containing a Full Account of the Black Hawk War, the Rise, Progress and Fall of Mormonism, the Alton and Lovejoy Riots, and Other Events* (Chicago: S.C. Griggs & Co., 1854), 255.

[21] Robert Bruce Flanders, *Navoo: A Kingdom on the Mississippi* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965) 324.

isolated existence and be free to worship as they wished. With a war with Mexico on the horizon, an opportunity had presented itself that would help bring this vision to fruition.[22]

On April 4, 1845 in an act of desperation Young wrote a letter to newly elected President James K. Polk asking that he lend his "immediate aid to quell the violence of mobocracy" towards the Mormons and to work his "influence to establish us as a people in our civil and religious rights where we are now, or in some part of the United States."[23] However, Polk never responded to Young's letter.

Later year, on December 2 Polk delivered his First Annual Message to Congress in which he addressed the issue of the continued Indian attacks along the Oregon Trail. To help protect the emigrants, he recommended the establishment of blockhouses and blockades between Missouri and the Rocky Mountains.[24]

However, this was not the first time such a plan had been suggested. Aware of the Oregon boundary issue, Smith had submitted a petition to both Congress and President John Tyler to "raise a company of one hundred thousand armed volunteers…to protect inhabitants of Oregon from foreign aggressors…"[25]

The High Council of Nauvoo also submitted a proposal to build forts along the route to Oregon. The proposal stated they could build and staff the necessary fortifications at a lower cost than the federal government. Further, they reaffirmed their patriotism and stated that, if allowed to do so, they pledged to protect the United States' claim to the Oregon Territory.[26]

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[22] Mackay et al., *The Mormons, or, Latter-Day Saints with Memoirs*,, 155.

[23] James Knox Polk, *Correspondence of James K. Polk*, ed. Wayne Cutler and Robert G. Hall, vol. IX (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee, 1996), 364.

[24] James K. Polk, "First Annual Message," First Annual Message | The American Presidency Project, 184AD, https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/first-annual-message-6.

[25] *Journal History*. Salt Lake City, UT: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1844.

[26] Ibid.

Both the petition and the proposal from the High Council of Nauvoo were rejected by Congress. However, given that the Mormons were looking to relocate to Oregon, when Polk resurrected the idea to fortify that territory the following year Young saw this as the perfect opportunity to again make a plea for help. He wrote a second letter to Polk trying to convince him that the Mormons could handle the job. Young knew if Polk agreed this would be the Mormons' ticket westward. However, his letter again met with no response.[27]

Despite his plea falling on deaf ears, Young was not one to quit. He sent Bishop Jesse C. Little to Washington, D.C. to meet with President James K. Polk. He hoped they would secure much-needed military aid and monetary funding. This would allow them to proceed with their planned westward migration.

In June, 1846 Little and attorney Amos Kendall were granted a series of meetings with Polk, Secretary of State and future President of the United States James Buchanan, and Secretary of War William L. Marcy.[28] Of the meeting with Little and Kendall, Polk wrote in his diary that he had a desire to see his administration in a good relationship with the Mormons and wished to learn more regarding the policies of the federal government as they pertained to them. He also noted that he informed Little that they would be treated equally under the constitution and that he "had no prejudices towards them which could induce a different course of treatment."[29]

Initially Little pushed Polk to enlist two thousand Mormons into the United States Army. His plan was to have the men split into two units numbering one thousand men each. The first

[27] Natalie Brooke Coffman, "The Mormon Battalion's Manifest Destiny: Expansion and Identity during the Mexican-American War," UVM Scholarworks, accessed May 11, 2023, https://scholarworks.uvm.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1508&context=graddis, 40.

[28] Andrew Jenson, *Latter-Day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia* (Salt Lake City, UT: Andrew Jenson History Company, 1901), 243.

[29] James Knox Polk and Milo Milton Quaife, *The Diary of James K. Polk during His Presidency: 1845 to 1849* (Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co., 1910), 446.

unit would march to California. The second unit would depart from the East coast and sail South, rounding Cape Horn sailing Northward, eventually arriving on the California coast. Under this plan, these two units would not be utilized in combat. Rather, it would have been a roundabout way for Polk to help provide the Mormons with the necessary funding to complete their westward migration.[30]

This plan was good in concept, and Polk was initially onboard. However, he quickly developed reservations. He came to the realization that if two thousand Mormons settled in California among the Americans that already resided there, there could very well be a repeat of the persecution and mob violence the Mormons had endured while living in Nauvoo.[31]

Hoping to have the best of both worlds, Polk instead decided to authorize the organization of a battalion of five hundred Mormon men under the command of U.S. Army officers. Under this plan, these Mormons would be able to earn a soldier's pay to help facilitate their migration to the Utah Territory. Simultaneously, this would deter them from settling in California, as it was feared conflicts would arise between them and the other Americans already living there.[32]

However, Polk knew that if he was to provide military aid to the Mormons in return for their enlistment, he had to be extremely careful in the way in which he went about it. First, he had to achieve a very delicate balance within the electorate. Like any politician, while he was focused on his current duties he was focused on upcoming elections and the Mormons held

[30] Bruce Worthen, *Mormon Envoy: The Diplomatic Legacy of Dr. John Milton Bernhisel* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2023).
[31] Ibid.
[32] Worthen, *Mormon Envoy*.

significant political power. Simultaneously, there were many voters who held great disdain for the Mormons.

Second, there were increasing tensions between the U.S. and Great Britain over their joint ownership of the Oregon Territory. As there were over twenty thousand British Mormons in the Oregon Territory, the allegiance of the Americans was a major concern.[33] In a letter to Polk, Little stated that the Mormons were loyal to the United States and wished to remain so. Simultaneously, however, he made it known that if the government turned its back on them they would do the same and seek help elsewhere.[34] Knowing this, Polk wanted to appease the Mormons to maintain good relations, thus preventing them from turning against the United States once they settled out west.[35]

Shortly thereafter, a letter was issued by Secretary Marcy to General Stephen Kearney stating, "... It has been decided by the President to be of the greatest importance, in the pending war with Mexico, to take the earliest possession of Upper California. An expedition, with that view, is hereby ordered, and you are designated to command it."[36] Kearney then informed him that he was to muster a number of Mormon volunteers into service not exceeding one third of his own troops.[37]

Kearney, in command of the Army of the West at Fort Leavenworth, sent a letter to Captain James Allen on June 19, 1846, calling him into duty. The letter stated that Allen was to

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[33] Ibid.

[34] *The Latter-Day Saints' Millennial Star*, vol. 39 (Liverpool: Joseph F. Smith Publisher, 1877), 146.

[35] Andrew Jenson, *Latter-Day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia*, 243.

[36] James Madison Cutts, *The Conquest of California and New Mexico, by the Forces of the United States, in the Years 1846 & 1847* (Philadelphia, PA: Carey & Hart, 1847), 245.

[37] Ibid.

lead the Mormon Battalion to California and that he was to enlist the Mormon volunteers for a period of twelve months and march to California.[38]

Allen was successful in recruiting roughly five hundred Mormon volunteers into the United States Army and on July 16, 1846, they were mustered into service at Council Bluffs, in what was then the Iowa Territory.[39] They were assembled into the first and only religiously affiliated military unit in American history, known as the Mormon Battalion. However, this was not without risk and would present some serious new challenges for Polk.

First and foremost, while a war with Mexico was inevitable, Polk knew that if he did not help the Mormons, he risked starting another war with them. The Mormons wished to settle out west, which would be outside the borders of the United States at that time. As such, if he did not provide aid, there was a very real possibility that once out west the Mormons could ally themselves with another nation altogether.

At the time the United States and England were in a dispute over Oregon, which made the risk of the Mormons allying with another nation a very real possibility. Complicating matters was the fact that by 1846 more than fifteen thousand English were members of the Mormon Church. Of these, five thousand were in Mormon settlements within the United States. Given this, Polk knew he must tread very carefully.[40]

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[38] T. B. H. Stenhouse, *The Rocky Mountain Saints a Full and Complete History of the Mormons, from the First Vision of Joseph Smith to the Last Courtship of Brigham Young and the Development of the Great Mineral Wealth of the Territory of Utah* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1873), 242-243.

[39] Tyler, *A Concise History of the Mormon Battalion*, 113.

[40] W. Ray Luce, "The Mormon Battalion: A Historical Accident?," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 42, no. 1 (1974): 32.

Young made it known that the Mormon Church remained dedicated to the United States and had faith in the Polk administration. However, Little also made it clear that if the federal government refused to help the Mormons, they may have to look elsewhere for help.[41] One might suspect that, upon receiving such mixed messages, Polk may very well have not known who to believe. As a result, he had to walk a very fine line to try to please all those involved to the best of his ability. He knew the very loyalty of the Mormons lay in the balance.

In helping the Mormons President Polk had a new hand to play in the war with Mexico. Before asking Congress for a declaration of war against Mexico, Polk knew he faced opposition from not only many Whig senators but from numerous Democrats as well. Many were opposed to his ideas of aggressive expansion. Complicating matters was the fact that many individuals did not like the Mormons and were vehemently opposed to his administration assisting them. In response, as noted in his diary, Polk stated he had no power to interfere with the Mormon emigration and that they had the right to relocate if they so wished.[42]

Polk knew if he continued to both help the Mormons and push ahead with his plan to ask for a declaration of war, it could have dire consequences in the next election. Regardless, Polk did not shy away from his desire for war. The answer he had been looking for came in a bill making its way through Congress in May 1846. The bill provided supplies for the troops as well as reinforcements.

In a stroke of political genius, Polk tied this bill to his request for a declaration of war in such a way as to paint anyone opposed to either the bill or the war as unpatriotic and

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[41] James Knox Polk and Wayne Cutler, *Correspondence of James K. Polk*, vol. XI (Knoxville: University of Tennessee press, 2009), 274.

[42] Polk and Milo Milton Quaife, *The Diary of James K. Polk during His Presidency*, 205-206.

unsupportive of the troops, the Mormon Battalion included.[43] Essentially, he used the troops to get the legislation passed and, in turn, used the aid to help the Mormons. It was a political win-win.

While his plan to get the bill and declaration both passed was a success, thus allowing him to continue his quest for westward expansion, it also allowed him to continue to provide much-needed help to the Mormons without being vilified. Regardless, his efforts were not without consequences. While Polk had decided not to pursue a second term in office, he still wanted his party to prevail in the election of 1848. However, Whig candidate Zachary Taylor defeated Democrat candidates Lewis Cass and Martin Van Buren.

Despite the political ramifications, Polk was still determined to bring his vision of Manifest Destiny to fruition. He was a believer in the concept of Manifest Destiny, the belief that the United States was meant to span from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean, and had a plan to make that belief a reality. He knew that if he provided aid to the Mormons in their journey westward that he could position them in Los Angeles to defend the city if necessary and to aid in peace negotiations, he could accomplish his goal. However, by the time the battalion arrived in Los Angeles, the war was all but over. Regardless, they still played an important role in the peace negotiations as planned, resulting in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. In what is known as the Mexican Cession, the treaty gave the United States 529,000 square miles of Mexican territory. This would later become the states of California, Nevada, Utah, and parts of New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, and Wyoming.

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[43] *Acts and Resolutions Passed in the First Session of the Thirtieth Congress of the United States with an Appendix* (Washington, DC: Ritchie and Heiss, Printers, 1848), 3.

Chapter Three: Women, Guides, and Faith in Mormon Battalion

On the first half of their historic march, the women who accompanied the Mormon Battalion played a role as nurses, in washing and repairing the very limited clothing of the battalion members, filling in for sick and injured men, and providing much needed moral support. This ensured the men remained comfortable on an otherwise grueling journey. In the second half of the march, the guides employed by the battalion played a vital role in finding food, water, the best routes, and in communicating with Native Americans. The guides as well as the battalion's strong reliance on faith helped to ensure the success of battalion in its 2,100-mile march. During their march, the battalion was aided by two different groups of individuals. The battalion also relied very heavily on their faith to help them persevere. While their roles were very different, they were both extremely important.

In their trek to California, the battalion traversed terrain that was both foreign, inhospitable, and a challenge to navigate. In the face of such conditions, the women accompanying the battalion continuously worked to make the soldiers more comfortable. Also extremely important were the guides that led the battalion across the Southwest on the second half of the march. These skilled outdoorsmen served a purpose that was very much a matter of life and death. Lastly, faith also played a major role in helping the battalion to persevere.[1]

In July of 1846 the battalion set out from Council Bluffs on their 2,100-mile march through Nebraska, Wyoming, Utah, Arizona, and ending in San Diego, California. Many of the battalion members brought their families with them on the march, so as not to be separated for an extended period. As such, on the first half of the march, one of the longest military marches in

[1] Tyler, *A Concise History of the Mormon Battalion*,118.

recorded history, the women played an important role in providing for the comfort of the battalion on the trail.

The women took on several very important roles including that of laundresses, nurses, looking after the children, taking on the work of the sick and injured men, and providing much-needed emotional support. While most of the women and children left the battalion halfway through the march with a detachment of sick soldiers, the battalion would not have been as comfortable on the first half of the mission had it not been for their extremely hard work and determination.

One way the women provided such comforts was to act as laundresses. The battalion consisted of five separate companies which were allowed up to a total of 20 paid laundresses provided by the army, of which there are 18 known to have been employed. However, there were many women who wanted to accompany their enlisted husbands on their march and worked as unpaid laundresses. There are 34 known women who traveled at least part of Cooke's Wagon Road. One such woman was Mary McCree Black Brown who, along with her son, accompanied her husband on the trail. She was "to do the laundry for sixteen men which called for days of hard work" at a time.[2]

The women also put their culinary skills to the test in serving as cooks for the battalion. With the limitations on their food supply, Captain Philip St. George Cooke, who would take over command of the battalion following the death of Lieutenant Colonel James Allen, marveled at the abilities of the women. He stated "They could hardly be called housewives in entymological strictness, but it was plain they had once been such, and most distinguished ones."[3] The little food stuffs they had to work with consisted mostly of milk, meal, and flour. Occasionally there

[2] Bigler et al, *Army of Israel*, 308-309.
[3] Tyler, *A Concise History of the Mormon Battalion*, 90.

was meat available by way of wild game as well. Cooke noted that, utilizing what little resources were available, the women learned to make butter in the back of wagons, using the jolting of the wagons themselves to help churn it. They also learned to make bread using ovens dug from hillsides. In praising the women's abilities and ingenuity, Cooke said "I have no doubt the appetizing zest their humble lore succeeded in imparting to diet which was both simple and meagre, availed materially for the health as well as the comfort of the people."[4]

It should be noted that, while there was much to be done, there was often very little time to do it as well. The battalion often only stopped for the night which provided only a short window to do laundry. Adding to their pressure was the fact that many of the men had few changes of clothing, requiring a quick turnaround time. Occasionally, however, the battalion would stop for a longer period, which gave the women time to catch up. As one unnamed woman noted that they occasionally stopped to camp during which time the men would hunt for food. Meanwhile the women remained at camp and, among other things, baked bread, washed clothes, and made preparations to resume the journey the next day.[5]

However, complicating their efforts was the necessity for repairs as their march progressed. Clothes would get ripped or torn, lose buttons, and so on and the women often had only overnight to make such repairs as well. As their situation became dire and they faced more exposure to the elements, such repairs were vital.

Women also played the all-important role of caregiver whenever needed. Along Cooke's Wagon Road, sickness was a major issue. The soldiers suffered from such conditions as exhaustion, dysentery, and dehydration, to name but a few. With sickness and injury being an ever-present reality and formally trained doctors in short supply, women also took on the role of

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[4] Ibid., 90-91.
[5] Shurtleff, *Reynolds Cahoon and His Stalwart Sons*, 117-118, 121.

nurses. Military historian Sergeant Daniel Tyler noted that the women "were the chief comforters of the severest sufferers, the kind nurses who gave [the men], in their sickness, those dear attentions, with which pauperism is hardly poor, and which the greatest wealth often fails to buy."[6]

While the battalion did have a surgeon provided by the United States Army, Dr. George Sanderson, his treatment of the soldiers was appalling. Not only did he not care about their well-being, but he refused to let the sick receive treatment from the assistant surgeon, Dr. William McIntyre, or anyone else for that matter. At one point, Sanderson stated that if anyone of the Mormon Battalion received treatment from anyone but him that he would "send as many [Mormons] to hell as he could."[7] Given such statements, it is hardly surprising that the soldiers came to believe Dr. Sanderson "seemed determined to kill the soldiers."[8]

This belief was reinforced by the fact that his medicine of choice was always calomel, another name for mercury chloride. In caring for the sick men, "after a light examination the doctor would give each one a nice little paper containing a dose of calomel. All were treated alike." However, the men feared the calomel so much that they "would often bury it before getting back to camp."[9] Unfortunately, Sanderson eventually caught on and began forcing the men to take their calomel in his presence against their will.[10]

It is not surprising Sanderson often turned to calomel given that in the mid-1800s it was used to treat many different conditions and was seen as a cure-all medicine. As noted by another doctor of the period, Dr. George Sigmond, if utilized properly calomel has "the power of

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[6] Tyler, *A Concise History of the Mormon Battalion*, 90.
[7] William Hyde, *The Private Journal of William Hyde*, 1968, 24-25.
[8] Samuel Hollister Rogers, *Samuel Hollister Rogers Diaries*, 1841.
[9] Zadoc Knapp. *Autobiography of Zadoc Knapp Judd 1827-1909.*
[10] Samuel Miles, *Autobiography of Samuel Miles.*

arresting some of the most fearful maladies to which human nature is subject" but, given the mercury content of the medicine as well as the lack of standardized dosage at the time, this treatment had the potential to do more harm than good.[11] In the event of such adverse effects, regardless of what his true intentions may have been, some of the men may very well have believed Sanderson was trying to deliberately hurt them.

Dr. Sanderson also had a brusque personality and tended to alienate the Mormon soldiers. As a man of what amounted to modern medicine at that time, he had contempt for the Mormons' reliance on faith and prayer for healing. Despite their feelings towards him, while a very unpleasant man, his insistence on the Mormon soldiers seeing him for their health concerns may have been to ensure they received proper treatment rather than relying on faith alone. Regardless, his personality left the soldiers feeling quite the opposite.[12]

As a result of the inability of the soldiers to turn to either doctor for medical attention, they often turned to their wives to nurse them back to health. Unfortunately, they did not have the same training as the surgeons, but they saved many lives, nevertheless. Battalion member Nelson Higgins noted that if it had not been "for the tender nursing of the women" many more would have died.[13]

It also fell on the women to care for each other in their time of need as well. Even as they sometimes required medical attention the women were extremely resilient. As noted by Rachel Simmons, wife of battalion member Joseph Simmons, when "my sister Mary [Louisa] was

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[11] George G. Sigmund, *Mercury, Blue Pill, and Calomel; Their Use and Abuse* (London: H. Renshaw, 1840), 1.

[12] Tyler, *A Concise History of the Mormon Battalion,*147.

[13] Norma B. Ricketts, *Mormon Battalion: U.S. Army of the West, 1846-1848* (Logan, UT: Utah State University, 1997).

born…We never laid over a day in consequence of Mother's sickness. The Lord blessed her and fitted her to bear the journey as He did many others at that time."[14]

As this case illustrates times of injury or sickness were not the only time women required medical attention on the trail. Numerous pregnant women traveled with the battalion that needed to be cared for when they went into labor. Amazingly, however, upon giving birth some of these women hardly took time to rest and instead kept pushing forward. Eunice Billings Snow, daughter of battalion member Titus Billings, noted in her journal, "in several instances, my mother acting as midwife, delivered women in confinement, and there was no interruption to our journey, since mothers and babes continued the trip right along with us."[15]

Some, however, did not fare so well in giving birth on the trail and were incapacitated for a period thereafter. One such case was that of Eliza Lyman, widow of former church leader Joseph Smith, who gave birth on August 20, 1848. She stated in her journal that her newborn son, Dealton Lyman, was the second she had given birth to in a wagon and, as such, had spent much of the journey helpless. Nevertheless she remained hopeful that that her children would be raised in the Mormon faith without fear of persecution as we have done.[16]

While the experience of being restricted to lying in a wagon bed while traversing the western frontier post-childbirth may most assuredly not have been unique to Eliza Lyman, in this instance it was nonetheless significant. Her experience illustrates that the battalion came together to take care of each other in their time of need for the good of the individual, for the good of the mission, and the good of the future of their faith and their families.

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[14] The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *Brief Biography of Rachel Emma Woolley Simmons*, accessed July 16, 2022, https://history.churchofjesuschrist.org/chd/transcript?lang=enandg&name=transcript-for-brief-biography-of-rachel-emma-woolley-simmons-11-14.

[15] Eunice Billings Snow, "Sketches from the Life of Eunice Billings," *Woman's Exponent* 6, 40 (1912): 48.

[16] Eliza Marie Partridge Lyman, *Life and Journal of Eliza Maria Partridge Lyman*, 43.

Many members of the battalion brought their entire families with them, including their children. As such, it should be noted that the women not only nursed the men back to health when need be, but they also took on the responsibility of taking care of the children as well. This was especially pertinent as the children were attracted to the campfires and boiling water. Unfortunately, young boys also engaged in dangerous activities such as hanging on tent poles, playing on the wagon equipment, and getting too close to the draught animals.[17]

The women either assigned older children to monitor the younger ones or would herd all the children into a single group. The group would then be made to march in front of the battalion all day. While this was undoubtedly an unorthodox form of childcare it was nevertheless extremely effective. The children were also often assigned to chores to keep them out of trouble. However, this solution was usually only effective for those children who were old enough to perform such tasks. Regardless, these various methods were so successful that there were only a handful of child fatalities during the battalion's march.[18]

It should also be noted that while motherhood was greatly complicated by new responsibilities presented by life on the trail, the women were still expected to play all the traditional roles of a mother as well. This meant, among other things, teaching the children valuable life lessons to help them both in their everyday lives as well as in surviving the rest of their journey on the trail. Anne Hale recalled an instance in which her mother taught her one such lesson. She recalled stealing a needle from a woman to help her mother in their time of need, to which her mother made her return it and apologize. As a reward for her honesty the woman gave her mother the needle.[19]

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[17] Stanley Buchholz Kimball, *Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trail* (Washington, DC: United States Department of the Interior, 1991), 22.

[18] Tyler, *A Concise History of the Mormon Battalion*, 196.

[19] Anna Clark Hale, *Memoirs of Anna Clark Hale*, 16.

Teaching such a lesson was important and significant on the trail. If the battalion and those accompanying them were to succeed, they needed to look out for each other and the greater good, rather than thinking simply of themselves. This includes sharing supplies, including needles, all of which would have been a commodity on the trail. In this instance, teaching the children the importance of sharing also taught them a valuable lesson in survival.

When not caring for the children, the women also found themselves volunteering to take on tasks otherwise usually delegated to the men. When men were scarce due to sickness or injury, it was not uncommon for women to step up and take over their jobs. They would tend the livestock and they sometimes had to drive the wagons as well.

Another unnamed woman stated that when driving a wagon she had been in "fear and trembling[,] but it made no difference, I had to go at it the next day just the same."[20] In observing women taking on these tasks battalion member Hiram Clawson stated that, which the women did hard work, "the courage they had, the determination, the willpower and the faith, aided and helped them, and with the blessing of the Lord they went through all right."[21]

The women accompanying the Mormon Battalion were certainly a big asset in the first half of the march. As noted by Josephine Streeper Chase, they put forth many valuable contributions. She remarked, "woman poor woman must iron, bake, sew, tend babies…"[22] Through these and many other contributions, the women played an important part in keeping the battalion comfortable through its beginnings.

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[20] Stanley Buchholz Kimball and Violet T. Kimball, *Villages on Wheels: A Social History of the Gathering to Zion* (Salt Lake City, UT: Greg Kofford Books, 2011), 114.

[21] Harold Schindler, In *Crossing the Plains: New and Fascinating Accounts of the Hardships, Controversies and Courage Experienced and Chronicled by the 1847 Pioneers on the Mormon Trail* (Salt Lake City, UT: Salt Lake Tribune, 1997), 217.

[22] Fae Decker Dix, "The Josephine Diaries: Glimpses of the Life of Josephine Streeper Chase, 1881–94," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 46, no. 2 (January 1978): 167-183, 277.

In enduring life on the trail, there was often low morale leading to the need for someone to turn to for much needed-moral support. As such, the women were quick to step up and fill this role as well. Life on Cooke's Wagon Road was hard at best and downright brutal at worst. The men and women both faced severe dehydration, starvation, disease, and among other things, exposure to the elements. Facing such hardships day in and day out was both physically and mentally taxing. While their bodies may have ended up broken along the way, they knew they must remain strong of will and sound of mind if they were to ultimately have the best chance not only for survival but of success in their mission. After all even if they were to perish along the way, the success of the mission was still of the utmost importance as it meant a much better future for the families they would leave behind as well as for their church as a whole.

On such a mission mental health was every bit as important as physical health. As such, the men and women both looked to each other as confidants, for someone to vent to and for a rock on which to lean. Illustrating the importance of such support, John W. Hess wrote of his wife "God bless her memory; had it not been for her noble spirit to comfort me, I think many times I think I should have almost despaired because of the gloomy outlook."[23] Clearly, the Mormons understood they were much stronger together than on their own. As such, maintaining the collective mental and physical health was a priority.

While their physical health was very important, they were vigilant in looking out for the mental well-being of one another. There was a mental ailment known to plague the pioneers called prairie fever. This condition was brought about by both the terrain and the solitary environment of the great plains, much of which the battalion traversed. Pioneers making their way through this region "would reportedly experience episodes of depression, anxiety, and, in

[23]John W. Hess, "John W. Hess, with the Mormon Battalion," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 4, no. 2 (April 1931): 53.

rare cases, violence and suicide."[24] Because of their vigilance, those in the battalion remained sound of mind.

To help in maintaining their mental health, women worked hard to ensure the men had a sense of home on the trail, which was extremely important for their morale. Many in the battalion brought their own Conestoga wagons and the women would essentially turn them into homes on wheels. Mormon historian Stanley Kimball noted that the women did their best to make the wagon interiors homelike. In doing so, they did such things as laying down carpets, decorating with lamps, pictures and other belongings. To this end, Kimball noted that the women did their best to maintain their traditional role while on the trail.[25]

While the women played a very important part in the first half of the march, there was a second group of individuals that played an extremely significant role in the second half of the march. These individuals were the guides that led the battalion. They helped the battalion navigate through the deserts of what would become the American Southwest to their destination of San Diego, California.

The battalion arrived in Santa Fe, New Mexico two months after setting out from Fort Leavenworth. Lieutenant Colonel James Allen had died early in the march and Lieutenant Andrew Jackson Smith had become acting commander. However, it was at Santa Fe that Colonel Stephen W. Kearney ordered Captain Philip St. George Cooke, a graduate of West Point, to lead the battalion for the remainder of their journey. Upon receiving Kearney's order, Cooke noted that Colonel Price confirmed "the death of Colonel Allen of the Mormon Volunteers. And now,

[24] Alex D. Velez, "'The Wind Cries Mary': The Effect of Soundscape on the Prairie-Madness Phenomenon," *Historical Archaeology* 56, no. 2 (2022).

[25] Kimball, *Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trail*, 22.

at night, I have been selected to succeed him; which, of course, must turn my face to Santa Fe tomorrow."[26]

Upon assuming command, one of Cooke's first orders of business was to send the women, children, and sick, incapacitated men to Pueblo, Colorado. Here they spent the winter with another group of Mormons led by Brigham Young who was in route to Utah. In his journal Cooke noted that a small detachment of women, children, and those pronounced unfit to continue were spent were to spend the winter at a temporary encampment at Pueblo.[27]

Upon ordering this detachment to Pueblo, he quickly enlisted the help of at least eleven known guides to see the battalion through the second half of their march. These guides had various skills including interpretation, tracking, surveying, and familiarity with various Native American languages. Among these guides were Willard P. Hall, Phillip Thompson, and four individuals known simply as Appolonius, Chacon, Francisco, and Tasson. However, there is very little known of these individuals. There were also four additional known guides, at least three of whom were of pioneer stock. Among these men were Antoine Leroux, Pauline Weaver, Jean-Baptiste Charbonneau, and Stephen Clarke Foster.

Antoine Leroux, Cooke's lead guide, was born in 1801 and had a vast background as an outdoorsman and fur trapper.[28] Being multilingual, he could speak not only English but also French and Spanish. Additionally, he was fluent in numerous Native American tribal languages. He had also been a guide for numerous other expeditions in the decades before being recruited

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[26] Philip St. George Cooke, *The Conquest of New Mexico and California an Historical and Personal Narrativ.* (New York: Putnam, 1878), 78.

[27] Cooke, *Report from the Secretary of War*, 2.

[28] Frank Lockwood, "Antoine Leroux: Master Trapper and Trail Maker of the Southwest," State Library, June 1933, 12.

by Cooke.[29] His skills and vast experience made him an extremely valuable addition to the Mormon Battalion.

Powell Weaver, sometimes referred to as Pauline Weaver or Paulino Weaver, was born in 1797. At some point he had changed his name to better acclimate to the Spanish people among whom he was living at the time, accounting for the numerous variations of his name. He was born to a white father, Henry Weaver, and a Native American mother of Cherokee descent. He was a skilled explorer and trapper and had been employed as a guide on several previous expeditions as well. These include an expedition in 1829 in which he accompanied Captain John Rogers to the Rocky Mountains and an expedition to California in 1831-1832 with Ewing Young.[30]

Jean-Baptiste Charbonneau, undoubtedly the most well-known, was another extremely experienced mountain man. The son of Toussaint Charbonneau and Sacajawea, he was half Native-American (Shoshone) and was taught the way of the land from a very early age. In fact, as an infant, Charbonneau had accompanied his mother and father on the Corps of Discovery with Meriwether Lewis and William Clark roughly forty years before being recruited by the Mormon Battalion.

Much like Leroux, Charbonneau was an experienced trapper and was multilingual. As a young man he had spent some time in Europe where he learned numerous different languages. Also, as he was raised among the Shoshone and was half Shoshone himself, he picked up numerous tribal languages as well.[31]

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[29] "Antoine Leroux to the Mormon Battalion - Usarmyofthewest.org." Accessed July 1, 2022. https://usarmyofthewest.org/Articles/Vignette%20Story%201%20-%20Leroux.pdf.

[30] John R. Murdock, "Arizona Characters In Silhouette - Pauline Weaver, Distinctive Fur Trapper, Scout and Guide," *Arizona Republic*, April 26, 1933, 7.

[31] "Jean Baptiste Charbonneau (1805-1866)," The Oregon Encyclopedia, accessed July 28, 2022, https://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/charbonneau_jean_baptiste/#.YuMpvD3MJPY.

Lastly, was Stephen Clarke Foster. Born in 1820, he was not yet 30 when he joined the Mormon Battalion. While little is known about his early life, what is known is that he was an alumnus of Yale University. Undoubtedly extremely intelligent, Cooke chose him to serve as an interpreter.

As previously noted, of the remaining seven guides little remains but a name. As such, their contributions to the success of the battalion are unknown. However, given that Cooke saw fit to employ them, they no doubt had an important role to play, in whatever capacity that may have been.

With his guides in place, General Kearney had ordered Cooke to follow a route south of the Gila River while on the route to California. This route followed Camino Real, which connected Santa Fe with Chihuahua. However, Weaver, Leroux, and Charbonneau were unfamiliar with this path and advised against it. Instead, they advised Cooke to abandon the wagons and follow the same course taken by Kearney down the Gila River itself. Cooke opted to disregard their advice and push forward as "he has started out to make a wagon road across the great American desert, and he was determined not to abandon the enterprise."[32] However, his guides' lack of familiarity with this area quickly became a point of frustration. He stated their knowledge of it was "very obscure, if not contradictory. They can convey no ideas of distance."[33]

As they departed on this new route steeped in uncertainty, the primary role of these guides would be to act as surveyors. It was essential to find trails that were not only passable on foot but also by wagon. As the battalion had at least thirty wagons in tow, this was of great

[32] Tyler, *A Concise History of the Mormon Battalion*, 189.

[33] Philip Saint George Cooke, *Exploring Southwestern Trails: 1846-1854* (Glendale, CA: Arthur H. Clarke, 1938), 109.

concern. As a result, much of the work building Cooke's Wagon Road involved clearing the route of fallen trees, boulders, and other debris.

Broken wagon tongues, axels, and wheels were a common sight on the trail necessitating many repairs. Not only were such repairs not always cheap, but they caused frequent delays. The fact that the Mormons did not always have the luxury of new wagons did not help matters either. It was only shortly after the battalion began its march that the first known breakdown occurred. Such breakdowns also occurred along the Mormon migration from Nauvoo, Illinois to the Utah Territory. In a letter dated September 10, 1848 and addressed to Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball, who was a councilor to Young, Willard Richards stated that he had repaired his wagon many times and there were many others in poor condition and unsafe without lightening their load.[34]

Such rough terrain made building a more traversable route essential. To minimize such incidents, Cooke would often send Charbonneau, Leroux, and Weaver ahead to assess the trail and, if necessary, to locate alternate routes as well. In doing so, they had to keep in mind that they were not only building a passable trail for themselves, but also for the many hundreds of thousands of Mormon migrants they knew would follow them westward in search of religious freedom in the decades to come.

In surveying the best routes, Cooke often sent the scouts many miles ahead to search for possible dangers and obstructions, to find the best points at which to cross rivers, and so on. As the guides were often as much as thirty or forty miles ahead of the rest of the battalion, they had to be creative in how they relayed communications. Rather than traveling back to inform Cooke

[34] Franklin Dewey Richards, *Narrative of Franklin Dewey Richards*, 28.

of their findings and wasting precious time, they would communicate with him in other ways such as leaving notes and using smoke signals.

Navigating the trail often came through trial and error as well. In one such instance, the battalion came to the "edge of a massive precipice separating the level Animas tableland from the rough and confused mass of rocks and arroyos of the Guadalupe Mountains."[35] Two days were spent building a proper road and maneuvering the wagons down the steep incline.

So steep was the incline that Cooke noted in his journal that he had never seen wagons make it through such an obstacle.[36] Unfortunately it was not until after the fact that Cooke's scouts discovered the more easily traversed Guadalupe Pass only a mile further south. After this incident Cooke made detailed notes to help future pioneers more easily find the pass and avoid potential disaster.[37]

Navigating the land on Cooke's Wagon Road was only half the battle. Another major hardship that plagued the battalion was the constant lack of water. As the soldiers were traversing the extremely inhospitable desert, simply surviving from day to day became a challenge. Water was extremely scarce, often leading to severe dehydration and sickness.

On August 4, 1846, in an article reprinted from the July 27 edition of the Newspaper "Age," the *St. Louis Republican* stated that, with a lack of food, shoes and clothing, the whole of the battalion was in poor condition. It also noted that "It can hardly fail that many of these

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[35]John F. Yurtinus, *A Ram in the Thicket: The Mormon Battalion in the Mexican War* (Provo, Brigham Young University Press: 1975), 378.

[36] Cooke, *Exploring Southwestern Trails,* 124.

[37] Philip St. George Cooke, *Report of Lieut. J.W. Abert, of His Examination of New Mexico in the Years 1846-'47. Report of Lieut. Col. P. St. George Cooke of His March from Santa Fé, New Mexico, to San Diego, Upper California. Journal of Captain A.R. Johnston, First Dragoons.* (Washington, DC: Wendell and Van Benthuysen, printers, 1848).

persons, especially the aged and sick, women and children, must perish during the next fall and winter."[38]

These extremely harsh conditions took their toll not only on the soldiers but on the draught animals as well. In a letter to his son Curtis Bolton written on October 9, 1848, Curtis Edwin Bolton stated many of the cattle had died of dehydration. He also noted that, when they did find water if was sometimes contaminated with salerates, which were deadly if ingested.[39]

As man and beast alike were suffering the severe ill effects of dehydration, Cooke continuously sent Leroux, Charbonneau, and Weaver ahead to locate water. Soldier James Abert noted that "Leroux, with five, six or seven others, would get a day in advance, exploring for water, in the best practicable direction; finding a spring or a puddle, (sometimes a hole in nearly inaccessible rocks) he would send a man back" to inform the others.[40] In many cases, however, as the only available water was groundwater, Cooke subsequently ordered the digging of wells. At other times, the scouts were able to locate naturally occurring cisterns.[41]

Unfortunately for the soldiers, when water was found they often benefited little from it. Cooke would ensure that all the animals received their fill first before letting the men drink the often little that was left over. On one occasion it was noted that he "let his white mule and other staff animals drink first before the soldiers. This drained the pool, so the men had to lay on the

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[38] "The Mormons," *Age*, October 9, 1846, 4.

[39] Cleo Louise Harman Evans, *Curtis Edwin Bolton, Pioneer Missionary: History, Descendants and Ancestors* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968), 153.

[40] J. W. Abert, *Communicating in Answer to a Resolution of the Senate, a Report and Map of the Examination of New Mexico, Made by Lieutenant J.W. Abert of the Topographical Corps* (Washington, D.C., 1848), 553.

[41] Carmen Smith. "The Lost Well of the Mormon Battalion Rediscovered." *Utah Historical Quarterly* 57, no. 3 (1989): 278.

ground lapping the water like dogs as it seeped out from the rocks. Others captured the water with their spoons or sucked it through quills."[42] However, despite their misgivings, the Mormon troops learned quickly not to question Cooke because if they did, they were sure to find themselves threatened at bayonet point.[43]

The lack of water left the men in dire straits, to say the least. To make matters worse, when there was water enough for the men to drink, often it was not even fit for animal consumption. However, they had become so desperate that they would consume any water, tainted or not, so long as it was wet. They even went so far as to drink water they found that "was thick with Buffalo urine, bugs, and rainwater…" They "layed down, and sucked and strained water through their teeth to keep from swallowing bugs. Then they filled their canteens."[44]

Some individuals who would ride ahead of the main body of troops in search of water and keep what they found for themselves. One such individual was Dr. George Sanderson, whom the Mormon troops thought was evil and was trying to kill them. His journal appears to validate that, whether he wanted the Mormons to die, he thought very little of them. On November 23, 1846 he wrote that it was humorous watching the men and their animals, as dehydrated as they were, failing to find water.[45]

Despite these terrible conditions, the guides never gave up and continued to put forth their best efforts for the good of the expedition. There were many times when the guides had

[42] Ricketts, *The Mormon Battalion*, passim.
[43] *Abraham Day III Journal*, 24.
[44] Levi W. Hancock, *Levi W. Hancock Journal*, n.d.
[45] *Dr. George B. Sanderson Journal*, November 23, 1846, 30-31.

gone miles ahead in search of water.[46] Sometimes they came up empty-handed but other times, however, they were extremely successful.[47]

One such successful attempt was noted by battalion member David Pettigrew in a journal entry dated November 13, 1846. Of a well discovered by the guides, he wrote that it appeared to be between 20 and 30 feet in depth and that "Colonel sat for two hours until all the mules and other animals were watered, cursing the men almost all of the time.[48]

While the guides knew the way of the land well, they were quite literally blazing a new trail and were not familiar with the path of which they traveled. Their knowledge of native languages allowed them to converse with those who were familiar with the area. As a result, the Native Americans sometimes pointed them towards water.[49]

The shortage of water was severe, to say the least. To make matters worse, for all their hard work in trying to help these men, the guides had the offices, those that thought only of themselves, and nature itself working against them. This made their expertise even more important in the seemingly never-ending quest to locate water.

On the trail, finding water was only half the battle, so to speak. The soldiers were also constantly plagued by a lack of food, often resorting to eating quite literally anything they could get their hands on. As a result, starvation was not only a real concern but also not at all uncommon.

When the battalion set out from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas they had a low level of provisions. In his diary, Chapman Duncan documented a representative list of supplies carried by

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[46] Tyler, *A Concise History of the Mormon Battalion*, 203.
[47] Ibid., 224.
[48] *David Pettigrew Journal*, November 13, 1846.
[49] Tyler, *A Concise History of the Mormon Battalion*, 224.

everyone in his company. The list, which is representative rather than all-inclusive, included such things as various forms of livestock, wagons, oats, corn, wheat, and tools.[50] [51]
With such few supplies in tow, they were less than stocked for their journey. For some, running out of provisions was of great concern.

The greatest test would be the winter of 1846 to 1847. While still under the command of Colonel James Allen, the battalion had camped for the winter along the Platte River where they had attempted to grow their food. However, the crops failed, making them completely reliant on the government for help.[52]

The government did finally provide rations, but soon another problem arose. These rations did not last as long as they should, as on numerous occasions individuals were caught eating more than their share as well as stealing rations to feed their private animals. In frustration, Cooke noted "one company that should have, without wastage, twenty-six days', has eight! What can a commander do with a people that act and manage thus? If they starve they will be useless or steal and rob."[53]

Another big blow to their provisions occurred in January 1847. As the mules were suffering from exhaustion, Cooke thought it best to transport the supplies downriver using rafts. Unfortunately, the rafts got stuck. As a result, they had to abandon hundreds of pounds of both food and camping equipment.

Given the severe shortage of food, Cooke again turned to his guides to locate sustenance. They spent a great deal of time locating food, including wild game. However, hunting was not

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[50] Duncan Chapman, *Reminiscences 1852-1874*, 11-11A, 23-25.
[51] Jeff Davis Smedley, "The 1848 Mormon Westward Migration" (master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 2017), 69-70.
[52] "Untitled," *Manufacturers and Farmers Journal and Providence and Pawtucket Advertiser* (Providence, Rhode Island), October 1, 1846.
[53] Cooke, *Exploring Southwestern Trails*, 174.

always an option. The battalion "relied on their rifles to bring them food, but rarely left their road in search of game. They made long daily marches and moved with as much rapidity as possible."[54]

While the battalion was not always in the position to stop and hunt, the guides did sometimes bring back game. Charbonneau himself brought back antelope and deer to the soldiers. On one occasion, while he was pursuing four grizzly bears, three of which were cubs, he was able to kill the adult, "which was rolled down (the hill) and butchered before the wagons had passed."[55]

The guides also used their skills as outdoorsmen to lead the battalion to settlements where the soldiers could acquire more supplies. One such settlement was that of Tucson, Arizona. However, Tucson was garrisoned by two hundred Mexican soldiers. When the guides made it to Tucson and discovered the garrison, Leroux reported his findings. Cooke then sent a letter ahead to Tucson stating that they came in peace and only wished to pass through.[56]

One of the guides, Stephen Forster, had gone ahead of the battalion and had been arrested by the Mexican forces in Tucson. Colonel Cooke demanded Foster's release, which was granted. He then sent a message to Tucson demanding the surrender of the city, which was promptly refused. However, as the battalion moved closer to the town the Mexican forces promptly retreated.[57]

Upon arriving in Tucson, it was discovered that the garrison had abandoned the town. However, they left behind roughly 2,000 bushels of wheat. The battalion took all they could

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[54] Tyler, *A Concise History of the Mormon Battalion*, 102.
[55] Cooke, *Exploring Southwestern Trails*, 116.
[56] Tyler, *A Concise History of the Mormon Battalion*, 225-226.
[57] James S. Brown, *Life of a Pioneer: Being the Autobiography of James S. Brown* (Salt Lake City: Geo. Q. Cannon, 1900), 60.

carry to feed their animals. Out of desperation, however, some of the soldiers resorted to eating it themselves after boiling it.[58]

In Tucson, the remaining inhabitants showed them great kindness and gratitude, having been freed from the Mexican garrison. Carmen Lucero recalled "the coming of the Americans was a Godsend to Tucson…The day the troops took possession there was lots of excitement. They raised the flag on the wall and the people welcomed them with a fiesta and they were all on good terms."[59]

In showing their thanks, they brought the soldiers much needed- water. From the townspeople, the soldiers also purchased flour, fruit, corn, quinces, and beans, among other things. However, Cooke had given orders against purchasing such items leading the soldiers to hide these goods in their backpacks and wagons. Desperate times called for desperate measures.

Despite the hardships that they had to endure daily it was a consolation to the battalion that they did not have to endure them alone. The battalion often traded for food with various Native American tribes,[60] no doubt with the help of the guides who were fluent in many native tongues. However, often the Native Americans were not faring much better. There were occasions in which the men tried to buy food from them "but failed to get any, as the Indians had none to spare."[61] In such cases, however, the Native Americans were sometimes able to at least point them in the direction of potential food sources.

While some tribes were going hungry themselves, others had an ample food supply and were more than willing to help. As Robert Bliss noted, after leaving Tucson the battalion "traveled 8 or 9 miles down the River & came to the village where the Indians met us by the

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[58] Tyler, *A Concise History of the Mormon Battalion*, 227.
[59] Carmen R. Lucero, *Reminiscences of Mrs. Carmen R. Lucero*, n.d.
[60] *Abraham Day III Journal*, 24.
[61] Tyler, *A Concise History of the Mormon Battalion*, 324.

hundreds to see our wagons & camped here the Indians filled a ditch with water from the River…"[62]

These Native Americans, the Pima tribe, also traded with the battalion for food and even tended to those soldiers that had fallen further back on the trail that were too weak to continue. The Pima provided "corn, wheat, flour, pumpkins and other refreshing food to the famished men." As a sign of good faith as well as a thank you for their generosity, Colonel Cooke gave several sheep to Antonio Azula, the Pima Chief.[63]

Several days later, the battalion happened upon another Native American village, that of the Maricopa. They again traded with them for much-needed food. However, perhaps more valuable was the farming skills the battalion learned from the Maricopa. The tribe was very adept at farming and irrigation in the desert environment. As such, these skills proved invaluable as the battalion established settlements across the Southwest.

The members of the battalion knew relations with Native Americans would be essential in acquiring much-needed food along the trail. As such, when a given tribe showed them kindness, they were quick to return the favor. In one such encounter, Robert Campbell documented a conversation in his journal that took place on August 7, 1848, between Willard Richards and Chief Whirlwind of the Ogallalah Tribe. In this conversation, Richards thanked Chief Whirlwind for the kindness his tribe had shown them and relayed to him the plight of the Mormon people. At the conclusion of their interaction, Richards noted that the tribe gave them

[62] Robert S. Bliss, "The Journal of Robert S. Bliss, with the Mormon Battalion," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 4, no. 3 (July 1931): 67–96, 110-128, 81.

[63] Jill B. Adair, "Native Americans Remembered for Help to Mormon Battalion," December 20, 1997, https://www.thechurchnews.com/archives/1997-12-20/native-americans-remembered-for-help-to-mormon-battalion-128747.

the gift of "30 lbs. Beans – Pail of corn[,] half loaf & 4 Biscuits, 4 lbs Sugar[,] 3 of coffee & Dr handed them 1 plug tobacco[.]"[64]

The battalion enjoyed very good relations with the Native Americans, for the most part. This was due to their hospitable treatment of and respect for one another as well as a shared understanding of the many hardships that each other had endured. Both had been subjected time and time again to persecution over their beliefs and ways of life. In describing this understanding, Hiram Clawson stated that the interpreters had told the Native Americans about the religious persecution they had endured, to which they showed sympathy.[65]

The battalion presented no threat to the Native Americans which allowed them to maintain peaceful relations. This was demonstrated by the Mormons in that they were extremely mindful of the fact that they were on Native American land, did not build on it, and consumed only what was needed. In return, the Indians sometime presented them with gifts.[66]

In a sign of solidarity, both the battalion and the Native Americans alike, regardless of tribe, were usually more than happy to help each other in their time of need if possible. There were numerous accounts of such relations. Caroline Crosby noted in her journal that the Native Americans came to their camp on numerous occasions asking them for food. She notes that the battalion was always willing to oblige and do its best to help those in need.[67]

The fact that the battalion was always willing to help the Native Americans may very well have been beneficial to both parties. It is possible various neighboring tribes may have communicated with each other, thus spreading the word of goodwill of those in the battalion. As such all tribes receiving word of this would have known the battalion was friendly and meant no

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[64] Robert Campbell, *Journal*, August 7, 1848.
[65] Hiram Clawson, *Reminiscence*, 1907.
[66] Kimball, *Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trail*, 24.
[67] Caroline Crosby, *Journal*, 46.

ill will, thus leading them to be more willing to trade with them. This may very well have ensured the battalion a safe passage through Native American land, particularly while traveling along the Mexican border in what would become Southern New Mexico and Arizona. Native American raids were very common in this region, particularly from the Apache and Camanche tribes.

However, while most of the battalion's encounters with Native Americans were peaceful, there were isolated incidents where this was not the case. In one such instance, a group of Omaha Indians stole some cows from the battalion. In trying to retrieve the cows several soldiers gave chase, only to be fired upon. The soldiers had mistakenly anticipated that the Omaha were not hostile. In the skirmish, three soldiers were wounded and one, Jacob Weatherby was killed after being shot in the hip and bowels.[68]

Jacob Norton strongly lamented the actions of those soldiers involved, stating "This was a foolish affair on the part of our men. Elders of Israel are not called to make war upon the Lamanites [a term from the Book of Mormon used to describe Native Americans]."[69] In taking a position of necessity in the matter, Franklin Richards stated sometimes it was necessary to kill and Indian. Simultaneously, however, he was quick to remind those involved to "Do unto others as you would others should do unto you."[70]

This incident occurred at the beginning of the battalion's trek westward, leaving them weary of the Native Americans they were sure to encounter on the remainder of their 2,100-mile journey. However, while they never let their guard down, to their relief such incidents were

[68] Jacob Norton, *Reminiscence and journal*, June 6, 1848.
[69] Ibid.
[70] *Narrative of Franklin Dewey Richards*, 37-38.

exceedingly rare. As previously noted, the battalion enjoyed largely peaceful relations with the Native Americans.

Even so, such relations would not have been possible had it not been for the ability to transcend the language barrier with the many tribes they encountered. Leroux, Charbonneau, and Weaver were all well-versed in various native tongues and were able to serve as translators. These guides were able to communicate with the Native Americans to ensure safe passage for the battalion as well as to negotiate trades for much-needed food as well.

Before embarking on their journey, knowing what lay ahead, the members of the battalion turned to their faith to see them through. As devout members of the Mormon church, faith was one of the main driving factors of their success. Those who enlisted were apprehensive about leaving their families behind, uncertain if they would ever return. As such, they relied on their very strong faith and church council to guide them on their journey. As Zadoc Judd stated that, while it was hard to imagine leaving their wives and children alone, "the word came from the right source and seemed to bring the spirit of conviction of its truth with it."[71]

The members of the battalion knew if they were successful their efforts would pay off handsomely in the way of a new home for them and their families free of religious persecution. They would be free to worship in any way they saw fit. However, at the same time, they were acutely aware of the ramifications should they fail. They were relying more heavily on their faith than ever before and leaving their futures entirely in the hands of God. As such, it was understandable and natural that there was some degree of apprehension. As James S. Brown noted, if not for the church council, it was unlikely any of the battalion members would have

[71] Zadoc Knapp Judd, *Autobiography of Zadoc Knapp Judd 1827-1909* (Unpublished manuscript), typescript.

enlisted. He continued, "I would have felt very reluctant under the circumstances had it not been for the counsel of my brethren whom God authorized to dictate the affairs of His kingdom."[72]

Like all Mormons of the time, the men of the battalion looked to Brigham Young as a living prophet, someone they believed had a direct line to God, so to speak. This made it extremely reassuring to all recruits when he addressed them, stating that they would not die in battle so long as they "perform their duties faithfully without murmuring and go in the name of the Lord, be humble and pray every morning and evening."[73] He continued that, should they succeed, the expedition would "result in great good, and [their] names be handed down in honorable remembrance to all generations."[74]

The men trusted Young deeply and as such were determined to follow his instruction faithfully. In doing so, not only did they pray every morning and every night, but they always recognized the sabbath day as well. In the end, Young's prophecy proved to be true as the battalion never engaged in battle. Except for Jacob Weatherby who was shot while in pursuit of a single Native American, rather than in battle, the only deaths resulted from sickness and exposure. However, such deaths were few. Upon reaching California Robert Bliss noted in his journal "we have endured one of the greatest journeys ever made by a man at least in America & it is by faith and prayers of the Saints that we have done it. All of our Company that left Fort Leavenworth have arrived here safe."[75]

Such a prophecy from a man believed to be a prophet of God, must surely have persuaded many in their decision to join the battalion. Not only that, but faith in Young and in the Lord saw these men through the many hardships they suffered on the trail. While their faith

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[72] Tyler, *A Concise History of the Mormon Battalion*, 357.
[73] Watson, *Manuscript History of Brigham Young*, 264.
[74] Hyde, *The Private Journal of William Hyde*, 19.
[75] Bliss, *The Journal of Robert S. Bliss, with the Mormon Battalion*, 85-86.

was tested to its very limit, it was no doubt that much stronger when they reached California and Young's prophecy had come true.

The brave men of the battalion and the women and children that accompanied them put their lives on the line out of sheer faith, and it was that faith that provided the strength and determination they desperately needed to reach their destination. With the absence of such faith, it would have been more difficult for them to succeed.

The unwavering faith of the battalion was also extremely important when it came to matters of leadership. Despite the battalion being part of the United States Army, it was essentially built on the foundation of the Mormon Church. As such, Brigham Young exercised a great deal of control. However, there was a great deal of tension between federal officers and Mormon soldiers in the battalion.[76]

The federal officers included most notably Lieutenant Colonel James Allen, Lieutenant Andrew Jackson Smith, and Lieutenant Colonel Phillip St. George Cooke. Allen was a graduate of West Point while Smith and Cooke both graduated from the United States Military Academy. While there were some Mormon officers, such as Captain Jefferson Hunt, none of them possessed formal military training.

Young's involvement only created further animosity among the ranks as his authority was repeatedly challenged. The federal officers often thought less of the Mormon troops, sometimes treating them unfairly. In doing so, Smith was known to be rather harsh and to lead them on "foolish and unnecessary forced marches" and punishing privates "for the merest trifles, [while] officers could go where and do what they pleased" without fear of being reprimanded.[77]

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[76] Tyler, *A Concise History of the Mormon Battalion*, 174.
[77] Ibid., 177.

As unfairly as they were treated under Smith, when he was relieved of command by Lieutenant Colonel Philip St. George Cooke things changed. Whether or not they changed for the better, however, is uncertain. Some, such as Daniel Tyler, believed conditions had certainly improved. He stated, "we found the judgment of Colonel Cooke in traveling much better than that of Smith, in fact, it was first-class."[78] Others, however, were much less complimentary of Cooke's leadership and thought very lowly of him. Levi Hancock concluded "He is a miserable creature and often curses and damns the soldiers. He is as mean as I ever saw a man. Smith who led us is a gentleman to him - he is a small, low lived cuss."[79]

While Young was not physically present in the battalion, he monitored their progress from afar by maintaining correspondence. As such, he could see relations between the Mormon soldiers and the federal officers were becoming strained, to say the least. In trying to maintain peace within the battalion, Young instructed the men to "manage their affairs by the power and influence of the Priesthood." He stated that "a private soldier is as honorable as an officer, if he behaved as well."[80]

The men took Young's words to heart and remained loyal and faithful to the mission despite any objections they may have had to their officers. It was no doubt very difficult for some not to speak their mind and act out. However, their restraint did not go unnoticed. Tyler noted "I am satisfied that any other set of men but Latter-Day Saints would have mutinied rather than submit to the oppression and abuse this heaped upon them."[81] It should be noted, however, that regardless of how Cooke may or may not have treated the battalion, he would go on to praise

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[78] Ibid., 185.

[79] Elijah Elmer, *Journal of Elijah Elmer 1st Sargeant, Company "C" Mormon Battalion 1846-47* (San Diego, CA: San Diego Historical Society, 1847).

[80] *Journal History*. Salt Lake City, UT: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1846.

[81] Tyler, *A Concise History of the Mormon Battalion*, 174.

them and hold them in the highest regard for their efforts upon their arrival at San Diego, California.

After enduring a grueling march of nearly 2,100 miles, the city was a site to behold. Upon seeing the Pacific Ocean, Cooke stated that they succeeded in building a "great national highway across the American desert" and that, upon completing their service in California, the men would rejoin their families and live as martyrs.[82]

For the next five months, the battalion would perform duties in San Diego and Los Angeles. Upon completing their enlistment, as Corporal Thomas Dunn noted that, upon their discharge from the service, the officers encouraged the members of the battalion to re-enlist.[83] Despite their efforts, they met with only limited success. While some would re-enlist others marched on to their destination of Salt Lake City.

The remainder of the battalion marched to what is now Sacramento where they played an important role in the discovery of gold, thus ushering in the gold rush of 1849. They would eventually march to Salt Lake City as well, but not before mining for a period to raise money for the church at the insistence of Brigham Young.

After the battalion completed their march and subsequent duty in in the cities of San Diego and Los Angeles, many wrote about their exploits. In fact, a poem entitled "The Mormon Battalion and First Wagon Road over the Great American Desert" was written by Eliza R. Snow. This is especially significant given that Snow was the widow of Joseph Smith.[84]

In the first half of the march, the women were willing to fill any number of roles whenever needed, such as that of nurse, seamstress, driving wagons, filling in for the sick, and

[82] Ibid., 253.
[83] Thomas Dunn, *Diary of Thomas Dunn*, 27.
[84] Tyler, *A Concise History of the Mormon Battalion*, 107-109.

childcare. This contributed greatly to the comforts of the men in the battalion. Also important were the many survival skills employed by the knowledgeable guides in the second half of the march. These skills included finding food, water, and shelter, locating the most navigable routes, and being able to communicate with many of the Native American tribes. Without the invaluable contributions of the women the battalion would not have been as comfortable in the first half of the march and, without the guides the battalion would not have been as successful on the second half of the march.

Chapter Four: Mobilizing the West

The Mormon Battalion played a key role in the growth of the American West in several ways. This included the construction of various trails, which allowed for increased emigration as well as for the establishment of many settlements. The United States Department of the Interior notes that the Mormon Battalion is "one of the dramatic events in the history of American westward expansion" and "was unique in comparison to other migrations because of its purpose, organization and cultural impact. Its purpose was to maintain the cohesiveness of the Mormon community, and thus became a permanent movement of a whole people."[1]

They also played an important role in the discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill, resulting in the gold rush of 1849. These events led to a massive increase in both emigration from the East Coast and immigration from overseas, innovations in transportation, and the establishment of many new industries. This caused the West to grow and expand very quickly. As such, the Mormon Battalion had a massive impact on the western United States, changing it forever.

At the time that the Mormon battalion set out on their 2,100-mile march, there were few other routes westward, certainly not ones that were relatively easy to traverse. Anyone moving westward at this point was doing so with all their personal belongings in tow, all packed into covered wagons or, for those less fortunate, into handcarts which they had to pull themselves, but these trails were often much too difficult for these wagons and handcarts to navigate.

Looking ahead to increased Mormon migrations, and with such hardships in mind, the battalion had a clear mission when they set out westward. In this the Mormons and the federal government shared the same goal. While they were under orders from the federal government to

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[1] *Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trail* (Washington, D.C.: United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1981), 10.

defend the United States in the Mexican-American War, they were also under orders from Cooke to construct a safer, more navigable route for others who would come after.[2] In building this new trail the battalion surveyed and graded the land, cleared boulders, and made note of the best locations to camp and to find food, water and wood. This would become the guide for the hundreds of thousands of emigrants that followed in their footsteps.[3]

Cooke's Wagon Road allowed much safer travel to the Utah Territory, which became the new seat of the Mormon Church. Utah was chosen as the new location for the church as the Mormons wanted a location that was extremely isolated from the rest of the nation, where they could practice their faith without living in fear. Utah was also chosen because the only real residents, except for the occasional mountain man, were the Native Americans.

The Mormons referred to this location as the new Zion, a term from the Book of Mormon. The Book of Mormon states that "out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."[4] This was to be "God's dwelling-place, where he rests in his love."[5] However, with this came the requirement that all Mormons were to relocate there to prepare for the Second Coming of Christ.[6] With that in mind, construction of Cooke's Wagon Road was essential for their faith to continue to thrive.

While the battalion constructed Cooke's Wagon Road for those converts that they knew would surely follow, they may not have known that they would draw to their new Zion Mormon immigrants from Canada or from overseas from such nations as Norway, Denmark, Sweden, and

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[2] Tyler, *A Concise History of the Mormon Battalion*, 189.
[3] *Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trail*, 10.
[4] *The Saints' Herald Reader: A Selection of Editorials, Articles, and Stories from the Saints' Herald, the Official Church Organ of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints* (Cincinnati, OH: Herald House, 1862), 75.
[5] *The Spiritual Magazine, and Zion's Casket* (London: E. Palmer and Son, 1846), 91.
[6] *The Seer*, vol. 1 (Liverpool: Franklin Richards, 1865), 265.

Great Britain. Shortly after the completion of Cooke's Wagon Road in 1847, there was a mass exodus to the new Zion in Salt Lake City. Over the following two decades roughly eighty thousand Latter-day Saints made their way to Utah.[7]

There were organized Mormon migrations to Salt Lake City every year following the completion of the trail in 1847. In 1869, though still in use by many, the trail began to see a decrease in those immigrating by foot due. This was largely due to the completion of the transcontinental railroad, which members of the Mormon battalion helped to build.

While the Mormon exodus brought many new settlers westward to Zion, many who were not of the Mormon faith immigrated elsewhere in the West. While not attempting to escape persecution, as was the case with the Mormons, these immigrants still had their reasons for going west. For example, many of these immigrants were seeking a new life out west as a result of the Homestead Act of 1862, which guaranteed 160 acres of land to anyone who farmed it.[8]

Regardless of where these immigrants came from or why they chose to move west, these some of these mass migrations would not have been possible had it not been for the building of Cooke's Wagon Road. In building the trail the battalion cleared the path of all fallen trees, boulders, and so on, built new paths, and discovered new, more navigable routes allowing wagons to pass more easily. They also extensively documented the trail itself and the easiest mountain passes and published them in a guide for all those looking to move westward. That is not to say, however, that the trek for those that followed would be without its hardships, but the trail itself was a major innovation that alleviated at least some of the major challenges of westward immigration.

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[7] *The Latter-Day Saints Millennial Star*, vol. 19 (Liverpool: S. W. Richards, 1857), 652.

[8] "Homestead Act (1862)," National Archives and Records Administration (National Archives and Records Administration), accessed June 28, 2022, https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/homestead-act#:~:text=The%20Homestead%20Act%2C%20enacted%20during,plot%20by%20cultivating%20the%20land.

The building of Cooke's Wagon Road was a large undertaking. However, as impressive as this accomplishment was, it was not perfect. While Cooke's Wagon Road did provide a much better alternative for those traveling westward, it was by no means without its dangers. Much like the battalion itself, those that followed still faced many challenges. While they did know of the best trails and the best locations to find food and water, as documented by the battalion and their guides, those that followed still suffered from such things as dehydration, disease, starvation, and exposure, to name but a few.

In noting the difficulties of emigrating by handcart, John Chislett explained that it was very hard on the old and the sick and that, though infrequent at first, deaths quickly became commonplace. He stated, "I have seen some pull their carts in the morning, give out during the day, and die before next morning." As a result of such overwhelming loss, he noted that morale was very low.[9]

While traveling west was much more feasible using Cooke's Wagon Road, doing so was still extremely risky as many dangers remained. Regardless, some advances made it much easier and exponentially faster than ever before. One such innovation was that of the stagecoach. As noted by the United States Department of the Interior, "the march of the Mormon Battalion played a significant part in opening up a vast area which subsequently became part of the United States and across which the Butterfield Overland Mail…[was] later routed."[10]

In the mid-1800s, the country was experiencing great growth and, as a result, the federal government wanted to stimulate westward migration. To aid in this endeavor, Congress decided

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[9] T. B. H. Stenhouse, *The Rocky Mountain Saints a Full and Complete History of the Mormons, from the First Vision of Joseph Smith to the Last Courtship of Brigham Young and the Development of the Great Mineral Wealth of the Territory of Utah* (D. Appleton and Company: Ward, Lock, and Tyler, 1873), 320-321.

[10] *Mormon Battalion Trail Study: Santa Fe to San Diego* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Interior, 1975), 16.

to look at starting an overland stagecoach company to carry both mail and passengers westward in an expedited timeframe. In doing so they decided to solicit bids on a contract to start such a company. An advertisement for bids was posted on April 20, 1857, to which there were nine submitted.[11]

Congress awarded the contract to John Butterfield of Utica, New York for providing semi-weekly service at the sum of $600,000 a year. The contract required "the service to be performed with good four-horse coaches or spring wagons, suitable for the conveyance of passengers as well as the safety and security of the mails."[12]

A New York native, he was employed for a time with Parker's stages in Utica after which he started a small livery. His business relationship with Parker's stages continued until they went out of business. He then opened his own stagecoach company, eventually becoming one of the leading lines in the state until the stage lines fell to the railroads.[13]

He began building stage lines in Utica before branching out. With the invention of the telegraph, he also helped establish the New York, Albany, and Buffalo Telegraph Company. Later, he eventually became interested in shipping as well. It was through shipping that he helped build some of the most profitable and well-known companies in American history, which continue to operate well into the 21st century.

As Butterfield built more stage routes it was not long before his competitors began to take advantage of them as well. Among these competitors were Wells & Co. and Livingston, Fargo & Co. founded by Henry Wells and William Fargo, respectfully. Butterfield successfully

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[11] *Report of the Postmaster General: Communicating, in Compliance with a Resolution of the Senate, a Copy of the Contract with J. Butterfield and His Associates for Carrying the Mail from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1859), 4-5

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid., 264.

merged with these two competitors to create American Express. The company was broken down into two divisions, Wells, Butterfield & Co. and Livingston, Fargo & Co. Each division serviced a different region.[14]

When Congress opened bids for an overland stagecoach company, Butterfield had nearly forty years of experience working in the stage business in one form or another. As such, his experience made him an excellent candidate for the contract. The fierce contender he was, it came as no surprise that Congress chose him.[15] [16]

Upon being granted the contract, Butterfield founded the Overland Mail Company, also known as Butterfield Overland Mail. The route, including portions of the trail taken by the Mormon Battalion through the Southwest, was quickly surveyed in preparation for further improving the trail and establishing the needed stage stations along the route. Once all preparations were made and the company got off the ground, Butterfield's stagecoaches ran bi-weekly both East and West.

The Overland Stage Company ran until 1861 when, as a result of the impending Civil War, it had to cease operations. As part of the route ran through Texas, which had allied with the South, Confederate attacks were a very real concern. However, the Butterfield Trail itself, including the large portion which followed Cooke's Wagon Road, remained in use by emigrants until 1880.[17]

When all preparations were in place and the Overland Mail Company began operations, President James Buchanan sent John Butterfield a letter personally congratulating him. The

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[14] "American Express Company," *Syracuse Daily Standard*, April 5, 1850, 1.

[15] Samuel W. Durant, *History of Oneida County, New York: With Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of Some of Its Prominent Men and Pioneers* (Morgantown, PA: Higginson Book Company, 1878), 264.

[16] "American Express Company," *Syracuse Daily Standard*, April 5, 1850, 1.

[17] Henry Inman and William F. Cody, *The Great Salt Lake Trail* (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1898), 164.

letter states in part, “I cordially congratulate you upon the result. It is a glorious triumph for civilization and the Union.[18]

In 1861, Wells, Fargo, and Company, who owned large shares of the Overland Mail Company, took control from Butterfield as he had accumulated large debts. Shortly thereafter, as a result of the Civil War, the operation of the Overland Mail Company ceased and the federal contract was transferred to the Central Overland Trail which was, in turn, given a contract to operate the short-lived Pony-Express.[19] The Mormons would later be asked by the federal government to help defend the Pony Express lines in the Utah Territory. It should also be noted that the Central Overland Trail, which ran through the Utah Territory was greatly developed by members of the Mormon Battalion on their return to Salt Lake City from San Francisco.

Before the establishment of these stagecoach lines, the Mormon Battalion played a large role in building the trails these companies would later utilize. They constructed “a wagon road over a wild, desert and unexplored country, where wagons had never been before.”[20] In doing so they leveled terrain, built bridges, and cut roads through mountains.[21] Many tens of thousands of immigrants traveled along these routes before the completion of the first transcontinental railroad in 1869. Thus, through quite literally paving the way for the stagecoach industry, the Mormon Battalion had yet another impact on westward emigration and expansion.

The construction of Cooke’s Wagon Road was a key event in opening the West to further settlement and expansion, bringing the United States one step closer to the realization of

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[18] James Buchanan, *Evening Star*, October 11, 1858, 2.

[19] *Contract with Overland Mail Company, The Executive Documents, Printed by Order of the Senate of the United States, Second Session, Forty-Sixth Congress, 1858-'59, and Special Session of the Senate of 1859* (Washington: William A. Harris, 1858), 4.

[20] Tyler, *A Concise History of the Mormon Battalion,* 188.

[21] Ibid., 248.

Manifest Destiny. Even so, it should be noted that it was not the only trail the members of the Mormon Battalion had a hand in establishing.

The Mormon Battalion also took part in helping develop another very important wagon route as well. When the Mormon Battalion disbanded in California following their one-year enlistment, some followed Cooke's Wagon Road back to Salt Lake City in the direction from which they came. However, the other half went north to San Francisco before eventually returning to Salt Lake City utilizing the California Trail.

When following the California Trail, the former members of the battalion made many improvements along the way. These included clearing debris, widening existing trails, and building new ones such as the Salt Lake Cutoff, which joined Salt Lake City with both the Oregon and California Trails. This route was a much better alternative to the Hastings Cutoff which was often impassable in the winter months. Perhaps the most well-known victims of this were of the Donner Party.[22]

In the winter of 1846-1847 the Donner Party was emigrating to California when they opted to take the now infamous Hastings Cutoff. However, the route proved to be impassable, and they were left stranded in the mountains amid the harsh winter conditions with help unable to reach them. They eventually ran out of food and resorted to cannibalism for survival.[23]

The improvements made to the California Trail and the new Salt Lake Cutoff by the former members of the battalion were huge innovations in westward emigration. These improvements provided emigrants a much safer route westward through the Utah Territory for the tens of thousands of emigrants that followed in the coming decades. As these routes also

[22] Eliza P. Donner Houghton, *Expedition of the Donner Party and Its Tragic Fate* (Chicago, IL: A. C. McClurg, 1911), 139.

[23] Ibid.

went through the Salt Lake basin, they also provided emigrants with a place to stock up on supplies, repair their wagons, and so on.[24]

It should also be noted that these routes played a pivotal role in the California Gold Rush of 1849. Hundreds of thousands of people were moving westward in hopes of striking it rich and, thanks to these new and improved trails, they had a much easier and much safer route directly to the gold fields of California. With the development of these additional trails, the Northwest was able to continue growing exponentially.

These trails, built and improved upon by former members of the battalion, allowed many more emigrants to make the trek westward and establish their homesteads. This led to the construction of many new towns and cities, which resulted in large increases in population which, in turn, helped set these territories on the track to statehood.

When the Mormon Battalion was marching to and from California, they established many settlements along the way on what had been Mexican land that the United States acquired in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. This land encompassed large parts of what would become Arizona, California, Utah, Idaho, Oregon, New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming and Nevada. Once the United States acquired this land, the Mormons wanted to turn it into one massive state and name it Deseret, a term from the Book of Mormon meaning "honeybee."[25]

The battalion played an role in acquiring this land from Mexico without which these settlements may not have been a reality. These new cities and towns made possible by the

[24] Jules Remy, *A Journey to Great-Salt-Lake-City: With a Sketch of the History, Religion, and Customs of the Mormons, and an Introduction on the Religious Movement in the United States* (London: W. Jeffs, 1861), 220.

[25]Joseph Smith, tran., *The Book of Mormon* (Nauvoo, IL: Robinson and Smith, 1840), 525.

battalion gave Mormon emigrants moving westward a new place to settle where they could worship freely without fear of religious persecution.

While the Mormon Battalion impacted the settlement of what would become Utah, they had an impact on the settlement of many other areas of the American West as well, most notably San Diego and New Helvetia, California. Many of the cities continue to thrive well into the 21st century.

Upon reaching San Diego, the battalion found the city in a state of disrepair. In noting the condition of the town, Cooke wrote that the town was in a state of disrepair. [26] Given the condition of the town, the battalion quickly set about making much needed improvements such as digging new wells, constructing new homes, and building adobe structures. Many of the first bricks in California were made in San Diego by the Mormon Battalion.[27]

The Mormons were quickly building a reputation for themselves across the American West, both literally and figuratively. As such, the people of San Diego were extremely appreciative of the Mormons for their services in helping to rebuild their town. Like those individuals in the other cities the Mormons had aided along their march, "The citizens found the men to be peaceful, quiet, industrious fellows, who had improved their town greatly. They had been told the Mormons would steal everything and insult their women, but that had not been the case."[28]

It should also be noted that many of the settlements built or rehabilitated by the battalion throughout the west played a very important role in westward expansion in numerous ways,

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[26] Philip St. George Cooke, *The Conquest of New Mexico and California an Historical and Personal Narrativ.* (New York: Putnam, 1878), 196.

[27] Tyler, *A Concise History of the Mormon Battalion*, 286.

[28] Ricketts, *Mormon Battalion,* 141.

including stops for the future Pony Express and railroad lines, as home to many telegraph offices, as stops for those on their way to and from the gold fields in California following the discovery of gold in 1849, and through the industries established in these locations. Through the building of these settlements, the battalion added greatly to the economic power of the West, thus allowing it to continue to expand and grow.

In attempting to create the state of Deseret, the Mormons began surveying land in 1847 that would eventually become part of the Utah Territory three years later. They began surveying this land almost immediately, laying out the grids for their new towns. As Brigham Young noted, there were lots of various sizes dependent upon their intended use. There were specific lots designated for farmers, artisans, and mechanics, all of which were enclosed by a single common fence.[29]

On March 15, 1849, representatives adopted a constitution for this new state of Deseret. They also elected a state senate, a state house of representatives, and a state governor, an office to be filled by Brigham Young. This new government was quick to establish a General Surveyor's office to aid in parceling out the land and establishing ownership. While the legislative actions of the state of Deseret were not recognized by the federal government, in the eyes of the Mormons this provisional government had all authority over land ownership and could govern land ownership and establish communities and municipalities.

Congress voted against the idea of a Mormon-based state of Deseret and instead passed the Compromise of 1850 which, among other things, formed the New Mexico and Utah Territories, the latter of which was named after the Ute Indians.[30] This new territory

[29] Brigham Young, *Manuscript History of Brigham Young 1847-1850* (Salt Lake City, UT: Collier's Publishing, 1997), 127.

[30] Curry, ed., *National Repository*, 139.

encompassed most of what would become the states of Utah and Nevada and part of both Colorado and Wyoming. The New Mexico Territory contained what would become the states of New Mexico and Arizona.

Despite Congress voting against their proposal, the Mormon's remained resolute in their belief that Utah was the new Zion. In reiterating this, Young stated "God has shown me that this is the spot to locate this people, and here is where they will prosper…" He continued "We will extend our settlements to the east and west, to the north and south, and we will build towns and cities by the hundreds, and thousands of Saints will gather in from the nations of the earth. This will become the great highway of nations."[31]

As their previously passed laws governing land ownership remained in effect, once they arrived in Salt Lake Valley in late1847 upon completion of their mission, the former members of the battalion wasted no time in building numerous shelters, cultivating the soil, and making adobe bricks for use in building living quarters as well as a fort. They also began to plant wheat they obtained from Taos in their march westward as well as club-head wheat, both of which grew very well in Utah and became major crops.[32] This became only the first of many new towns the Mormons built.

As predicted by Young in his proclamation, throughout this area the Mormons established many settlements. There was a twenty-year period of exponential growth in the Salt Lake Valley alone. Not only were many colonies established, but they all served a unique purpose that helped the west to thrive. Brigham Young had ordered four distinct kinds of

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[31] Brigham Young, *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young* (Salt Lake City, UT: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1997), passim

[32] Howard Stansbury, *An Expedition to the Valley of the Great Salt Lake of Utah: Including A Description of Its Georgraphy, Natural History, and Minerals, and an Analysis of Its Waters: With an Authentic Account of the Mormon Settlement* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo and Co., 1852), 141.

settlements to be established. The first of these settlements served as places of temporary gathering for emigrants before they continued to the Great Basin where they found their new homes. Second, there were settlements built to manufacture necessary commodities. These included such items as flax, coal, molasses, iron, and sugarcane. It also included such livestock as sheep and cattle. In the construction of these settlements, Young stated "produce what you consume; draw from the native element, the necessaries of life;…let home industry [i.e. Mormon industry] produce every article of home consumption."[33]

Third, Young ordered the establishment of settlements for Native Americans. He intended to help them become civilized. He stated that this form of settlement would be a center where Native Americans could both learn and receive all the necessities that they needed to survive. The fourth and final type of settlement built contained homes and farms.[34] It should also be noted that the attempts were made to introduce the Native Americans to the Mormon faith. This was met with limited success, even resulting in some of the chiefs becoming baptized. Others, however, were not as enthusiastic about the "white man's" religion.[35]

This was important in providing for the housing needs of the ever-increasing number of immigrants arriving every year. Together, these four types of settlements saw the Utah territory thriving beyond Young's greatest expectations. As the leader of the Mormon Church, Young believed it to be his responsibility to visit each of these settlements at least once every year. Under his careful watch, these settlements not only grew but thrived. Young was so taken aback

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[33] Catherine Van Valkenberg Waite, *The Mormon Prophet and His Harem: Or an Authentic History of Brigham Young, His Numerous Wives and Children* (Chicago: J. S. Goodman and Company, 1868), 25.

[34] Leonard J. Arrington, *Brigham Young: American Moses* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1986) 175.

[35] Solomon Nunes Carvalho, *Incidents of Travel and Adventure in the Far West; with Col. Fremont's Last Expedition across the Rocky Mountains: Including Three Months' Residence in Utah, and a Perilous Trip across the Great American Desert to the Pacific* (New York: Derby & Jackson, 1857), 224.

by the overwhelming success of these settlements he that wrote a letter wrote to his son Brigham Young, Jr. stating "It is almost a matter of surprise even to us…how the people have increased and are still increasing and spreading abroad."

While so many settlements were being built in the Salt Lake Valley and the surrounding areas, slowly other Mormon cities began popping up further away in such places as Carson Valley. Named for Kit Carson, Mormons founded this city, some of which were former battalion members. One former battalion member, named Abner Blackburn, recalled leading a party of settlers to Carson Valley stating "I being the best aquainted with the country, took them back to where Genoa now is. There was no better place on the river."[36] Keenly aware of this, Mormon entrepreneur John Reese bought a trading post there named Mormon Station and turned it into what became Carson Valley. Like many other Mormon towns, Carson Valley grew quickly. Reese and his fellow settlers were quick to establish a local hotel for those passing through. Among other things, they also constructed a stockade which consisted of a store and an inside acre land on which they planted produce.[37] With the success of Carson Valley, the Mormons also established a mission there.

With the discovery of gold in California in 1848, many emigrants on their way to the gold fields followed the trails improved upon by the Mormon Battalion on their march to Salt Lake City. Situated along this route, the establishment of Carson Valley in 1851 was strategic. Ideal in location, it played a significant role in westward migration as many prospective miners

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[36] *The Pony Express Courier: Stories of Pioneers and Old Trails*, 1st ed., vol. 16 (Placerville, CA: N. H. Robotham, 1949), 13.

[37] Dan De Quille, *The Big Bonanza: An Authentic Account of the Discovery, History, and Working of the World-Renowned Comstock Lode of Nevada: Including the Present Condition of the Various Mines Situated Thereon, Sketches of the Most Prominent Men Interested in Them, Incidents and Adventures Connected with Mining, the Indians, and the Country, Amusing Stories, Experiences, Anecdotes, Etc., Etc., and a Full Exposition of the Production of Pure Silver* (Hartford, CT: American Publishing Company, 1876), 20.

saw Carson Valley as a good stopping point at which they could both stock up on supplies and get a good night's sleep.

Later, in 1850 some of the Mormon settlers discovered gold in a nearby area known as Gold Canon. It was not until 1859, however, that a massive gold and silver deposit was found in nearby Virginia City. This deposit, now known as the Comstock Lode, was named for Henry Thomas Paige Comstock.[38]

With the discovery of this mineral deposit, Carson Valley was able to capitalize again on a mining boom. Many miners again flocked to the area for supplies and lodging. This time, however, the Carson Valley was also able to capitalize on the mines themselves. Since its discovery, "the Comstock has become the greatest gold and silver mine in active operation in the world."[39]

Much like the California gold rush, the Comstock Lode resulted in the rapid development of the Carson Valley. New buildings and industries popped up very quickly. The towns became "filled with Mills and mining works, that gave employment to many thousands of miners, mechanics, and workingmen of all grades and classes."[40]

In 1851, iron was discovered in what would later become Southeast Utah. Wasting no time, the Mormons were quick to migrate to this location and established many cities there including Parowan. Then known as "Iron Mission," this area became what is now Iron County.

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[38] John Adams Church, *The Comstock Lode: Its Formation and History* (New York: J. Wiley & Sons, 1879), 3.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Dan De Quille, *A History of the Comstock Silver Lode & Mines, Nevada and the Great Basin Region; Lake Tahoe and the High Sierras ... the Mineral and Agricultural Resources of "Silverland" ..* (Virginia, NV: F. Boegle, 1889), 52.

In building the town of Parowan, the settlers quickly began construction of a meeting house.[41] When not working on the meeting house, everyone worked on building their own homes.[42]

In 1861, at the beginning of the Civil War, the Mormons founded another town in Southwest Utah by the name of St. George. As the war had just broken out, Brigham Young thought it would be the best option to try to raise cotton here. As a result, many of the settlers of St. George came from the southern states to try and grow this cash crop. Parowan and St. George would become two of the towns collectively known as both "Cotton Mission" and "Utah's Dixie."[43]

With the outbreak of the war, the Mormons no longer had access to Southern cotton. Facing a shortage, they instead began to grow their own. These efforts met with success and numerous cotton mills were constructed, including one personally owned by Brigham Young. Along with these mills, as noted by an unnamed Mormon elder, "the whole Mormon community [had] long been…clothed in cloth and linsey of homespun, almost every house [was] a home manufactory."[44]

Initially this industry showed promise leading to the formation of the Deseret Mercantile Association. Cotton became an important source of income for the Mormons as not only were they using it domestically, but they were also shipping it to both the East and West coasts. However, with the end of the Civil War, cotton production in the South increased. This, combined with Native American conflicts, effectively led to the end of the cotton industry in the Utah Territory.[45]

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[41] Henry Lunt, *Diary of Henry Lunt 1850-1851,* 24.
[42] Ibid.
[43] *The Latter-Day Saints' Millennial Star*, vol. 30 (Liverpool: P. P. Pratt Publisher, 1868), 247.
[44] Mark Twain, ed., *Galaxy,: An Illustrated Magazine of Entertaining Reading* (New York: W. C. & F. P. Church , 1866), 361.
[45] Ibid.

A group of Mormons led by Jesse W. Fox and Joseph L. Haywood founded another town just to the north of St. George called Nephi. Here they built homes and schools and had several industries. These included a gristmill built by Abraham Boswell, Zimira H. Baxter, and George W. Bradley. With the establishment of more mills, eventually, the Gem and Snowflake Flour Company was founded. Gypsum, salt, and coal mining also became major industries in Nephi. In fact, the gypsum mine gave rise to yet another industry, the Nephi Plaster and Manufacturing Company.[46]

Later in 1859, the Mormons founded the town of Logan, named after prominent fur trapper Ephraim Logan. Just to the north of Nephi, the town of Logan was built to resemble Salt Lake City. There were several rows of houses, a school, a tabernacle, wide streets, and many businesses. There were also several acres of wheat planted, the basis for what would become an agricultural economy. The town grew very quickly as only a year later there were 100 homes. With the addition of a carding mill, a tannery, a lime kiln, and a sawmill, Logan also became something of an industrial hub. Capitalizing on this, Aaron D. and John B. Thatcher established a business empire in the city as well. They had "business interests in banking, merchandising, manufacturing, mining, building of railroads, and commerce."[47]

In 1849, after receiving a personal invitation from Chief Walkara (also known as Chief Walker) of the Ute tribe, a group of roughly fifty Mormon families arrived in the city of Manti just to the north of St. George on August 20. Walkara invited Brigham Young to send some of the Mormon settlers to join Chief Sanpeetch and his people on this land. As a result, Brigham Young and Chief Walkara are considered the joint founders of the city of Manti, a name deriving

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[46] Allan Kent Powell, ed, *Utah History Encyclopedia* (Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah, 1994), 291.

[47] Edward W. Tullidge, *Tullidge's Quarterly Magazine: October 1880*, vol. 1 (Salt Lake City, UT: Edward W. Tullidge, Publisher, 1880), 533.

from the Book of Alma, a section of the Book of Mormon appropriately named after a prophet in the scripture named Alma the Younger.[48]

The settlers quickly set about constructing the new town complete with a prosperous agricultural industry through the planting of hay and grain and the raising of livestock. They also began establishing many new industries as well. These included tanneries, woolen mills, and sugar factories. The local coal deposits gave rise to a local mining industry. Such growth was only increased with the arrival of the railroad, which ran "from Draper to Manti, Utah, and ultimately through Nevada into California."[49] This made Manti one of the major industrial centers in the state.

In 1850, a group of Mormons led by a man named Enoch Reese founded the town of Spanish Fork. Deriving its name from the Spanish Fork River, the townspeople quickly established a new branch of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.[50] This town was founded on agriculture, though the residents were rather poor. Bishop Stephen Markham took all of his own money and that which he could borrow and purchased seed to loan to all the townspeople to help ensure all would have enough to eat. Regardless of its humble beginnings, the town of Spanish Fork would go on to thrive.[51]

In 1851 the Mormons founded yet another city, naming it Fillmore after then-President Millard Fillmore. Brigham Young and a group of lawmakers jointly founded the town and it was

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[48] W. H. Lever, *History of Sanpete and Emery Counties, Utah: With Sketches of Cities, Towns and Villages, Chronology of Important Events, Records of Indian Wars, Portraits of Prominent Persons, and Biographies of Representative* Citizens (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1898), 47.

[49] Henry V. Poor, *Poor's Manual of Railroads*, vol. 18 (New York: H.V. & H.W. Poor, 1885), 50.

[50] Edward W. Tullidge, *Tullidge's Quarterly Magazine*, vol. 3 (Salt Lake City, UT: Star Printing Company, 1883), 47.

[51] Ibid., 80.

settled shortly thereafter by a group of settlers led by Anson Call. Fillmore eventually became the county seat of the appropriately named Millard County.[52]

Several years later, in 1853 the leaders of the Mormon church sent a group of settlers to Eastern Utah to establish what became known as the Elk Mountain Mission trading post. This trading post was the first attempt to settle what would become the town of Moab. However, due to attacks from Native Americans, the initial attempt failed. Their second attempt twenty-five years later proved to be much more successful. Moab thrived on agriculture and, in particular the livestock and produce industries thrived.[53]

While the Mormons were not always successful in attempting to establish new settlements and rehabilitate older ones, they were not content to take defeat lying down. Rather, they were quick to move forward and try yet again. Such was the case with the town of Santa Clara, Nevada. Edward Bunker, a former member of the Mormon Battalion, was sent by the Mormon church to rebuild the town and establish the Santa Clara United Order. However, despite his best efforts his mission ended in failure.

Not one to give up, Bunker established a new town to the west of St. George. Appropriately called Bunkerville, the new town truly represented what it meant to work together for the greater good. The citizens helped each other in every way including in building farms and irrigation systems and growing such crops as cotton and various vegetables.[54]

In 1855, the Mormons founded what was and is perhaps one of their most famous settlements, save for that of Salt Lake City itself. On June 14 of that year, they established the town of Las Vegas. Shortly after they arrived, they set to work building the new town. They

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[52] Stenhouse, *The Rocky Mountain Saints*, 275.
[53] Peter Stubbs, *Peter Stubbs Autobiography* (United States: n.p., n.d.).
[54] *The Deseret Weekly*, vol. 44 (Salt Lake City, UT: The Deseret News Company, 1892), 499-500.

constructed an adobe building that measured 150 feet square and fourteen feet in height. They also built houses and established small farms nearby.[55]

Continuing to expand their settlement of the Utah Territory, Moses Thatcher founded Star Valley in the 1870s. Lying in the southeast corner of Wyoming, Star Valley was on the very edge of the Utah Territory and became something of a refuge for those Mormons looking to escape the reaches of the Edmunds Anti-Polygamy Act of 1882. However, even though Star Valley was all the way out in Wyoming, that did not stop the federal government from trying to enforce this new law. Regardless, their efforts met with little success. It would not be until eight years later when the pressure from the federal government finally forced Wilford Woodruff, the president of the Mormon Church, to issue what is known as the 1890 Manifesto, also known as the Anti-Polygamy Manifesto. This officially ended the practice of polygamy within the church.

While the Mormons resisted giving up the practice of polygamy, it was only the Mormon men who resisted. Though most felt as though they were unable to speak up and defend themselves, the women were largely opposed to the practice themselves.[56] Before the abolition of polygamy the rules stated that when taking another wife there were specific approvals required, a specific order they must be obtained in, and who they must be obtained from.[57]

Despite having these formal, albeit complicated rules, whether they were adhered to was another issue in and of itself. Often, regardless of who approved or disapproved, Brigham Young's approval was the only one that truly mattered. Asking for such approvals was merely a

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[55] James H. McClintock, *Mormon Settlement in Arizona: A Record of Peaceful Conquest of the Desert* (Phoenix: The Manufacturing Stationers, Inc., 1921), 105.

[56] T. B. H. Stenhouse, *Exposé Of Polygamy in Utah: A Lady's Life among the Mormons, a Record of Personal Experience as One of the Wives of a Mormon Elder during a Period of More than Twenty Years* (New York: American News Company, 1872), 69-70.

[57] Ibid.

formality regardless of the answer. Regardless of the attempted interference of the federal government, the Mormons continued to pursue what they believed to be the greater good.

These cities, and many others, were founded by the Mormons and former members of the Mormon Battalion. These settlements were extremely important to establishing their new "Zion." They each established their own industries and sources of income and, as a result, brought in many new settlers. This allowed them to not only grow, but thrive. This was very important as the Mormons had a communal way of life, sharing greatly in each other's successes. As such, when one settlement thrived it benefited all of them.

In settling in the West, however, the focus of the Mormons was not only on building a new Zion but also on helping all their fellow Mormons emigrate to this new holy land as well. As such, in 1849 they established the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company (also simply known as the Perpetual Emigration Fund). The purpose of this new organization was to help provide economic funding to those wishing to emigrate to the Salt Lake Valley.

When they started their journey, the emigrants arrived in New Orleans before embarking on a journey by land and by river that led them to the Utah Territory.[58] However, in the later years of this program efforts were made to save even further costs by making use of the seaports in the East where the emigrants would then make their way to Iowa using the railroads and then to Utah through use of handcarts.

After battalion completed their one-year enlistment they wished to make their way to the new Zion, much to the dismay of the people of California. They became so well-liked that the citizens begged them to stay longer, some even going so far as to ask the governor to use his power to make them do so. While Governor Mason wished for the battalion to stay as well, he

[58] Conybeare, William John. *Mormonism.* London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts and Green, 1863.

had no such power. However, that did not stop him from attempting to use the power of persuasion. He "tried hard to induce the company to remain in service another year; failing in that, then, to stay six months longer; all to no purpose, however; the 'Volunteers' were determined to join their friends and families in Salt Lake City."[59]

When the battalion departed from Los Angeles in 1848, they divided into two groups, taking two separate routes back to Salt Lake City. The first group returned the way from which they came, marching back across Nevada to reach Utah. The second group marched west to San Francisco where they planned to move across Nevada and into Utah. However, before doing so Brigham Young informed them that they needed to find employment in California as there was a shortage of food and supplies in Salt Lake Valley.

Upon receiving Young's message, they wasted no time looking for work when they reached the town of San Francisco. They quickly made their "way immediately to Sutter's fort, where most of the brethren obtained work from" a Swiss immigrant named . August (John) Sutter.[60] Born in Kandern, Baden (what is now Germany), he left school as a teenager. He had numerous odd jobs including working as a printer's apprentice and in various retail establishments before he eventually got accepted at a military college at Berne from which he graduated in 1823.

However, for various reasons his debts quickly accumulated to where he was at risk of being arrested and sent to debtor's prison. As a result, he decided to flee to the United States of America. In July of 1834 he at last arrived in New York City. He eventually made his way to the West Coast where he sailed to the Sandwich Islands, now known as the Hawaiian Islands. After

[59] Roberts, *The Mormon Battalion: Its History and Achievements*, 73-74.
[60] Samuel Miles, *Autobiography of Samuel Miles*, passim.

five months he set sail for Alaska where he made the acquaintance of the governor and made an agreement for all of the supplies he would need to establish a Swiss colony. He had these supplies shipped to California where he established his settlement.[61]

On September 29, 1847, the former battalion members arrived at what would be the future site of Sutter's sawmill. They constructed the sawmill northeast of Sacramento in Coloma on the south fork of the American River. Of those that helped construct the mill there were at least six known members of the Mormon Battalion. Among them were Alexander Stephens, William Johnston, James Barger, James S. Brown, Henry Bigler, and Azariah Smith.

However, it was discovered that the water was not flowing properly into the tailrace and adjustments had to be made to the design. While making these adjustments, John Sutter's partner, James Marshall, was performing an inspection when some shiny particles in the water beneath the mill caught his eye. He quickly gathered them in his hat and shared his discovery with the other workers. Bigler noted, "just before we quit work for the day, Marshall came up and told us he had found a gold mine."[62]

They quickly set about subjecting the particles to various tests including biting them and smashing them with a hammer to test their hardness as well as throwing them in a fire to test their resistance to heat. After completing their tests, they were able to confirm that Marshall had indeed found gold.[63] On January 30, 1848, Bigler noted in his journal "Our metal has been tried and proved to be gold. It is thought to be rich. We have picked up more than a hundred dollars' worth last week."[64]

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[61] Sutter, *Diary of Johann August Sutter.*
[62] Henry William Bigler, *Journal of Henry William Bigler.*
[63] Sutter, *Diary of Johann August Sutter.*
[64] Henry William Bigler, *Journal of Henry William Bigler.*

The workers quickly set about collecting as much gold as they could from the river by hand, though this was no easy task. Thus, they began using knives to help in the extraction. It was not long before a three-ounce nugget was discovered and quickly taken to the sawmill where a woman named Jane "Jennie Wimmer" soaked it overnight in a lye solution to prove its authenticity. This nugget, which proved to be solid gold, became appropriately known as the Wimmer Nugget. For obvious reasons Sutter and Marshall both wished to keep their discovery a secret.[65]

In a diary entry dated February 1, 1848, Sutter stated that he had examined the gold himself. He noted that he then had a discussion with his employees, stating "I told them that as they do know now that this Metal is Gold, I wished that they would do me the great favor and keep it secret…unfortunately the people would not keep it secret…[66]

Another man named Sam Brannan, a member of the Mormon Church (though not a member of the battalion) and founder of the first newspaper in San Francisco, known as the *California Star*, found out about the gold. Subsequently, he walked up and down the streets of San Francisco carrying gold and exclaiming "Gold! Gold! Gold, from the American River!" As such, on March 15, 1848, the discovery made headline news in another local paper called the *Californian*. This was exactly the outcome that Brannan had been hoping for.[67]

Being an opportunist and knowing there would be a resulting gold rush, he bought up all the mining supplies he could get his hands on. As a result, when the prospectors came to town, he would be the only one in San Francisco with tools, equipment, and so on, thus creating a

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[65] Peter L. Wimmer and James W. Marshall, *California's First Gold Nugget Found January, 1848 by James W. Marshall and Peter L. Wimmer at Sutter Mill, American River: As Shown by within Original Documents*, n.d.
[66] Sutter, *Diary of Johann August Sutter*.
[67] Samuel Brannan, *Samuel Brannan Letters*, Photographs, and Other Material, n.d.

monopoly in the area. As a result, he could charge whatever prices he wished. His plan worked perfectly and a short time he became extremely wealthy.[68] Former battalion member Samuel Miles, who was employed as a cashier in Brannan's store, noted "the trade at the store was very large being then the only place of supplies near the placer mines lately discovered."[69]

Given the technology of the day, news of the discovery was slow to spread. However, five months later, the *Baltimore Sun* officially became the first newspaper on the East Coast to publish the story, followed shortly thereafter by the *New York Herald*. With the gold discovery now making East Coast headlines, the news quickly made it to the desk of President James K. Polk himself. He later informed Congress of the discovery in his Fourth Annual Message to Congress which he delivered on December 5, 1848.

In his address, Polk stated "the accounts of the abundance of gold in that territory are of such an extraordinary character as would scarcely command belief were they not corroborated by the authentic reports of officers in the public service who have visited the mineral district and derived the facts which they detail from personal observation."[70]

Following Polk's address to Congress, news of the discovery quickly spread to the remainder of the country, thus setting off one of the largest gold rushes the nation had ever seen. So large was the gold rush that in his address Polk said nearly the entire male population of the nation had made their way to California in hopes of striking it rich.[71] Many were also coming from other countries, such as France, Chile, and China as well. With the sudden influx of such many people emigrating westward, the West changed exponentially in a very short time.

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[68] Ibid.

[69] Samuel Miles, *Autobiography of Samuel Miles*.

[70] James K. Polk, *Message of President James K. Polk to Congress, Dec. 5, 1848: And Accompanying Documents.* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1848).

[71] Ibid.

With such a drastic increase in those emigrating to California, attention was quickly turned to how these individuals would make the journey. At the time California was not heavily populated and thus there were few roads to get there, one such road being Cooke's Wagon Road. There were also few roads leading throughout the territory. As a result, the construction of new infrastructure, such as roads and bridges, became a priority as well as seeking out new modes of transportation.

Some would-be miners would continue utilizing the covered wagons they had used for generations. However, their mules had trouble navigating the trails. As it became necessary to build better roads for the influx of emigrants, local governments and various merchants began to help contribute funds for the construction of new roads. In California, the construction of Trans-Sierra roads began as well. These roads connected California and Nevada and not only provided new routes for emigration but also provided better routes for shipping freight.

While the roads did see some improvements, others would look to new, more innovative means of travel. One such solution was taking steamships from the East Coast down around the tip of South America to reach the West Coast. However, the length of this trip was significantly reduced with a new route through the isthmus of Panama. Rather than going all the way down around the tip of South America, travelers could now make a short trek across Panama where they would meet up with another ship on the other side waiting to take them to California. This shortcut would greatly reduce the length of their trip. It would become shorter still with the completion of the Panama Railroad in 1855.[72]

[72] Thomas L. DuBose, *Forty-Niner from Alabama: The Gold Rush Diary of Thomas L. DuBose*, ed. Philip Lawrence Hardgrave (Natchitoches, LA: Northwester State University of Louisiana, 1975), 7.

Through these various methods of travel, over 300,000 people made their way to California during the gold rush. While many of them were prospectors looking to make their fortune, others, like Brannan, were looking to make their money elsewhere. The prospectors needed food, lodging, supplies, and so on during their stay in California and hungry businessmen were waiting to cash in. As a result many small towns, appropriately called boom towns, were constructed in many cases quite literally overnight.

Some of these boom towns, such as San Francisco, thrived. Then known as Yerba Buena, San Francisco had only 1,000 residents in 1848 but swelled to a staggering 25,000 only a year later. Other successful boom towns in California include Stockton and Sacramento, then known as New Helvetia. Of course, not all boom towns were in California. Many were established along the route to the future Golden State as well and for much the same purpose. They provided ideal locations for would-be miners to get food and supplies, take care of their draught animals, and have a good night's rest.[73]

As Hinton Helper Howe was quick to note, these towns were not paid for with gold. Rather, the merchants brought their money with them from back East and overseas. In discussing the effect of gold on the establishment of these towns by the local merchants, he was quick to equate gold to Southern cotton. He noted, "California gold is to the world much what Southern cotton is to the North."[74]

The discovery of gold, in which former members of the Mormon Battalion played a role, brought about many new businesses in California. Many were able to strike it rich without ever stepping foot on the gold fields. For example, proprietors like Brennan made their money

[73] Hinton Rowan Helper, *The Land of Gold: Reality Versus Fiction* (Baltimore, MD: Published for the author, by H. Taylor, 1855), 53.

[74] Ibid., 53, 57.

through retail sales While others capitalized on the gold rush by means of providing services as well. For instance, women quickly found that they were a commodity in gold country. As such, they were able to provide different services such as washing clothes and cooking, and were able to charge a hefty price for doing so. As one woman, known only as Mrs. McKinney noted, she was able to make a $16 a week per customer as a cook.[75]

The increase in boom towns gave rise to an increase in many industries as well, both local and non-local. One such industry was the lumber industry. As the towns were being quickly built, sawmills were working overtime to supply the necessary lumber. However, at the rate the towns were being built, the lumber was often needed more quickly than it could be supplied. This resulted in a boom in the prefabrication industry as well, with the prefabricated buildings being shipped in from overseas.

The mining of gold in California also brought about several new industries in and of itself. With the influx of emigrants, paper money quickly became worthless. As a result, private mints were established, and began issuing gold coins. However, these coins were not of high quality. As a result, several years later in 1854, the federal government established an official, yet makeshift branch of the United States Mint in San Francisco. A permanent branch would be built there twenty years later in 1874.[76]

Mining for gold gave rise to many other industries. In mining for gold, miners discovered deposits of many other minerals as well. This led to the founding of industries such as explosives, the mining of mercury, minerals, and other precious metals, and acid production.

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[75] Margaret A. Frink, *Journal of The Adventures of a Party of California Gold-Seekers under the Guidance of Mr. Ledyard Frink during a Journey across the Plains from Martinsville, Indiana, to Sacramento, California, from March 30, 1850, to September 7, 1850* (Oakland, CA: Ledyard Frink, 1897), 22.

[76] D. J. St. Clair, "The Gold Rush and the Beginnings of California Industry," *California History* 77, no. 4 (January 1998): 185-208, 186.

However, perhaps the most important industry to come out of the gold rush is that of foundries.[77] These foundries were extremely important in the settlement of California. They produced iron-work, engines, mining machinery, and more.[78]

As a result of the gold rush, California also saw a massive increase in agriculture. With the discovery of gold, the price of livestock increased exponentially. Along with rearing livestock, farmers planted wheat, fruit, and vegetables. As California occasionally experienced periods of drought, these crops were sometimes grown using irrigation provided by the water from placer mining.[79]

With an exponential increase in the number of emigrants looking to stake a claim, there was a large spike in the demand for alcohol as well. As such, many vineyards and wineries were established. The miners not only worked up a thirst prospecting for gold, but they also had a seemingly insatiable appetite for alcohol. As their drink of choice, whatever that may have been, was not available, they had to settle for whatever was at hand. There had at one time been more than 100 wineries in the Sierra Foothills, the gold rush had quite literally put California wine country on the map. This industry not only continues to thrive over 150 years later but is an extremely important part of California's massive economy.[80]

The gold rush also saw the rise of many niche industries in California. Some of these companies bare brand names that not only still exist today but are household names in their own

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[77] Ibid., 193.

[78] John S. Hittell, *The Commerce and Industries of the Pacific Coast of North America: Comprising the Rise, Progress, Products, Present Condition and Prospects of the Useful Arts on the Western Side of Our Continent and Some Account of Its Resources with Elaborate Treatment of Manufactures, Briefer Consideration of Commerce, Transportation, Agriculture, and Mining and Mention of Leading Establishements and Prominent Men in Various Departments of Business* (San Francisco: A.L. Bancroft, 1882), 659.

[79] Eliza W. Farnham, *California, in-Doors and out: Or, How We Farm, Mine, and Live Generally in the Golden State* (New York: Dix, Edwards and Co., 1856), 39.

[80] Ibid., 344.

right. These include, among others, Ghirardelli chocolates, Spreckles sugar, Levi Strauss, Folgers Coffee, and Studebaker automobiles.[81]

With the many booming industries that were springing up as a result of the gold rush, the delivery of freight became a major issue. This also gave rise to a new kind of schooner that was more well-suited for river navigation and thus a new shipbuilding industry as well. Many new companies began making these new schooners, but they were eventually consolidated into the California Steam Navigation Company. As a result of this new industry, the rivers, particularly the Sacramento-San Joaquin River system, began to see substantially greater utilization for shipping.

An overland freight industry was quickly established as well. These companies made use of specially constructed freight wagons and traveled the path laid down by the Mormon Battalion. This road stretched from Salt Lake City, Utah to San Bernadino, California. The fact that it was traversable year-round was extremely significant given that it allowed for the transport and an exponentially greater amount of goods.[82]

The gold rush brought about many altogether unsurprising changes. For example, with such an event it was likely expected that many new settlements would be established and many new businesses would be founded. However, the large number of new inventions that were made a reality as a result of the gold rush may have been a little more surprising.

The discovery of gold in California brought about many new inventions that revolutionized the mining industry. These include gold pans and numerous sediment filtering devices. Among these devices were the cradle, the pudding box, the board sluice, and the dry

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[81] James J. Rawls and Richard J. Orsi, *A Golden State: Mining and Economic Development in Gold Rush California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999) 195-196.

[82] Rawls and Orsi, *A Golden State*, 259.

washer.[83] Older forms of technology were also repurposed for use in mining such as water wheels and the Chinese chain pump. The gold rush saw the innovation of new mining processes. These new processes include hydraulic mining, sluicing, and what is known as booming or gauging, which uses the power of rushing water moving down a slope to remove loose sediment.[84]

These new mining innovations and processes were extremely effective, leading to the recovery of what would be $2.3 billion worth of gold in today's currency. This was a huge boost both to the national economy and to the pockets of those prospectors lucky enough to find a small fortune on their claim. However, as beneficial as these innovations and processes may have been, they also proved to be very detrimental in some ways. They took a large toll on the physical landscape and the environment itself, washing away large sections of land. As a result, there was an increase in mudslides as well as an increase in the level of various toxins in the water supply. Despite these drawbacks, the benefits of the gold rush on the development of the American West far outweighed the negatives.

The changes brought about by the gold rush of 1849 are but only a few of the many impacts on the growth of the American West that the Mormon Battalion left in its wake. In constructing Cooke's Wagon Road on their march westward the Mormon Battalion not only built what would become a much safer wagon route but one that was traversable year-round. This allowed many tens of thousands of Mormon emigrants to move westward more easily during the Mormon migration that followed in the subsequent decades. This road would also come to be part of the first transcontinental stagecoach route, which offered a much faster way to get from one coast to the other. The battalion also built or helped re-construct many towns and cities

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[83] Charles Beebe Turrill, *Gold Notes*, (San Francisco, Edward Bosqui and Co., Printers, 1876), 156.
[84] Ibid., 152.

during and after their journey westward, thus creating the new epicenter of their church in the Utah Territory in the process.

The gold rush, which began in part thanks to the contributions of the Mormons in the construction of John Sutter's sawmill in what is now Sacramento, also brought great change to the American West. These changes included the construction of many new towns and roads, the rise of many new industries including ferries, freight, and metal working, and influx of over 300,000 immigrants from around the world making their way to California in hopes of making their fortune in the gold mines.

In examining the course of events stemming from the 2,100-mile march of the Mormon Battalion, it is very evident that they had an important role in the westward expansion of the United States. They also laid many foundations, so to speak, for those that followed as well. While their accomplishments are many, they could not have made all of the aforementioned achievements on their own. What they did accomplish, however, is nothing short of remarkable.

Chapter Five: The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the Gadsden Purchase

In roughly ten years, the Mormon Battalion played an important role, directly and indirectly, in two treaties with Mexico that had a huge impact on westward expansion. Through their participation in the defense of Los Angeles, they helped bring about the end of the Mexican-American War, as achieved with the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo. Also, through the construction of their wagon road on their westward march as well as through their role in bringing about the end of the war, the battalion inadvertently laid the groundwork for the Gadsden Purchase six years later, on June 30, 1854. This gave the United States a further 29,670 square miles of territory that would eventually become parts of Arizona and New Mexico. The treaty and purchase together gave the United States roughly 555,000 square miles of additional land which would become all or part or of the future states of Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, California, Utah, Nevada, and Wyoming.

It also gave the United States large mineral deposits, natural resources, and ports. Unfortunately, the acquisition of this land also led to increased tensions over slave versus free states. The treaty further defined the United States-Mexico border along the Rio Grande as well.

In their role in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the Mormon Battalion first marched roughly 2,100 miles across the country before arriving in San Diego. After leaving San Diego, however, the battalion marched to Los Angeles where they aided in the construction of Fort Moore. Amid construction, they provided reinforcements for General Kearney's troops in the Battle of La Mesa on January 9, 1847. This was the last armed conflict in the Mexican-American War.

The role of the battalion in the Battle of La Mesa helped to secure victory for the United States. This led to the signing of the Treaty of Cahuenga four days later, thus ending all conflict

on American soil, after which the Mexican forces retreated across the Southern border.[1] As a result of the American victory at the Battle of Cahuenga, at which the Mormon Battalion assisted, U.S. forces no longer needed to occupy California and instead were able to turn their attention to invading Mexico, eventually forcing a surrender.

When peace negotiations began immediately after surrender, Nashville lawyer Alfred Balch wrote a letter to Polk stating that, should the negotiations go his way, "your destiny will be happily accomplished."[2] This somewhat prophetic statement would prove true on February 2, 1848, when the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo was signed, officially ending the war. Daniel Tyler notes that "the wisdom of Commodore Stockton and General Kearny in ratifying the treaty, although made by a subordinate and more provisional officer, is apparent from the fact that thereby the peace of the country was preserved until all national disputes were settled by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo."[3]

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo had three major impacts. The first of these is the acquisition of roughly 530,000 square miles of land from Mexico and the California gold rush of 1849. As previously noted, they both changed the nation in many ways. However, given the focus on these events in the previous chapter, the focus of this section will be on the final two impacts of the treaty.[4]

The second impact is that of the acquisition of California's Pacific Coastline, including Humboldt Bay, San Diego Bay, and San Francisco Bay. It should also be noted that, though it

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[1] "1847, January 12 - Treaty of Cahuenga," Digital Commons @ CSUMB, accessed June 24, 2023, https://digitalcommons.csumb.edu/hornbeck_usa_2_b/7/.

[2] James K. Polk, *Correspondence of James K. Polk*, ed. Michael David Cohen and Bradley J. Nichols, vol. XIII (Knoxville, TN: The University of Tennessee Press, 2017), xxviii.

[3] Tyler, *Concise History of the Mormon Battalion in the Mexican War*, 262.

[4] "Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848)," National Archives and Records Administration, accessed July 23, 2022, https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/treaty-of-guadalupe-hidalgo#:~:text=The%20Treaty%20of%20Guadalupe%20Hidalgo,the%20advance%20of%20U.S.%20forces.

would not open until over half a century later, the United States also acquired what eventually became the port of Los Angeles, one of the largest ports in the world. The acquisition of this coastline led to vast growth in America's shipping, ferry, and shipbuilding industries. It also proved to be of vital importance militarily as well, leading to the establishment of numerous forts and naval bases.[5]

The third and final major impact of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo is the establishment of the Mexican-American border along the Rio Grande River. While this is very significant, the treaty failed to lay out a boundary line that could not be disputed. As a result, there remained heated debate over where one nation's land ceased, and the others began.[6]

With the battalion's help in expelling the Mexican forces and the acquisition of the California coast came access to many ports and a vast coastline ripe for shipping. In fact, only a month after the signing of the treaty the shipping industry began to increase drastically. In San Francisco alone, at the end of March, "there were eighty-six arrivals by sea; including four naval vessels, sixteen whalers, and eight vessels from the Hawaiian Islands. The others were from various ports of Oregon and California. About a dozen of these were regularly employed in the coasting trade."[7]

This new booming shipping industry continued to grow by leaps and bounds thanks to the discovery of gold. All those making their way to California in hopes of striking it rich needed supplies, which had to be shipped in. Simultaneously, however, there were vast amounts of gold recovered that had to be shipped out. The gold exported in 1847 amounted to no less than

[5] "Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848)."
[6] Ibid.
[7] John S. Hittell, *A History of the City of San Francisco and Incidentally of the State of California* (San Francisco: A.L. Bancroft & Company, 1878), 119.

$160,000. The following year the gold exports more than doubled.[8] This would continue to grow in the years that followed.

While gold was a large boon to the California shipping industry, eventually the gold mines began to dry up. Even so, merchandise exports began to take off and within two decades far exceeded what gold exports had been at their peak. In 1866, the merchandise exports of San Francisco alone were no less than a staggering $17,000,000.[9]

It should be noted that, while the ports allowed for a much greater increase in shipping, the shipping industry in California did not stop at the coast. In many cases, once the larger ships arrived in port, goods were offloaded onto smaller vessels and transported inland via rivers. The fact that many of these ports had ready access to rivers allowed the industry to grow exponentially.

This new shipping industry allowed for far greater trade, both with the East Coast via the isthmus of Panama and overseas as well. However, this was still in the era of sailing, meaning trade was anything but expedited. Regardless, this was extremely important economically to both California and the United States as a whole.

While these waterways provided for the growing shipping industry, they also played a large role in immigration. In 1848 the population of California was low in number and new arrivals were few. However, following the signing of the treaty in 1848 the population began to see a sharp increase.[10]

In total, more than 35,000 immigrants arrived in California in 1848 alone, 23,000 of whom were Americans. Others came from South and Central America, even as far away as

[8] Hittell, *A History of the City of San Francisco*, 127.
[9] Ibid., 358.
[10] Ibid., 139.

China. Of course, this was due in no small part to the discovery of gold. However, when the gold rush began to fizzle out in 1855 these fortune-seeking immigrants began to find work in other industries.

It should be noted that not all immigrants that came to California during this time were seeking fortune in the gold mines. Some were coming to take advantage of the quality of life California had to offer. One such example was another group of Mormons emigrating by boat seeking freedom from religious persecution. They were led by one of the leaders of the Mormon Church by the name of Samuel Brannan. When Mormons led by Brigham Young set out westward from Nauvoo, Illinois it fell on Brannon's shoulders to see that the Mormon population of New York was evacuated.[11]

As part of their push westward for a better life, Brannan chartered a ship named the *Brooklyn* to carry this Mormon population to the West Coast. The ship was to sail around Cape Horn to Oregon to establish a new settlement. However, in mid-route the church decided to change its destination to San Francisco Bay. This change of course was made under the advice and instruction of church leadership "with the expectation that they would find on its shores a place where they could build up a large and prosperous colony, and where no government or mob would be strong enough for many years to disturb them on account of their religion."[12]

The ship carried roughly two hundred and forty emigrants on board, most of whom were Mormon. These individuals were disappointed when they realized they had landed in an urbanized area. Most possessed skills more suitable for farming and building settlements.

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[11] "Brethren and Friends," *The Prophet*, May 10, 1845, 1-2.
[12] Hittell, *A History of the City of San Francisco*, 108.

However, they decided to remain and, as such, became very well-liked among the people of Yerba Buena.[13]

Brannan, a newspaper publisher by trade, brought his printing press with him from New York and quickly set up a new town newspaper called the *California Star*. The other new settlers set about becoming very active in local shops and industries. Their efforts contributed greatly to the quick growth of the city. Shortly after the arrival of the Mormons in Yerba Buena the name of the town was officially changed to San Francisco. The city became predominantly Mormon and there remains a sizeable Mormon population in the city.[14]

Along with resulting in a growing shipping industry and an increase in emigration, the efforts of the Mormon Battalion in securing peace allowed the federal government to turn its attention to better fortifying California as well. There was a need to defend the California coastline for a couple of reasons, the first of which was to maintain stability. As armed conflict had just ended in California and Mexican forces had just evacuated, there was at that time a state of peace. However, it was thought that there might be resistance from the citizens, so the military established numerous bases, including many along the coastline, to maintain order.

The second reason the government wanted to keep military forces in California is that it was believed that Great Britain may be planning an invasion. Shortly after the beginning of the Mexican-American War in 1846, the United States and Great Britain signed the Oregon Treaty, in which the English gave up their joint ownership of the territory in very heated negotiations that almost resulted in yet another war.[15] As a result of these tensions, the federal government had a legitimate concern.

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[13] Hittell, *A History of the City of San Francisco*, 108.
[14] Ibid.
[15] "Canado-American Treaties," Canado-American Treaties, accessed September 5, 2022, https://web.archive.org/web/20091113034143/http://www.lexum.umontreal.ca/ca_us/en/cus.1846.28.en.html.

As historian Ephraim Adams notes, the United States had numerous reasons to be weary of Britain's intentions. First, England held a large sum of Mexico's debt, for which it was feared Mexico may tried to give Britain ownership of California. It was feared that, if such a deal were to occur, that Great Britain may try to turn California into a new colony. Second, the British admirals stationed on the Pacific Coast had orders with such a goal in mind.[16]

The concern over a potential British invasion was further legitimized by British Vice-Consul to Mexican California and later British Consul to the U.S. State of California James Forbes. When asked by British Vice-Consul Eustice Barron "whether this country [California] can be received under the protection of Great Britain" Forbes responded, "I feel myself in duty bound to use all my influence to prevent this fine country from falling into the hands of any other foreign power than that of England."[17]

Future President of the Confederacy Jefferson Davis saw a resulting conflict with Great Britain as a very real possibility and warned of being prepared. He wrote that, should such a conflict arise, it was important to "close all questions with Mexico, and have the ship overhauled for action on a larger scale."[18]

However, despite increasing tensions, Adams states that the fears of a potential invasion by Great Britain may have been unfounded. He noted that Britain was not interested in California as they were indifferent to expanding their colonial reach, information on California was scarce, and they wanted to preserve their relationship with Mexico.[19]

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[16] Ephraim D. Adams, "English Interest in the Annexation of California," *The American Historical Review* 14 (1909): 744-763, 744.

[17] Ibid., 749.

[18] Jefferson Davis, *Jefferson Davis, Constitutionalist: His Letters, Papers and Speeches*, ed. Dunbar Rowland, vol. 1 (New York: J. J. Little & Ives Company, 1923), 46.

[19] Adams, "English Interest in the Annexation of California," 763.

While stating that there was likely no threat from Great Britain, Adams simultaneously notes that there was a brief period in 1844 when irritations with Mexico led them to contemplate possible colonization in what was then Mexican-California. Once California was acquired by the United States, the nation still had every reason to be cautious of Great Britain, as their intentions remained uncertain.

The role of the Mormon Battalion in helping to win the Battle of La Mesa resulted in the Treaty of Cahuenga and, thus, peace on the then Mexican-California soil. This allowed the American military to establish a stronger foothold to turn its attention to further fortifying the territory as well as to the building of many forts and bases along the coastline. As a result, conflict was potentially prevented on not one, but two fronts.

In helping to expel Mexican forces from U.S. soil, which ultimately helped lead to the end of the war with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the Mormon Battalion also indirectly helped to establish a new borderline between the United States and Mexico. As stipulated by the treaty, the new border line was to follow the Rio Grande River and was to be surveyed by the newly formed Joint United States and Mexico Boundary Commission. Taking several years to complete, the team finished surveying the new border in 1853.

According to the treaty, the commission was to utilize an old map of the port of San Diego completed roughly seventy years prior in 1782 by Don Juan Pantoja. The treaty states that this map was to be used to discern the border between upper and lower California. The border was to be drawn from the Rio Grande in Colorado to the Pacific Ocean south of the port of San Diego.[20]

[20] "Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848)."

However, this proved to be a major issue as in the 66 years between the creation of the map and the signing of the treaty some of the geographic features had changed. A second major point of contention was that neither side could agree on what the measurement of one marine league was equivalent to. Lastly, the commission was supposed to place a marker the length of one marine league south of the southernmost tip of the Port of San Diego. Instead, however, they made the error of placing the marker one league south at the southern end of San Diego Bay. This resulted in the boundary line being placed nine and a half miles further south than it should have been.[21]

Another problem was that the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo stated that, in laying out the border, the survey team was to use a map published in 1847 by John Disturnell. However, the map proved to have numerous inaccuracies. This was a major problem as it would result in the border being drawn too far west and would thus violate the treaty.[22]

Due to discrepancies in surveying, both sides were unable to agree on the borderline. To complicate matters, the American team had a high level of turnover, leaving new members to constantly try to pick up from where their predecessors left off. In the end, the issue of the borderline remained an issue of contention. The Gadsden Purchase of 1854 succeeded in bringing a greater resolution to this longstanding issue. However, even then, there remained disagreement. This led to the commission reexamining the border on numerous future surveys.

The disagreement over the southern border was not the only one that was exacerbated by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. As previously mentioned, in the treaty the United States received roughly 330,000 square miles of Mexican Territory. This was an advantage in many

[21] Byron Calkins, Lance Aspaas, Charles Nettleman, and Amanda Ramirez, "The Boundary Survey of the United States and Mexico 'Hidalgo de Guadalupe Medir' Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848)," *Surveying and Land Information Science*, 68, no. 4 (2008), 227-228.

[22] Ibid.

ways to the further growth of the United States as a nation both physically and economically. However, it further divided the nation as well.

The acquisition of this land instantly led to concern over whether future states carved from it would be admitted to the Union as slave states or free states. In 1846, foreseeing this very issue, Congressman David Wilmot introduced the Wilmot Proviso. This stated that, should the United States acquire land from Mexico following the war, slavery and involuntary servitude would be illegal in the new territory.[23]

The Wilmot Proviso failed to pass Congress and with the Mexican Cession two years later the issue of slavery again reared its ugly head as predicted. This only added to the long series of events that eventually culminated in the outbreak of the Civil War thirteen years later. While the Mexican Cession did create further tensions over slavery, this did not result in the outbreak of the Civil War directly. However, it would be accurate to say that it did add a little fuel to the fire.

Undeterred by potential divisions the acquisition of this new land may cause, President Franklin Pierce appointed Colonel James Gadsden as diplomat to Mexico to attempt to broker a deal for further territory that would eventually become southern Arizona and New Mexico. In their march across the country, when the Mormon Battalion entered New Mexico they marched south into Mexico and then turned south and continued marching straight until they reached San Diego. While marching through Mexico the battalion continued to build Cooke's Wagon Road, this portion of which was seen as an ideal route for a southern transcontinental railroad. This also proved to be the future route of major highways in the 20th century. Additionally, this land

[23] "Wilmott Proviso." National Archives and Records Administration. Accessed July 10, 2022. https://catalog.archives.gov/id/2127333.

acquisition also gave the United States further mineral deposits such as gold, silver, lead, and copper.

A secondary reason for the Gadsden Purchase was to further define the United States-Mexico border. While establishing the border, the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo left the borderline somewhat unclear. As a result, this continually led to heated debates from both sides. This new agreement solidified the borderline in an effort to prevent any further tensions with Mexico.

Gadsden, a veteran of the War of 1812, was the grandson of Revolutionary War hero and Gadsden Flag namesake Christopher Gadsden. He was previously the president of the South Carolina Railroad Company and had a special interest in seeing the completion of a southern transcontinental railroad. As such, he certainly had the motivation to see that the negotiations were a success.

Gadsden, however, was not the only one invested in the negotiations. He had been appointed to head the negotiations by Pierce only after having been urged to do so by Secretary of War and future President of the Confederacy Jefferson Davis. As the debate over slavery was heating up in the decade before the outbreak of the Civil War, Davis no doubt saw the benefit of a southern transcontinental railroad to the southern states should war become inevitable.[24]

Others, however, were vehemently opposed to the Gadsden Purchase. As stated in the *Daily National Era* newspaper on March 23, 1854, in Washington, DC, there was fear by some that the treaty was part of a larger scheme to dissolve the Union. Still, with increasing tensions between the North and the South, others objected to obtaining the land to build a Southern

[24] Franklin Rives, J. Rives, and George A. Bailey, *The Congressional Globe: Containing the Debates and Proceedings of the Second Session of the Fortieth Congress ; Together with an Appendix, Comprising the Laws Passed at That Session; A Supplement Embracing the Proceedings in the Trial of Andrew Johnson* (Washington, DC: Office of the Congressional Globe, 1868), 2293.

transcontinental railroad. It was feared that, should a Civil War become a reality, such a railroad would be an important supply line for the South.[25]

Unsurprisingly, there was plenty of opposition to the treaty on the other side of the border as well. This land was extremely significant both culturally and historically to the Mexican people. With these negotiations coming on the heels of the Mexican-American War, in which the United States acquired roughly 530,000 square miles of their territory, the Mexican people no doubt felt as if the United States was taking their country from them piecemeal with Santa Anna and his army powerless to stop it.

While hesitant to sell even more territory to the United States, Santa Anna found himself in a dire situation. The Mexican government was bankrupt and desperately needed money. Its military was without funding and, to make matters worse, he knew if he refused to sell the Gadsden Territory the United States may instead attempt to take it by force. If that were to happen, he knew that his army could not defend it. He also knew, should Mexico lose and America take the land, they would not receive any payment at all.

While selling this territory to the United States was a bitter pill for Santa Anna to swallow, so to speak, he failed to see the potential value in this land, thus making the deal more palatable. There were not yet any railroads or agricultural development in this region and much of the mineral deposits were yet to be discovered. While he did not want to lose this land as it was part of his nation, Santa Anna thought financially he was getting the much better end of the deal.

The negotiations resulted in the Treaty of Mesilla, which was drafted on December 30, 1853. Four months later, on April 25, 1854, the treaty was ratified by the United States Congress,

[25] "Santa Anna and His Empire," *Daily National Era*, March 23, 1854, 2.

thus going into effect on June 30. President Franklin Pierce delivered his "Message to Senate on Treaty with Mexico" on February 10, 1854, in which he outlined, among other things, the financial agreement the United States had reached with Mexican President Santa Ana. It was agreed that.[26]

The $10,000,000 paid for the territory now known as the Gadsden Purchase would amount to well over $200,000,000 today. While Santa Ana was in no hurry to sell the territory, Mexico was in dire straits financially, leaving him little choice but to agree to the terms of the treaty. However, had he realized this land had a great deal of value in many respects, he may have reconsidered.

Following the Gadsden Purchase, attention again turned to the lingering dispute over the U.S. – Mexico border. The Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo was both somewhat vague and contained many inaccuracies when it came to the provisions it provided for surveying the border. Thus, something had to be done to settle the dispute once and for all. Adding to the tensions was the fact that the federal government wanted to build a southern railroad but could not do so autonomously under Article VI of the treaty. Article VI states in part that if a railroad were built on either the left or right bank of the Gila River, within the distance of one marine league of the river itself, both nations must agree to and benefit equally from its construction.[27]

Before the purchase, tensions were again increasing over the disputed borderline, and it looked as if a second war with Mexico may have been on the horizon. However, in Gadsden's negotiations with Mexican President Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, a more defined border was

[26] Franklin Pierce. "February 10, 1854: Message to Senate on Treaty with Mexico." Miller Center, February 23, 2017. https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/february-10-1854-message-senate-treaty-mexico.

[27] "Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848)."

agreed upon. In the months that followed, a joint surveying team was formed, and a new boundary line was laid down.

Preventing further tensions, it was agreed that there would be no further border disputes. Article I of the Treaty of Mesilla of 1853, also known as the Gadsden Purchase Treaty, states in part that the border line must be respected by both nations without exception, unless there was mutual agreement between both countries stating otherwise.[28]

However, while the border agreement laid out in the Gadsden Purchase was an enormous improvement over the vague language of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, this would not be the final word on the border disputes. Over time the Rio Grande River, on which a portion of the borderline lies, shifted course, again changing the border. As a result, the United States and Mexico jointly established the International Boundary and Water Commission in 1889. The role of the newly created commission would be to re-establish the border whenever the river was to change course.[29]

The resolution of the disputed Mexican-American border was one of the reasons the United States wanted to acquire the Gadsden Territory from Mexico. However, more important still was that the land that would become southern New Mexico and Arizona was an ideal route for a transcontinental railroad. Given the idyllic conditions in this area for the construction of a railroad, it is not surprising that this is the same route on which the Mormon Battalion had decided to build Cooke's Wagon Road on their westward march roughly ten years earlier. It is this trail that would eventually provide the route for the Southern transcontinental railroad.

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[28] Avalon Project - *Gadsden Purchase Treaty* : December 30, 1853, accessed July 23, 2022, https://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/mx1853.asp.

[29] *The Executive Documents of the Senate of the United States for the Second Session of the Fifty-Second Congress, and the Special Session of the Senate Convened March 4, 1893*., vol. 3 (Washington, D.C, 1894), 90.

Given the discovery of gold in California and the resulting influx of fortune seekers, the construction of a railroad was of the utmost importance. Complicating matters was the fact that at the time, the best canal and railroad routes to the Pacific coast were in Mexico. As the Mexican-American War had just ended a few years prior, tensions between the two nations were still very strained. It became necessary for the United States to build its rail system to end its reliance on Mexico's then-superior transportation routes.

While the United States was able to acquire the much-desired land from Mexico, increasing tensions in Congress over slavery in the new territory forced Washington to abandon any hopes of building a railroad in this area. However, this would later be revisited following the Civil War and a second transcontinental railroad would be constructed through this land as initially hoped. The southern transcontinental railroad was finally completed in 1883, with the main line in "Los Angeles with San Francisco, and Arizona on the south."[30]

In Arizona, the Southern Pacific Railroad followed the route of Cooke's Wagon Road from Yuma through Tucson and Benson. It was at this point the railroad veered north into the mountainous terrain of New Mexico. The El Paso and Southwestern Railroad had previously built a more southerly route that also closely followed Cooke's Wagon Road. This route ran through the cities of Hachita, New Mexico, and Benson and Douglas, Arizona. These two railroads joined to form the southern transcontinental railroad.

With Arizona and New Mexico now having direct access to California, the economic potential of these new territories was soon realized. Eventually the railroad united the East and West coasts and spawned a network of connecting local railroads in between. It was believed that

[30] Richard Josiah Hinton, *Handbook to Arizona: Its Resources, History, Towns, Mines, Ruins, and Scenery: Amply Illustrated: Accompanied with a New Map of the Territory* (San Francisco, CA: Payot, Upham and Company, 1878), 19.

upon completion of this network, the United States would begin to realize "the beneficial effects of being the center of a railway system whose iron arms stretch out to every point of the compass."[31]

It was thought that constructing the railroad would help rebuild relations with Mexico, at least to some extent. Much animosity remained over the annexation of Texas and the resulting war, leading to soured relations that would not begin to improve until the 1870s. At this point, given the border crisis and depression were now over, the American railroads and Mexico both began obtaining subsidies from both the Mexican government as well as private American investors to fund the construction of the new rail lines.[32]

Before construction on these new lines could begin, General William Jackson Palmer established the Mexican National Construction Company. Palmer, a Civil War Veteran and engineer, was one of the founders of the Denver and Rio Grande National Railroad. The Mexican National Construction Company built lines stretching from Mexico City to the Pacific. The Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad formed the Mexican Central Railroad Company to build lines stretching from Mexico City to El Paso and Guadalajara in Mexico.[33]

The new transcontinental railroad, now extending into Mexico, had a big impact on international commerce. Before the construction of the railroad, the United States and Mexico both were procuring goods from overseas that they could readily have purchased from each other. With the completion of the railroad, the United States began to import from Mexico many

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[31] Hinton, *Handbook to Arizona*, 19.

[32] *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Transmitted to Congress, with the Annual Message of the President, December 2, 1878.* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1878), 776-778.

[33] Ibid.

goods previously purchased elsewhere, including fruit, hides, wool, coffee, sugar, hemp, and other various fibers.[34]

While goods could be more readily sold to and purchased from Mexico, the new southern transcontinental railroad made trade overseas much easier as well. As a result, the railroad became extremely important to the economy of both nations. In the United States, it was particularly important to the economy of the southern states who, up to that point, had never had a strong transportation system. While there was a lengthy delay of nearly twenty-five years in the construction of the railroad, once began it would be a relatively short period before the South had an entire railroad network.

It should be noted, however, that the massive delay in the construction of the southern transcontinental railroad, while detrimental to the South, may very well have saved the nation. During the Civil War the North was home to most of the nation's industries, allowing the Union to better supply its troops. However, with the shortage of industry in the South, the Confederacy relied on what few rail lines the south did have to transport weapons and supplies. Had the southern transcontinental railroad been completed before the outbreak of the Civil War, as may very well have happened had Congress not been in a gridlock, the Confederate army would have had much better access to supplies, arms, and ammunition during the war.

However, this fortunately never came to pass, and the completion of the southern transcontinental railroad some twenty-five years later led to the growth and development of southern Arizona and New Mexico. Farmers and local businesses were now able to get their goods to market much more quickly. By that same token, they could more easily import goods and supplies as well.

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[34] Richard S. Spofford, *Southern Pacific Railroad, via New Orleans, San Antonio and El Paso* (Washington DC: Thomas McGill & Co., Printers, 1878), 14.

However, perhaps the biggest impact the railroad had in the development of this area came from the mining industry. Author and lawyer Richard S. Spofford stated that the quantity and value of the mines of precious metals found both in the American frontier and Mexico's northern States was unequaled elsewhere.[35] This resulted in the shipping of vast quantities of precious metals such as gold, silver, lead, and copper.

In Arizona there were large deposits of silver discovered, with one such deposit being so large it was nicknamed the "silver belt." It was "twenty miles in length by two in width."[36] There were also entire mountains composed of copper ore as well. New Mexico had gold, lead, copper, and silver deposits. The territory had rich deposits of quartz as well. Some of these mines were so rich they are still in operation today, such as the massive Chino copper mine.

While the railroad provided a new means of trade with larger, broader markets, and had a huge impact on the mining industry, it also had a massive impact on agriculture. Much of the agricultural success of this region came from livestock. The *Fair Play* newspaper from Sainte Genevieve, Missouri reported that "this beautiful valley nourishes vast herds of cattle, sheep, and horses, which graze upon the luxuriant herbage of their inexhaustible pasture ground."[37]

The railroad caused a boom in the cattle market. Before the construction of the railroad, taking cattle to market meant setting out on a long, labor-intensive cattle drive that often took months. However, the railroads allowed the ranchers to ship greater quantities of cattle at a much faster rate. A farmer was able to "can commence shipping as soon as his cattle are in good order, and ship as large a number as he can each month as he can drive in a season."[38]

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[35] Spofford, *Southern Pacific Railroad,* 17.
[36] Hinton, *Handbook to Arizona,*101.
[37] "Life in New Mexico," *Fair Play*, February 1, 1877.
[38] "The Houston and Texas Central Railway and Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railway and Their Connections," *Weekly Statesman*, March 12, 1874.

The cattle would be shipped to big cities, such as Chicago, where they would be butchered in massive slaughterhouses. Selling the meat before it spoiled, on the other hand, was one of the challenges plaguing the ranching industry. However, the railroad again provided a solution to this problem. With the invention of the refrigerated rail car meat could be shipped vast distances while remaining fresh. With this innovation, ranchers were able to have their cattle butchered and ship the meat out rather than shipping out the entire cow to a slaughterhouse for processing. Essentially, the refrigerated railroad car allowed the ranchers to cut out the middleman, so to speak.

It should be noted that sheep were a valuable commodity as well. In particular, the wool industry in the New Mexico Territory proved to be extremely lucrative. The *Las Vegas Gazette* stated, "There is not another branch in God's creation, which is more remunerative, than wool grown in New Mexico." That same newspaper was so bold as to state that anyone willing to go so far so to invest $10,000 or more in this industry would at least double their money yearly.[39]

The territory acquired by the Gadsden Purchase also gave rise to a large farming industry. Though arid, this land was also rich in rivers and streams that made irrigation possible. In other areas that were less hospitable, such as along the Rio Grande, irrigation ditches were dug. Those dug along the Rio Grande alone had made farmable millions of acres of otherwise unworkable land. As a result, the farmers in this region were able to grow many crops. These included potatoes, alfalfa, grape vines, different kinds of vegetables and various types of grains such as oats, corn, and wheat barley.[40] [41]

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[39] "The Resources of New Mexico," *Las Vegas Gazette*, April 11, 1874.
[40] "The Resources of New Mexico," *Las Vegas Gazette*, April 11, 1874.
[41] "Farm and Garden: Arizona as a Farming Country," *Salt River Herald*, March 16, 1878.

Much of what grew was exported by the railroad. This was made possible by the refrigerated railroad car as it prevented the crops from rotting. These cars allowed the produce growers in the West to transport their product to the consumers in the East. With refrigerated cars, such perishable crops could be shipped thousands of miles without fear of rot. These cars also gave rise to regional produce specializations.[42]

With the rise of these new industries across the Gadsden Territory came an increase in emigration to the Southwest. Many wanted to try their hand at prospecting in the newly acquired mines or at agriculture on the vast new farmland. Regardless, the process of emigration was slow. Initially these new emigrants came by wagon train. As such, for those brave enough to seek out a new life in this new territory, the journey could take months. Still, thanks to the trail constructed by the Mormons the journey had become both faster and safer.

Unfortunately, however, settlement had not increased as much as had been hoped, causing the population to remain low. As the *Perrysburg Journal* stated, the was little emigration to the territory and that with a population of 60,000, there were only roughly 300 Americans. "The native population bears the proportion of two hundred, to one-American."[43]

The above-noted ratio of Native Americans to Americans living in this territory at the time of its purchase from Mexico highlights one of the major issues facing emigration at that time in the nation's history. Regardless of what state or territory one wished to move to, attacks from Native Americans were not only a concern but a very real possibility. While many tribes were peaceful, there were also many documented cases of such attacks validating this concern.

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[42] Ajay Kumar Gupta, *The Complete Book on Cold Storage, Cold Chain and Warehouse* (Delhi, India: NIIR Project Consultancy Services, 2022), 63.

[43] "Taxation in New Mexico," *The Perrysburg Journal*, December 16, 1854.

As a result of these attacks, in the years following the Gadsden Purchase, the federal government stationed troops in this territory to protect against the Apache Tribe.[44] Eventually the attacks would subside and allow emigration to slowly increase. However, this new growth would be short-lived.

In 1861 the settlement of this new territory hit another major roadblock with the outbreak of the Civil War. President Abraham Lincoln noted how the war had affected the New Mexico Territory in his Third Annual Message delivered to the Thirty-Eighth Congress on December 8, 1863. He noted that "There is still a great deficiency in laborers in every field of industry, especially in agriculture, and in our mines, as well of iron and coal as well as precious metals, while the demand for labor is thus increased." This lull in emigration and decrease in labor was no doubt due to so many men joining the war effort, either in the military or on the home front, so to speak.[45]

Roughly ten years after the war ended construction began on the southern transcontinental railroad and, upon its completion, emigration would finally begin to increase substantially. Among these new emigrants was a group of eighty Mormons. Working to extend the borders of their new promised land, the center of which was Salt Lake City, this group had settled in the Salt River Valley.[46]

It should be noted that, regardless of how the emigrants arrived in this new territory, whether it be by wagon train, stagecoach, or railroad, these methods of emigration all had one very important thing in common. They all utilized the road the Mormon Battalion built through

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[44] Ben Sacks, "The Origins of Fort Buchanan: Myth and Fact," *Arizona and the West* 7, no. 3 (1965): 207-226.

[45] Abraham Lincoln, "December 8, 1863: Third Annual Message," Miller Center, February 23, 2017, https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/december-8-1863-third-annual-message.

[46] "Mining Matters," *The Citizen*, March 24, 1877.

the southern end of the New Mexico territory on their history-making march. Without the construction of this road, known as Cooke's Wagon Road, it would have been substantially harder to emigrate to this region.

Cooke's Wagon Road continued to have an impact on both emigration and shipping to this region well into the twentieth century. Within ten years of the southern transcontinental railroad's completion, the "horseless carriage," began gaining popularity. Of course, it would still be some time before cross-country travel by automobile would become a reality.

However, with the innovation of the automobile, some railroads began to fall by the wayside. With that, in 1961 New Mexico Highway 9 was built following a portion of Cooke's Wagon Road that spanned from El Paso, Texas to Douglas, New Mexico. Highway 9 also intersects with no less than nine other highways throughout this region, demonstrating just how significant it is to this region.[47]

It should also be noted that with the invention of the automobile came a new way to vacation. In its role in New Mexico's highway system, Highway 9 also plays an important role in the region's tourism industry as well. This illustrates just how important Cooke's Wagon Road was to emigration, immigration, and the economy of this area, both past, and present.

From the construction of Cooke's Wagon Road to the rise of the automobile, the battalion helped to shape the American West. In doing so, they played an important role in the defeat of the Mexican forces at the Battle of La Mesa in Los Angeles. This helped to secure California and ultimately the surrender of Mexico shortly thereafter, thus ending the Mexican-American War. In helping to bring about the end of the war, the battalion also played a significant role in the peace treaty, known as the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, in which the United States acquired 529,000

[47] "Navajo Route 9, New Mexico," accessed July 23, 2022, https://ehillerman.unm.edu/node/1694.

square miles of land. This treaty would greatly impact the growth of the western United States in many ways. These include access to many new ports from which to facilitate trade and immigration, the discovery of new mineral deposits, the establishment of greater fortifications, and the defining of the Mexican-American border, however vague it may have been.

Six years later, the Mormon Battalion played a direct and indirect role in the Gadsden Purchase. In constructing Cooke's Wagon Road through this territory on their march westward, they played a direct role in that they built what became an ideal route for the southern transcontinental railroad. The location of this railroad "was more than coincidental; one of the Battalion's most important achievements was its success in pioneering a useful and important transportation corridor through the Southwest."[48] As such, this fueled the government's desire to purchase this region from Mexico. Simultaneously, there were numerous unresolved issues stemming from the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, in which the battalion had a direct role.

Given that these issues were resolved in the Gadsden Purchase Treaty, also known as the Treaty of Mesilla, it can be argued that the battalion had not only a direct role but also an indirect role in the Gadsden Purchase as well. This land eventually provided a route for the southern transcontinental railroad, which drastically increased trade and gave rise to vast agricultural and mining industries. This, combined with the increase in emigration, led to great growth.

Through both the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the Gadsden Purchase, the Mormon Battalion had a major impact on western expansion into this region. They helped to change the west in many ways. While they may have been forgotten by many, the battalion left a legacy that can still be felt in many ways today.

[48] *Mormon Battalion Trail Study,* 22.

Chapter Six: Indian Wars and Westward Expansion in the Utah Territory

When the Mormons resided in Nauvoo, Illinois, they formed a militia known as the Nauvoo Legion. Many members of the legion later went on to join the Mormon Battalion. When the battalion eventually disbanded and returned to what would become the Utah Territory, they formed the Deseret Militia, which would later become the Utah Territorial Militia. The Mormons and other settlers of the territory came in contact with numerous Native American tribes. Such contact sometimes resulted in conflicts in which the militia was called into action.

Many emigrants moving westward utilized wagon trails that cut through this region and, as a result, they were subject to attacks from the Native Americans. As a result, St. Louis Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Thomas H. Harvey, recommended that the government purchase roads leading to the mountains and then pay the Native Americans to let the settlers pass through peacefully.[1]

However, this recommendation did not come to fruition. Instead, the Deseret Militia, the successor of the Mormon Battalion comprised of many of its former members, kept the Utah territory safe by defending against such attacks. This allowed settlers to live in peace and emigrants to pass through without being harmed. In maintaining the peace, the militia helped facilitate settlement and further westward expansion. In doing so, they fought in numerous conflicts against the Native Americans including The Battle at Fort Utah, Wakara's War (also known as Walker's War), the Tintic War, the Paiute War (also known as the Pyramid Lake War), and The Ute Black Hawk War (not to be confused with the Black Hawk War of 1832).

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[1] *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs: Transmitted with the Message of the President at the Opening of the Second Session of the Twenty-Ninth Congress, 1844* (Washington, D.C.: Ritchie and Heiss Printers, 1846), 74.

When the Mormons first arrived in what would become the Utah Territory, they wished to establish peaceful relations with Ute Indians. In trying to do so, Young addressed Chief Wakara telling him that, if the Utes did not hurt them or attack their settlements they would be blessed. He continued "we are sent here by the Great Spirit to teach you and do all of you good."[2]

His efforts seemed to pay off as initially, relations between them were mostly peaceful. When conflict did arise, however, it was for numerous reasons, the biggest of which was the fact that some tribes were hostile to the Mormons establishing settlements on their lands. While some offered to sell their land, their offer was refused. While the Mormons believed that one could hold a stewardship over the land, they believed that it could not belong to anyone as it was God's land.[3] Rather, they believed in owning the rights to it, which could then be sold or bequeathed.[4] As such, in trying to ensure no such deals were made, Brigham Young discouraged buying and trading with the Native Americans. As a result, the Native Americans were often pushed off the land by the Mormons instead, creating further hostilities.[5]

The state of affairs between the Native Americans and the Mormons tended to depend upon which tribe they were dealing with. There were many tribes throughout this territory at the time of Mormon settlement, most of whom were loosely unified into the Ute Nation. Some of those bands within the Ute Nation had further united into a confederacy under Chief Wakara. He and his brothers or half-brothers led different bands within the confederacy.[6]

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[2] Albert Smith, *Reminiscences and Journal*, n.d., 55-56.

[3] Jeanne Kay and Craig J. Brown, "Mormon Beliefs about Land and Natural Resources, 1847–1877," *Journal of Historical Geography* 11, no. 3 (1985): 253.

[4] Ibid., 259.

[5] William Clayton, *Journal*, 335.

[6] Richard F. Burton, *The City of the Saints and across the Rocky Mountains to California* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1862), 475.

Wakara was very welcoming to the Mormons, so much so that he invited them to settle on his land. He quickly struck up a friendship with Brigham Young who, in return, had promised to teach his people to farm and to provide them with schooling. Unfortunately, Wakara eventually claimed to have never made such an offer. However, he had done so on numerous occasions. Further, he went so far as to get baptized into the Mormon Church. He later expressed an interest in joining the ministry as well.[7] That being said, it is difficult to refute his alleged respect and admiration for the Mormon Church, at least initially.

Despite initially having a fondness for one another, relations between the Utes and the Mormons began to sour as the Timpanogos Utes, angry that the Mormons were encroaching on their land, repeatedly stole cattle from them. This continued despite the efforts of Wakara to hold those responsible accountable.[8]

In retaliation for the continuous cattle thefts, three Mormon men accused a Native American they had nicknamed "Old Bishop" of theft. When he denied the allegations they shot him, filled his body with rocks, and threw it in the Provo River. When the Utes found out, they demanded compensation. However, the Mormons refused to pay them and refused to turn over the perpetrators. As a result, the Utes continued to steal their livestock and their crops. They also shot their horses and attempted to shoot the Mormons themselves. This was all done in an attempt to incite fear, thus giving the Mormons an incentive to find a new home somewhere else.[9]

Tensions only increased as the Utes continued to steal livestock and attack emigrants moving westward through the Utah Territory. Those held up in Fort Utah waited until spring

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[7] Caravalho. *Incidents of Travel and Adventure in the Far West*, 224.

[8] *Journal History*. Salt Lake City, UT: Church History Library of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1850.

[9] Young, *Manuscript History of Brigham Young 1847-1850*, 17-18.

1850, at which time relations had deteriorated to the point they felt compelled to reach out to Governor Brigham Young and the Legislature in Salt Lake City for help.[10]

Captain Peter Canover, commander of the fort, and Miles Weaver delivered the message to headquarters. The message stated that the Utes had been hostile, attacked the citizens, and attacked the citizens. Canover noted that these actions warranted self-defense and that immediate action should be taken.[11]

Despite hearing of the predicament at the fort, the Mormon leaders were hesitant to retaliate. They knew that, given their relationship with the federal government, any action they took was likely to be misinterpreted. As such, they needed to proceed with caution "where other communities, whose loyalty and good intentions were unquestioned, might have risked all with impunity."[12]

The Mormons were also peaceful, nonviolent people. As such, it was initially the policy of church leadership to refrain from shooting Native Americans. When Young asked for his advice as to how to handle the situation at Fort Utah, Captain Howard Stansbury stated, "in my judgement the contemplated expedition against these savage marauders was a measure not only of good policy, but one of absolute necessity and self-preservation."[13]

Taking this advice to heart, as relations deteriorated and self-defense became necessary, Brigham Young eventually relented on this policy. In doing so, he authorized Adjutant General Daniel H. Wells to draft Special Order Number 2 to Captain George D. Grant. The order read in part that Grant was to proceed to Fort Utah with a Company of fifty officers to stop the hostile

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[10] Peter Gottfredson, *History of Indian Depredations in Utah* (Salt Lake City, UT: Fenestra Books, 1919), 28.

[11] "From the Salt Lake ." *The Port Gibson Herald, and Correspondent*. July 5, 1850.

[12] Gottfredson, *History of Indian Depredations in Utah*, 28.

[13] Howard Stansbury, *An Expedition to the Valley of the Great Salt Lake of Utah: Including A Description of Its Geography, Natural History, and Minerals, and an Analysis of Its Waters: With an Authentic Account of the Mormon Settlement* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo and Co., 1852) 149.

Indians. He noted that "Circumstances may require, exterminating such, as do not separate themselves from their hostile Clans, and sue for peace."[14]

It should be noted that in this context the term "extermination" was not referring to genocide. Rather, it refers to killing only those who were hostile to the Mormons. This is supported by the fact that not only were there few casualties but that the prisoners were treated reasonably well. Not only were they fed and housed, but they were eventually released without repercussions.[15]

Shortly thereafter the militia set out for Fort Utah from Salt Lake City accompanied by Stansbury. He also supplied camp equipment, arms, and ammunition. Additionally, he provided Lieutenant George W. Howland as adjutant as well as a physician by the name of Dr. James Black. Led by Wells, the militia arrived at the Timpanogos village near Fort Utah in early February 1850. While there were attempts to reach a peace agreement, it was to no avail. Even so, there were some in the tribe who held no ill will toward the Mormons and wished to maintain good relations. As there was a danger of a conflict breaking out, Mormons opened the doors of Fort Utah and allowed these friendly Native Americans to take refuge inside.[16]

As was expected, the negotiations failed, and shortly thereafter the tribe opened fire on the Mormons. For two days (the 8th and 9th of February) they made a desperate resistance. They were finally driven out, however, with the loss of some forty warriors. "One of the saints was killed, and a few wounded. After a few more skirmishes, in which the brethren sustained no loss,

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[14] Daniel H. Wells, "'Native American Extermination Order,'" Mormonr, accessed July 31, 2022, https://mormonr.org/qnas/dxS5B/native_american_extermination_order/research#re-pFMtec-tSGWDb.

[15] "Native American Extermination Order," Mormonr, accessed July 31, 2022, https://mormonr.org/qnas/dxS5B/native_american_extermination_order.

[16] Jared Farmer, *On Zion's Mount: Mormons, Indians, and the American Landscape* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 72.

peace was restored."[17] The one saint who was killed was Joseph Higbee, the son of church elder Isaac Higbee.[18]

Following the battle, there were several Timpanogos that had escaped. The militia, partially comprised of former members of the Mormon Battalion, was ordered to continue pursuing them and, if they surrendered peacefully, not to harm them. However, if they attempted to fight back, they were to be killed. Young stated "pursue them until you use them up. Let it be peace with them or extermination."[19] The tribe was followed for several days before the militia turned back.

During these conflicts, the Deseret Militia was armed with the best guns available. In fact, should be noted that the man responsible for providing arms for the Nauvoo Legion, the predecessor to the Mormon Battalion and later Deseret Militia, was early firearms pioneer and fellow Mormon Johnathan Browning. Born in Sumner County, Tennessee Browning was a blacksmith by training but quickly turned his interest to experimenting with firearms.

In the following years, he would relocate his family two more times, following the rest of the Mormon Church. They would move to Nauvoo, Illinois where Browning set up a firearm shop. Here he experimented with newer and ever more deadly firearm designs.[20]

As a Mormon, he indulged in the practice of polygamy and had three wives and twenty-two children.[21] It is important to note that his sons Jonathan Moses Browning and Matthew

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[17] "From the Salt Lake," *Weekly National Intelligencer*, July 6, 1850.

[18] Schuyler Colfax and John Taylor, *The Mormon Question, Being a Speech of Vice-President Schuyler Colfax, at Salt Lake City. A Reply Thereto by Elder John Taylor: And a Letter of Vice-President Colfax* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Office, 1870), 28.

[19] Will Bagley, *Kingdom in the West: The Mormons and the American Frontier* (Logan, UT: Utah State University Press, 1998), 72.

[20] Edward W. Tullidge, ed., *Tullidges Histories Containing All the History of the Northeastern, Eastern, and Western Counties of Utah; Also the Counties of Southern Idaho*, vol. 2 (Salt Lake City: Edward W. Tullidge Publisher, 1889), 234.

[21] Ibid., 235.

Sandefur Browning followed in their father's footsteps. Working beside their father in the shop they became prolific firearms inventors as well. In fact, they were key players in the later invention of semi-automatic and automatic firearms. Together they founded Browning Brothers in 1878, which later became the Browning Arms Company.[22]

Browning, Sr. became a very sought-after gun maker for the militia. His services were in such high demand that Brigham Young would not let him move to Utah until all the Mormons setting out from Nauvoo were well-armed. Young stated that "each wagon train must be equipped […] for survival in whatever abiding place the Lord should choose. The brethren must be provided with guns; they would need every gun which would be made or obtained and made serviceable…"[23]

He made numerous firearm innovations in his own right, the most famous of which was his take on the repeating rifle. This rifle allowed the shooter to fire successive rounds much more quickly, making it very deadly. Many of the legion members utilized his weapons and, as those that joined the Mormon Battalion were allowed to bring their personal arms with them, these guns accompanied them on the trail as well.

Upon the battalion's arrival in Utah after being discharged from the United States Army, many of them joined the newly formed Deseret Militia.. Though the Deseret Militia had several incarnations over the following decades, the one thing that never changed was their reliance on Browning's arms. It would be his weapons that would be utilized time and again to defend the Utah Territory from the Native Americans, thus keeping the region safe for emigrants, whether settling or passing through to lands farther west.

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[22] "Browning Firearms Collection." Internet Archive. Accessed August 30, 2022. https://web.archive.org/web/20121120215642/http://files.asme.org/ASMEORG/Communities/History/Landmarks/5508.pdf.

[23] Young to Daniel H. Wells, February 14, 1850, Territorial Militia Records, 1849-77, Utah State Archives, No. 1312.

After the battle had ended, there remained a mutual mistrust. Regardless, Wakara claimed to still be loyal to the Mormons. Shortly thereafter he was ordained as a church elder.[24] Even so, he could not control the actions of the other bands of Utes that were not under his leadership.

Many of these tribes continued to clash with the Mormons over land use and small skirmishes continued. Eventually the "extermination" campaign ended, and the Mormons turned instead to efforts to try to appease the Native Americans. Regardless of their efforts, however, it was too little too late.

Not only were the Mormons encroaching on the sacred lands of the Utes but, adding insult to injury, they were seriously infringing on their business interests as well. The Utes were actively engaged in slavery. They sold their wives and children as well as prisoners of war to the Spaniards to be used as slaves. Many were also sold to the Spaniards for European goods who, in turn, sold them to Mexico to work in the mines.[25] Through engaging in these practices, they were not only able to accumulate wealth, but they believed doing so brought great honor to their respective families.

These mounting tensions between the Utes and the Mormons were largely a matter of one major issue, that of clashing cultures. The Mormons were admittedly upsetting the Ute way of life which they had followed for hundreds if not thousands of years. As such, they were beginning to rebel against the settlers on their land.

The issue of clashing culture is itself extremely complex and would pose a major issue for any settlers hoping to make their home in the Utah Territory or looking to pass through to establish a new home further westward. Complicating this issue is the fact that the Utes were a

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[24] Caravalho. *Incidents of Travel and Adventure in the Far West*, 224.

[25] H. G. Cutler and Levi W. Yaggy, *Panorama of Nations, or, Journeys among the Families of Men: A Description of Their Homes, Customs, Habits, Employments and Beliefs ; Their Cities, Temples, Monuments, Literature and Fine Arts* (Chicago: Western Publishing House, 1888), 398.

nation of many different tribes, many of which were not under Wakara's control. While the Mormons had extensive relations with Wakara and those tribes commanded by him and his brothers and half-brothers, many tribes did not communicate with them, instead deciding to resort to violence and act out against those settling on their land.

While the Mormons actively tried to maintain peaceful relations with the Native Americans, they sometimes found themselves at odds with their way of life. This sometimes resulted in ethical dilemmas, such as that concerning slavery. In such instances, the Mormons took action to do what they believed was right despite knowing it would further strain relations with the Native Americans.

Maintaining peaceful relations was complicated by the fact that rather than establishing villages, some of the tribes were mobile. As such, settlers never knew when they may encounter them or whether they would be attacked. This presumption of danger, combined with the inevitable language barrier undoubtedly led to a great deal of miscommunication and resulting conflict.

Further, some tribes were simply not interested in peace. They saw the settlers taking their land, wild game, and other resources and were more interested in revenge than peaceful coexistence. As such, they adopted an "eye for an eye" mentality and sought retribution by attacking the settlers and their livestock.[26]

In addressing the issue of encroachment and learning to coexist, Brigham Young stated that the land was plentiful enough for both parties and that the Mormons would teach them how to farm the land.[27] However, some were not interested in learning an agricultural lifestyle,

[26] Brigham Young. *Brigham Young Papers.* United States: n.p., 1857.

[27] *Journal History* (Salt Lake City, UT: Church History Library of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1846).

instead opting to maintain their ancestral way of life. It is hardly surprising that many of the Native Americans did not want to abandon the only way of life they had ever known. Still, Young knew, however, that no matter which way of life they chose, there must be peace between them.

While the relationship between the Mormons and the various Ute tribes had been somewhat strained, they were at least stable. However, that stability was challenged when Brigham Young informed the Mexicans in the Utah Territory that trade with the Native Americans needed to be conducted within the confines of federal law. This was yet another major threat to Wakara's power as well as to the economic well-being of the Utes as a whole.[28]

Wakara again claimed to still want peace regardless of all that had transpired between the Utes and their Mormon neighbors. However, the Mormons remained suspicious of his true intentions. These misgivings increased when the attacks persisted.

Jacob Holeman, an agent from the Office of Indian Affairs sent to oversee Young, made note of such attacks, stating that the presence of the Mormons "creates much dissatisfaction among the Indians; excites them to acts of revenge; they attack emigrants, plunder and commit murder whenever they find a party weak enough to do so, thereby making the innocent suffer for injuries done by others."[29] Young did not deny such incidents but instead refuted any accusations that Mormons provoked such attacks through encroachment. In doing so, he cited the various ways they had helped the Native Americans and improved their land, leaving them more well-off.

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[28] Jones, *Forty Years Among the Indians,* 51-53.

[29] Young to Luke Lea, May 28, 1852, Letter, J. Willard Marriott Digital Library at the University of Utah, American West Center, https://collections.lib.utah.edu/file?id=375131 (accessed August 3, 2022).

Young also noted that attacks on emigrants were sometimes, though not always, the result of the fact that they "treat all Indians as enemies."[30] This inevitably led some emigrants to preemptively attack Native Americans out of fear without first knowing their true intentions. While condemning such acts, Young cautioned that, despite claiming to desire friendship, the Native Americans cannot be trusted.[31]

As relations remained precarious to say the least, Young warned the settlers not to let their guard down and to keep their firearms close at hand.[32] Though they remained on guard, no major conflicts occurred for the remainder of the year. However, this perceived friendliness would not last long.

In early 1853 the Native Americans again began to show hostility. To make matters worse, the Mexicans were trying to revive the slave trade with the Utes. To put a stop to the re-emerging slave trade, Young had all Mexicans in the territory arrested and imprisoned until further notice.

This continued interference in the slave trade only further angered the Utes. A fur trader named M. S. Martenas, who had known Wakara since childhood stated, "one prominent cause of the present excitement is the interference of the Mormons with their long-established Spanish trade" He continued, "I greatly fear that much difficulty will grow out of the present excited condition of the Indians.[33]

Both Young and Wakara continued to express a desire to have peace but had a deep distrust of each other. The Native Americans thought their anger toward the Mormon's was

[30] Ibid.
[31] Ibid.
[32] "Extracts." *Deseret News.* May 14, 1853.
[33] Young. *Brigham Young Papers*.

justified as Brigham Young had essentially stripped Wakara of his power. To make matters worse, the Mormons had turned their very way of life upside down.

However, it was the development of the land, the encroachment that was necessary for the Utah Territory to grow and for westward expansion to move forward. Young and the Mormons were not intentionally trying to harm the Native Americans or disrupt their way of life. Rather, they too were doing what needed to be done for their people to thrive.

Furthermore, Young had every right to not trust Wakara as his actions spoke much louder than his words. In voicing his concern, Young stated that Wakara ruled through fear. He noted that among other things, the Utes had made all emigrants passing through to California pay him a toll and that they stole the emigrants' children and sold them into slavery.[34]

Despite their differences and lack of trust in one another, Young remained cautiously optimistic that peace could be achieved. Wakara had even begun to embrace some aspects of the settlers' way of life. He and Young both knew that there were many advantages to embracing each other's cultures and lifestyles. However, while the leaders advocated for peace, their followers were much more hesitant. This attempt at peace was made more difficult by the fact that the same issues continued to arise. The Utes continued to steal Mormon property while the Mormons continued to encroach on Native American land and to impose new regulations on them.[35]

Unfortunately, any hope of peace was effectively shattered on July 15, 1853, when a Mormon man named James Ivey was trading with some Ute Indians at his home when a verbal altercation broke out between one of the Native Americans and his wife. When Ivey tried to step in and diffuse the situation, they tried forcing their way into his cabin. Ivey then killed one of

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[34] Young, *Journal of Discourses, vol. 1*, 170.
[35] Caravalho. *Incidents of Travel and Adventure in the Far West*, 213.

them, a relative of Wakara's named Shower-O-Cats, and injured two others out of self-defense. When Wakara learned of this incident, he demanded that the Mormons turn over Ivey, but they refused. This set off a series of raids collectively known as the Wakara War.[36]

Ivey later gave his versions of events to A. Mae Spofford, the Commissioner of the Court of Claims in Salina, Utah. In doing so he stated that a squaw came to his home trying to trade fish for flour when two other armed Native Americans forced their way into his home. They attacked and after a brief altercation, he knocked all three unconscious with the barrel of his gun. That night out of retaliation the Native Americans attacked the town of Payson and killed a man by the name of Keel who had been standing guard.[37]

Young sent several parties to meet with the Utes to try and establish peaceful relations again. The Utes agreed to peace in exchange for some blankets, one cow or ox, and one gun. The Mormons agreed, intending to follow through, but were subsequently unable to provide these items due to their scarcity. This inability to follow through again angered the Utes. Desiring to make peace at any cost, the Mormons tried again to negotiate with them. They initially agreed to provide the Utes with two cows or oxen and four sacks of flour. However, Wakara again demanded that Ivey be handed over to him to be put on trial. The Mormons refused and the peace negotiations failed once again.[38]

When no agreement could be made, Wakara was still hesitant to go to war. While he desired peace, tensions boiled over and reached a point of no return. As a result, he felt he had no other choice but to retaliate. Soon thereafter the Wakara War, also known as Walker's War, began.

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[36] Peter Conover, *Journal*, n.d.
[37] *Deposition of James Ivie*, October 21, 1897, 2-3, James Ivie vs. the United States.
[38] Gottfredson, *History of Indian Depredations in Utah*, 46.

As previously noted, though referred to as such, the Wakara War was not so much a war as it was a series of raids. These raids lasted for roughly ten months, from July 1853 to May 1854. During these raids the Utes repeatedly stole and killed livestock. They took crops and other goods from the Mormons. As a result, the Mormons sometimes took matters into their own hands and tracked down the Utes who stole their goods and killed them. However, Young issued orders against doing so. Instead, the militia was again called into action.

The Deseret Militia, partially comprised of former members of the Mormon Battalion, was dispatched to cities around the Utah Territory that were under threat. The settlers in these cities were ordered to build new forts for their protection. They proceeded to arrange their houses into makeshift strongholds, constructing them in a square formation with mud walls filling the gaps between them. In the center they built corrals for their livestock, to protect them from theft.[39]

The war placed a significant strain on the Mormons as not only did they have to live in forts for protection, but they were unable to tend to their crops. As a result, these crops were either taken by the Native Americans or destroyed by grasshoppers. This, combined with the continual theft of their livestock, created a substantial economic hardship.[40]

It should also be noted that, as they needed to evacuate to the forts, the towns the Mormons worked so hard to build fell into disrepair. In some cases, they were even burned down by the Native Americans. As Alman W. Babbitt noted, the effects of the ongoing attacks reduced these towns to a shadow of their former selves.[41]

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[39] *Deposition of George McKenzie*, 2-4, James Ivie vs. the United States.
[40] Adams, William Henry. *Family History and Reminiscences 1916 - ca. 1931*, n.d.
[41] *Journal History*, 1853.

Young again tried to make peace with Wakara, sending him some tobacco along with a letter stating that he wished for the Utes and the Mormons to be friends. Further, he offered gifts of beef cattle and flour should the Indians become hungry. He stated "When you get good natured again I would like to see you…You know that I have always been your best friend.[42]

While it was believed Wakara desired peace, it was thought that it was the Utes over whom he had no control that continued to perpetuate the war. Young's peace offering was rebuffed, and the violence continued. As a result, he issued a proclamation forbidding trade with the Utes.[43] Following this proclamation, Young sent a new order to the militia leader Daniel Ferguson. The militia was to prevent any trade with the Native Americans, to pursue any that were hostile, recover stolen property, and enforce federal law.[44]

The militia, which had many former members of the Mormon Battalion among its ranks, continued to defend against these raids and skirmishes which continued until December of 1853. At this point the conflict had mostly ceased, save for the occasional raid or cattle theft. Peace would not be reached until May of 1854, however, much of the details of these negotiations have since been lost to history.

What is known is that which was documented in the diary of Eli Bell. He stated that Young, along with numerous other church leaders met with Wakara. After smoking a peace pipe, Young gave Wakara numerous gifts including an ox, potatoes, thirteen cattle, and some sacks of flour.[45]

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[42] Junius F. Wells, ed., *The Contributor, Representing the Young Men's and Young Ladies Mutual Improvement Associations of the Latter-Day Saints*, vol. 9 (Salt Lake City, UT: Junius F. Wells Publisher, 1880), 163.

[43] Brigham Young, "Proclamation of Governor Brigham Young," *Deseret News*, August 19, 1853.

[44] Samuel W. Richards, ed., *The Latter-Day Saints' Millennial Star*, vol. 15 (Liverpool: Samuel W. Richards Publisher, 1853), 737.

[45] Eli Bell, *Diaries, 1854-1864*, Salt Lake City, Utah: Church History Library.

While the war had finally come to an end, it was not without a great cost to both the Mormons and the Ute Indians. Both suffered great economic hardship as a result of the hostilities and, though small in comparison to many other wars, both also suffered losses. It is known that the Mormons suffered nineteen casualties while the number of Utes lost, though not certain, is thought to be between twenty-four to thirty-four.[46]

The war also had another cost in the form of its effect on not only those trying to move to the Utah Territory but on those trying to pass through to California. In addressing this issue, Jefferson Davis stated that the routes westward should be defended. He believed military intervention was necessary, stating that "a force must be kept along those routes, or moving at stated periods across the continent to give protection to our emigrants traveling from the valley of the Mississippi to the slopes of the Pacific."[47]

Realizing the need to keep these emigrants safe, the Deseret Militia, in which many former members of the Mormon Battalion were enlisted, fought against the Native Americans to keep the territory safe for all, whether they be settlers or just passing through. In finally bringing an end to the war and establishing peace, they once again made westward expansion in and through this region both feasible and safe.

Unfortunately, as the causes of the Walker War were never adequately resolved and thus left to continue festering, it was only a matter of time before tensions rose again. As such, the Mormons continued to encroach on Native American lands. Through their mining operations and crop irrigation, they were also monopolizing the water supply.

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[46] Wimmer, *The Walker War Reconsidered,* 155.

[47] Jefferson Davis, *Jefferson Davis, Constitutionalist: His Letters, Papers and Speeches*, ed. Dunbar Rowland, vol. 3 (New York: J. J. Little & Ives Company, 1923), 207.

Indian Agent Garland Hunt wrote to Young, stating that the "white man" had encroached on the Ute hunting grounds, thus driving away the wild game. He noted that, as a result, the Indians were forced to either retreat to the mountains or deserts where they faced starvation and dehydration or "or to gain a meager subsistence either by begging or stealing."[48]

Again, Young tried to help the Native Americans and went so far as to set up farms for them where they could learn to plant and harvest if they were so willing. In 1856, as the winter months dragged on, those Utes who had refused Young's offer to learn to farm were struggling to find food and resorted to begging. However, the Mormons, short on rations themselves, had little to spare. As a result, these Utes led by a chief named Tintic began stealing cattle. In response to these thefts, the Utah Territorial Militia (the successor to the Deseret Militia), again with numerous members of the former Mormon Battalion among them, was again called into action. More specifically, a branch known as the Lehi Militia was mobilized. Under U.S. Deputy Marshal Thomas S. Johnson, the militia went in pursuit of Tintic and his tribe. However, Young told Johnson he was to keep the peace with the Native Americans and to not instigate conflict without first receiving council from the Superintendent of Indian Affairs[49]

The militia was sent with orders to apprehend Tintic and bring him back. However, he resisted and set off what would be the first conflict of the war. Upon the opening conflict of the war, Colonel Peter Conover issued a proclamation ordering the militia to ready themselves. In doing so he made it known that all efforts would be made to prevent the shedding of blood.[50]

The militia followed Tintic's tribe into the mountains and, though they were unable to capture him, they were able to recover many of their stolen cattle. They were also able to capture

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[48] Garland Hurt to Brigham Young, December 31, 1855.

[49] *Journal History* (Salt Lake City, UT: Church History Library of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1856): 21.

[50] "Proclamation from the Governor." *Deseret News.* February 27, 1856.

one Native American. However, he was adamant that he would not go peacefully to Salt Lake City to stand trial and be hung. To ensure this was not his fate he cut his own throat, dying shortly thereafter.[51]

This effectively ended the Tintic War. Ending in March 1856 the war lasted less than two months. Fortunately, the casualties were few on both sides. However, like with the outcome of the Wakara War, the underlying issues again remained unresolved.

Also like with the Wakara War, the Deseret Territorial Militia, the successor of the Mormon Battalion in which many of them served, was called into duty to again put down a Native American uprising. In doing so, peace was once again restored. As a result, settlers could make their way to the Utah Territory and those passing through to destinations further west could both once again do so safely.

Shortly after the conclusion of the Wakara War, there was yet another conflict that broke out. Unfortunately, as with each succeeding Native American war, the issues of land encroachment and culture clashes were never resolved. As a result, these same issues gave rise to the Pyramid Lake War, also known as the Paiute War.

Leading up to the outbreak of the war, the Native Americans living near the region of Pyramid Lake in the Utah Territory began orchestrating attacks on settlers in the area as early as 1857. These attacks came in the form of a series of raids. However, this was short-lived as there was a peace treaty signed the following year. Sadly, the peace was again fleeting as the Paiutes broke the treaty in 1860 after blaming the white men for the previous winter's harsh conditions.[52]

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[51] "Disturbance With Indians," *Deseret News*, March 5, 1856.

[52] Thomas Wren, *A History of the State of Nevada: Its Resources and People* (New York: Lewis Pub. Co., 1904), 264.

War officially broke out on May 7, 1860, with what has become known as the Williams Station Massacre. The Williams Station was something of an all-in-one stop consisting of a stagecoach stop, a saloon, a Pony Express station, and a general store. The attack resulted in five casualties and the station was burned down. The Williams Pony Express Station was not the last attacked by the Native Americans, as the Pony Express Station at Cold Springs was attacked shortly thereafter, and others would follow. However, this was not taken lightly.[53]

Shortly thereafter the First Battle of Pyramid Lake occurred, followed by the Second Battle of Pyramid Lake in July. Federal officers quickly proceeded to round up a local militia and put down these uprisings. Finally, in August both sides came to a ceasefire, though no treaty was signed.[54]

While the Pyramid Lake War was over, the following year the Civil War began. The federal government had increasing concerns over whether the Confederate States would attempt to recruit Native Americans in the Utah Territory to destroy the Pony Express lines and the newly built transcontinental telegraph lines. As these methods of communication were vital in communication with military forces in the field, ensuring their protection was of the utmost importance. Dylan S. Wood, Utah Superintendent for Indian Affairs, stated that it was necessary for the government to take steps to protect the telegraph and pony express lines from Native American attacks.[55]

Echoing this concern over Native American allegiance, Secretary of the Interior Caleb

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[53] "From California.; The Washoe War—Battle of Pyramid Lake-- Causes of the Outbreak—Exaggerations and Panics—Succinct Statement of the Whole Affair—Gossip about Town, &c," *New York Times Correspondent*, June 13, 1860, 1.

[54] Ibid.

[55] *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 135.

Blood Smith noted Indian Affairs were in a very poor state. He continued, the spirit of rebellion against the authority of the government, which has precipitated a large number of States into open revolt, has been instilled into a portion of the Indian tribes by emissaries from the insurrectionary States.[56]

The Governor of Utah, Alfred Cumming, thought the threat to these lines of communication was great enough to warrant protection from federal troops. As such, he requested the government send soldiers "for the protection of the Mail, Express, and emigrants, and, if need be, for the chastisement of the Indians."[57]

In response to Cumming's plea for assistance a telegram was sent to Brigham Young from Adjutant General Lorenzo Thomas on behalf of Secretary of War Simon Cameron. He requested that the Utah Territorial Militia defend the Pony Express and Telegraph lines. It stated in part that the President had authorized the formation of a calvary "to protect the property of the telegraph and overland mail companies in or about Independence Rock…"[58] Upon receiving this telegram, Young was happy to oblige. He stated, "the militia of Utah are ready and able, as they ever have been, to take care of all the Indians, and are able and willing to protect the mail line..."[59]

He sent two calvary units to guard the lines. The first, and larger of the two units, was commanded by federal officer Captain Lot Smith. The second unit was commanded by militia officer Colonel Robert T. Burton. It should be noted, however, that while Smith was a federal

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[56] Ibid., 3.

[57] "Affairs in Utah," *New York Times*, June 2, 1861, 2.

[58] United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies.* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1880), 27.

[59] *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Year 1862* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1863), 213.

officer, both units were comprised of members of the Utah Territorial Militia, many of whom served in the Mormon Battalion.[60]

The militia guarded these communication lines for a period of ninety days spanning May through August of 1862. From this point forward these communication lines were guarded by federal troops. As such, this marked the end of the Utah Territorial Militia's involvement in the Civil War.

Following the Civil War, the Mormon settlers and the Native Americans had a mostly peaceful coexistence. There was still the occasional cattle theft, but this was all but inevitable. However, during a particularly harsh winter in 1865, the Native Americans were hit hard by the "white man's" diseases, or smallpox and measles. They blamed the Mormons and vowed to retaliate.[61]

While the Mormons maintained peaceful relations with the Ute chiefs, it was the younger Utes that were hostile to them. John Lowry met with some of these Native Americans on April 9, 1865, at the town of Manti to discuss the recent cattle thefts and to ease further tensions. He stated that, while it initially appeared that everything would be settled peacefully, some Indians dissented, and one tried to attack him. In response, Lowry "rode up to him and turned him off his horse, and pulled him to the ground." [62]

The conflict on April 9 marked the beginning of Utah's Black Hawk War. There were also several small raids on April 10 and May 26, respectively. While some remained friendly, members of five different tribes took part in the war. These tribes include the Ute, Paravan, Piede, Paiute, and Navajo Indians. A group of Native Americans later ambushed and killed a

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[60] Kenneth L. Alford, *Utah and the American Civil War: The Written Record* (Norman: Arthur H. Clarke Co., 2017), 48.

[61] Gottfredson, *History of Indian Depredations in Utah*, 129, 136.

[62] Ibid.

Mormon man named Robert Gillispie on July 13 and another man, recorded only as A. Robinson, was killed the following day. It was then that the Utah Territorial Militia was again called into action.[63]

On July 18 one hundred men under the command of General Warren S. Snow arrived in Grass Valley, the site of the murders, and confronted the Native Americans camping there. Upon doing so, gunfire erupted. However, there was debate on both sides as to who fired the first shot. Led by Snow, the calvary then chased a group of hostile Native Americans into the mountains, killing fourteen of them.[64]

The following seven years saw many skirmishes and continued cattle theft. In all, there were dozens of conflicts during the war resulting in many casualties. Most of these conflicts occurred between 1865 and 1867 when Chief Black Hawk surrendered. The following year a peace treaty was signed in Strawberry Valley. Wanting peace, Black Hawk "requested Colonel Head to cut his hair for him in token of his abandonment of the war-path, and promised to induce as many as possible of his adherents to join him in peace as they had followed him to war."[65]

Despite Black Hawk's surrender, this did not stop the raids entirely. However, he made it known that these continuing raids were being perpetrated by those who were either not following his orders or were not under his command. They continued until 1872, when the militia was again called upon to prevent what likely would otherwise have been another bloody conflict. Even though the peace treaty had been signed in 1868, this was considered to be the official end of the Black Hawk War.[66]

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[63] Whitney, *History of Utah*,191.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Ibid.
[66] Ibid., 212.

The Utah Territorial Militia, the successor to the Mormon Battalion, with many of its former members among their ranks, had again restored peace in the Utah Territory. With the end of the war came the end of most Native American resistance in the Utah Territory. As a result, the number of immigrants increased drastically as did the number of communities within the territory. It also became much safer for those looking to pass through the Utah Territory and settle elsewhere.

Following the Black Hawk War, the Federal government placed the Utes on a couple of different reservations. In 1873, the Utes residing in a portion of Colorado that was still part of the Utah Territory were relocated to the Southern Ute Indian Reservation. Upon doing so Secretary of the Interior Columbus Delano penned a letter to Speaker of the House of Representatives James G. Blaine stating in part "I have the honor, herewith, to lay before Congress, for the consideration and action of that body, an agreement concluded with certain Ute Indians."[67]

In 1882, President Chester A. Arthur signed an executive order creating the Uncompahgre Reservation, also called the Uintah and Ouray Indian Reservation.[68] With the relocation of the Native Americans to these reservations, armed conflict in the Utah Territory had effectively come to an end.

In the Indian conflicts that plagued the Utah Territory through much of the 1850s-1870s the flames of war were continuously stoked by the same issues. The Native Americans and the "white man" had vastly different cultures and lifestyles making clashes all but inevitable. Adding

[67] *Report of the Secretary of the Interior Being Part of the Message and Documents Communicated to the Two Houses of Congress: At the Beginning of the First Session of the Forty-Third Congress.* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1873), 3.

[68] *Executive Orders Relating to Indian Reservations: From May 14, 1855 to July 1, 1912* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1912), 170-171.

to this the fact that the Native Americans were hunter-gatherers while the white men were farmers and built towns and cities led to many disputes, the largest of which was over land encroachment.

These conflicts at times resulted in making it nearly impossible for settlers to come to the Utah Territory or to pass through on their way to settle elsewhere out of fear for their own safety and that of their families. On numerous occasions the territorial military force was called into action to put down these uprisings and restore the peace, thus making the territory safe once again.

This territorial military force, partially comprised of former members of the Mormon Battalion, went through a couple of different incarnations once they reached the Utah Territory. From 1847-1852 this military force was known as the Deseret Militia and, upon Utah being granted territory status in 1852, the Deseret Militia was renamed the Utah Territorial Militia. Both incarnations were direct successors to the Mormon Battalion and repeatedly restored the peace during the many Indian Wars that ensued in the Utah Territory, including the Battle at Fort Utah, Wakara's War (also known as Walker's War), the Tintic War, the Paiute War (also known as the Pyramid Lake War) and The Ute Black Hawk War (not to be confused with the Black Hawk War of 1832).

The federal government did eventually step in and place the Native Americans on reservations, ending most of the conflict. However, it is important to note that before this, had the militia not repeatedly restored peace, westward growth in this region would have been greatly hindered. The militia, with former members of the Mormon Battalion serving among them, continuously maintained the peace not only allowing emigration and immigration to continue, but no doubt saving countless lives in the process. This allowed the region and areas

farther west to continue to grow and expand. While the Indian Wars did slow down this growth, without the militia, the direct successor of the Mormon Battalion, this growth may not only have slowed down but may very well have been reduced to nothing short of a trickle.

Chapter Seven

The Transcontinental Telegraph Line, First Transcontinental Railroad, and Westward Expansion into the Twentieth Century

In 1860 Congress passed the Pacific Telegraph Act of 1860 thus creating the first transcontinental telegraph in the United States. This telegraph line made communication from the East Coast to the West Coast nearly instantaneous for the first time. However, the Mormons, including former members of the battalion, helped to make this massive feat possible as they provided both supplies and labor to help build it. Their involvement with the telegraph also played a role in the Civil War. This resulted in the creation of the United States Army Signal Corps, the United States Military Telegraph Corps, and the Union Army Balloon Corps.

With the passage of the Pacific Railroad Act in 1862, President Lincoln also set in motion plans to build the first transcontinental railroad.[1] While construction initially stalled due to the Civil War, it would eventually connect the East and West coasts. Beginning in Council Bluffs, Iowa, where the railroads from the east terminated, it extended all the way to San Francisco.

The Mormons, including many former members of the battalion, helped in the construction of the railroad. From grading the surface to laying the ties and track, the Mormons, including members of the Battalion quite literally helped build the first transcontinental railroad from the ground up. Through their role in the construction of the transcontinental railroad, the battalion had an impact on the growth of the American West

[1] "Report of the Select Committee on the Pacific Railroad and Telegraph, 1856," Central Pacific Railroad Photographic History Museum, accessed August 10, 2023, http://cprr.org/Museum/HR_Report_358_1856.html.

During the Civil War, Congress also passed the Homestead Act of 1862, hoping to entice people to settle out west.[2] However, the Civil War again caused the new law to produce lackluster results. The war prevented the construction of the first transcontinental railroad, leaving few options for transportation out west. This, combined with many focusing their attention on the much-needed war effort, made it extremely difficult for would-be settlers to take advantage of the Homestead Act.

However, the construction of the railroad was finally completed after the conclusion of the Civil War. As a result, the success of the Homestead Act began to grow beyond Congress' wildest expectations. Emigrants quickly began taking the train in droves to their new homes on the western frontier.

The Homestead Act was later followed up with several other Homesteading Acts. These include the Timber Culture Act of 1873, the Desert Land Act of 1877, the Timber and Stone Act of 1878, and the Kinkaid Act of 1904. While the Homestead Act itself was designed to entice emigrants to settle the West as a whole, these additional acts were aimed at persuading additional emigrants to settle, for various reasons, in certain areas that remained uninhabited because they were not agriculturally viable.

However, some of these emigrants may not have made it out west had it not been for the transcontinental railroad. There were few other options, and those that did exist were much less desirous, to say the least. Had it not been for the battalion helping to build the actual railroad, these other options; being on foot, by wagon train, or on stagecoach; would have been the only

[2] Homestead Act (1862)," National Archives and Records Administration (National Archives and Records Administration), accessed June 28, 2022, https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/homestead-act#:~:text=The%20Homestead%20Act%2C%20enacted%20during,plot%20by%20cultivating%20the%20land.

alternatives. Through the success of the various homesteading acts, the Mormon Battalion had an impact on westward expansion.

Lastly, it should not be overlooked that the impact of the Mormon Battalion reaches well beyond the nineteenth century. The invention of the automobile necessitated proper roads to traverse the nation from East to West. The brainchild of auto pioneer Carl Fisher, the first of these nationwide highways was termed the Lincoln Highway as a memorial of sorts of President Abraham Lincoln and ran from Times Square in New York City to the appropriately named Lincoln Park in San Francisco.

In traversing the nation from East to West, the Lincoln Highway followed part of many different historic trails. These include the Great Sauk Train, Donner Pass, and the Overland Trail to name but a few. However, it also followed a portion of the route of the transcontinental railroad, which the members of the battalion helped to build. With the passage of the Federal-Aid Highway Act the Lincoln Highway became part of a much larger network of highways responsible for revolutionizing shipping, travel, and national defense.

Tangentially, the Mormon Battalion helped make the Lincoln Highway possible. As such, it led to a great deal of further development out west in many ways. Given this, through the incorporation of the railroad route they helped to construct, the battalion had an impact on westward expansion through the Lincoln Highway.

Through their help in constructing the first transcontinental railroad and transcontinental telegraph lines, the Mormon Battalion helped played a role in Westward expansion. This allowed for greater settlement and provided an advantage over Southern communications during the Civil War. Through these avenues, the battalion had an impact on the western expansion of the United States.

From the 1830s through the 1850s there was much experimentation with telegraphy among many different innovators of the age, perhaps the most famous of which was conducted by Samuel B. Morse. He invented the single-wire telegraph and shortly thereafter applied for a patent with the United States Patent Office and Trademark Office, which was granted in 1847. Unfortunately, he would spend the next six years in litigation over the patent, eventually ending up at the Supreme Court in 1853. The court eventually ruled in his favor.[3]

For the next several years Morse continued to improve upon and perfect his telegraph. Later, realizing the importance and potential impact of Morse's invention, Congress passed the Pacific Telegraph Act of 1860, also known as "An Act to Facilitate Communication between the Atlantic and Pacific States by Electric Telegraph." Signed into law on June 16, 1860, by President James Buchanan, this act states in part, the government was authorized to advertise for proposals for federal telegraph lines to be constructed beginning on the western border of Missouri. [4]

Congress wasted no time in soliciting bidders for the construction of the telegraph, one of whom was a prominent New York businessman named Hiram Sibley. In 1840 he assisted Morse and Ezra Cornell in their efforts to obtain $40,000 from Congress for the construction of the first telegraph line in the nation, which would run from Washington, DC to Baltimore.[5]

Congress was initially interested in Morse's invention and was about to provide the funding. However, this quickly changed upon the testimony of Morse himself in which he stated he could send a message from Washington to Baltimore in only two minutes. The chairman of

[3] "O'Reilly v. Morse, 56 U.S. 62 (1853)," Justia Law, accessed August 20, 2022, https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/56/62/.

[4] "Pacific Telegraph Act of 1860," Central Pacific Railroad Photographic History Museum, accessed August 20, 2022, http://cprr.org/Museum/Pacific_Telegraph_Act_1860.html.

[5] Ibid.

the committee stated, “twenty minutes is quick enough but two minutes is nonsense. The Professor is too radical and visionary, and I doubt if the committee would recommend the sum to be risked in such a manner.”[6]

Notwithstanding their opinion of Morse’s invention, Sibley succeeded in convincing the committee to appropriate $20,000, half of what they initially requested. Morse and Sibley were able to demonstrate the telegraph successfully, thus inspiring many others. Soon there were patents granted for various other telegraph designs. Various telegraph lines began to be constructed as well. However, these lines were divided among numerous different companies, thus preventing them from turning much of a profit.[7]

Realizing the potential in consolidation, Sibley quickly set about purchasing all the stock of the various telegraph companies, a process that would take three years. He then consolidated all these lines, a network now spanning thirteen states, and organized a new company. Sibley then founded a new organization called the New York and Mississippi Valley Printing Telegraph Company which would later be renamed The Western Union Telegraph Company.[8] He was the first president of the company and during his sixteen-year tenure, telegraph offices increased in number from 132 to more than 4,000 and their value increased from $220,000 to more than $48,000,000.[9]

Aside from Sibley, three other bidders were vying for the government contract. These included Benjamin Ficklin, Theodore Adams, and John Harmon. However, for various reasons, all three competing bidders dropped out. As a result, Sibley won the contract by default.[10] This

[6] “Pacific Telegraph Act of 1860.”
[7] *Scientific American Supplement*, 8455.
[8] “Pacific Telegraph Act of 1860.”
[9] *Scientific American Supplement*, 8455.
[10] “Pacific Telegraph Act of 1860.”

was only fitting as he was the one who had initially lobbied for the Telegraph Act to be passed in the first place.[11]

The transcontinental telegraph involved two telegraph lines. The first was the Pacific Telegraph Company, whose telegraph lines were already constructed and ran from the East Coast and terminated in Salt Lake City. The second line was Overland Telegraph Company, whose lines still needed to be constructed but once done, would run from California to Salt Lake City, thus connecting the East and West coasts.

The *Daily Alta California* newspaper stated that when finished the Overland Telegraph Company ran from San Francisco to Salt Lake City and from Sacramento to El Paso.[12] Much of Overland Telegraph Company's route followed the Oregon and California Trails as well as the Salt Lake Cutoff that the Mormon Battalion helped to construct on their way back to Utah after discovering gold near Sacramento, California. They made these routes much safer and much easier to traverse. One can only imagine how challenging it would have been trying to transport telegraph poles and other necessary equipment through these previously treacherous mountain passes. Had it not been for the work of the Mormon Battalion/ building and refining these trails, work on the telegraph lines would no doubt have been exponentially more difficult.

However, in constructing the telegraph lines running from California to the Salt Lake Basin, the Overland Telegraph Company ran into a unique challenge. Much of the terrain in this region was very sparse, creating a shortage of trees from which to make telegraph poles. As a result, the Mormons were asked for their help. Their help proved to be invaluable as they provided not only poles but also labor and such necessities as transportation, feed, and food.[13] It

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[11] *Scientific American Supplement*, 8455.

[12] "Overland Telegraph Company," *Daily Alta California*, April 14, 1861.

[13] *Journal History* (Salt Lake City, UT: Church History Library of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1861).

should be noted that many of the Mormon men who provided labor in constructing the telegraph lines were former members of the battalion as well.

The transcontinental telegraph was completed on October 17, 1861. The following day, Brigham Young was given the honor of sending the first message over its wires which was addressed to Jeptha H. Wade, the new president of the Western Union Telegraph Company, congratulating him on completing construction of the Overland Telegraph Line. It stated in part that he wished "that its use may ever tend to promote the true interests of the dwellers upon both the Atlantic and Pacific slopes of our continent.[14]

As the Civil War had broken out only six months before, Young reassuringly concluded by stating that "Utah has not seceded, but is firm for the Constitution and laws of our once happy country, and is warmly interested in such useful enterprises as the one so far completed."[15] Wade responded the following day stating that, while he also hoped the new telegraph line would benefit all, he also hoped that it would help " to annihilate prejudice, cultivate brotherly love, facilitate commerce and strengthen the bonds of our once again to be happy union.[16]

This exchange between Brigham Young and Jeptha Wade illustrates not only the success of the new transcontinental telegraph system, but also the hope and desire of both that that monumental accomplishment would not only revolutionize communication across the nation but would also help end the prejudice that many still felt towards the Mormons.[17]

Even though they did everything in their power to ensure the success of the telegraph system on which so many would come to rely, there was still a great deal of distrust and hatred towards them. Some remained so suspicious of the Mormons that they believed that they would

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[14] "The Completion of the Telegraph," *The Deseret News*, October 23, 1861, 5.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Ibid.

actively try to sabotage the telegraph lines that they had worked so hard to build. While the Mormons had no desire to do so, Georgia Senator Alfred Iverson reiterated this suspicion. He feared that any time Young may be in opposition to the views of the federal government, he may essentially hold the telegraph for ransom by threatening to have his men cut the lines.[18]

Regardless of any suspicion or feelings of ill will harbored toward the Mormons, the nation owed them a huge debt of gratitude. By helping to build and refine roads and to erect the western portion of the transcontinental telegraph for the Overland Telegraph Company the Mormons, again many of whom were members of the battalion, helped to open communications across the country in a whole new way. This revolutionized the way commerce was conducted, helped expedite government business, helped families stay in touch who otherwise may not have spoken for years, and so on. Despite the impact of the Mormons and the battalion on the development of the telegraph, they were only getting started.

The new transcontinental telegraph spanned East to West across the nation and skewed to the north across the Utah Territory. As a result, much of the region was left without telegraph service. Brigham Young set out to rectify this problem by building a network of wires throughout the Utah Territory. He made his intentions known in a sermon he delivered in Salt Lake City on February 9, 1862. He stated that to receive information in a timelier manner, he wanted to build a network of telegraph wires throughout the Utah territory.[19]

Young wanted to start building this new territorial telegraph right away, but construction was delayed due to the Civil War. It became virtually impossible for the Mormons to acquire all

[18] John C. Rives, *The Congressional Globe Containing the Debates and Proceedings of the First Session of the Thirty-Fifth Congress Also, of the Special Session of the Senate* (Washington, DC: John C. Rives, 1858), 1560.

[19] Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses Delivered by Brigham Young, His Two Counsellors, the Twelve Apostles, and Others*, vol. 9 (Liverpool: George Q. Cannon Publisher, 1862), 196.

the necessary supplies including insulators, batteries, and so on.[20] With the end of the war in 1865, construction finally began the following year.

In October of 1865 trains carrying supplies began pulling into the Salt Lake City terminal. In only a month and a half, lines had been constructed stretching to Ogden. By the middle of January that line had been further extended, terminating in Logan in the North and St. George in the South. In the end, over five hundred miles of lines had been built. In the following years, those lines would be extended into various communities in both Nevada and Idaho.[21]

Though the Deseret Telegraph was still under construction, the Territorial Assembly incorporated the Deseret Telegraph Company on January 18, 1867. The new lines were finished shortly thereafter. Upon incorporation, the Mormon Church became the company's largest shareholder.[22]

Upon completion of the Deseret Telegraph line from Ogden to Salt Lake City on December 1, 1866, Brigham Young sent the first message over its wires, dedicating it to "the Lord God of Israel."[23] This message was sent to Lorin Farr, Mayor of the city of Ogden, and Chauncey W. West, Bishop of Weber County, in which Ogden was the county seat. Farr and Weber sent a response later that same day lauding this achievement, stating in part "we trust that not only will the Saints who have contributed to this great work continue their efforts, but others will also assist in developing other improvements for the benefit of God's work."[24] These new lines, again built with the help of former members of the Mormon Battalion, aided in westward

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[20] *Journal History*, 1861.

[21] A. R. Mortensen, "A Pioneer Paper Mirrors the Breakup of Isolation in the Great Basin," issuu (Utah Historical Quarterly Volume 20, Number 1-4, 1952, April 15, 2019), https://issuu.com/utah10/docs/volume_20_1952/s/92041.

[22] "Deseret State Telegraph," *The Deseret News*, January 23, 1867.

[23] Franklin Dewey Richards, *The Latter-Day Saints' Millennial Star*, vol. 29 (Liverpool: F. D. Richards, 1867), 38.

[24] Richards, *The Latter-Day Saints' Millennial Star*, vol. 29, 38.

expansion. This revolutionary ability to communicate instantaneously benefited individuals and businesses alike.

The Deseret Telegraph Company remained a largely church-owned utility until the turn of the century. However, in 1887 Congress passed the Edmunds-Tucker Act to control some of the activities of the church out of punishment for their practice of polygamy. As a result, the federal government took control of the company.[25]

The federal government had finally succeeded in forcing the hand of Wilford Woodruff, president of the Mormon church. Shortly after this act was passed, he issued a statement, now known as the Manifesto of 1890 or the Woodruff Manifesto, in which he strongly condemned the practice of polygamy within the church.[26]

As a result, the church regained ownership of the Deseret Telegraph Company in 1894. However, for all the benefits of the telegraph, the financial arrangements with the various offices throughout the region were less than desirable. As a result, the company rarely ever turned a profit. In 1890 the company dissolved and became part of the Western Union Telegraph Company.[27]

The completion of the transcontinental telegraph line came only six months after the outbreak of the Civil War at the Battle of Fort Sumter April 12-13 1861. With the new war, a demand for a better system of communication became all the more imperative. The telegraph

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[25] *Our Constitutional Rights and Congressional Privelages, Containing the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, Washington's Farewell Address,the Anti-Polygamy Law of 1862, the Poland Law of 1874, the Edmunds Law of 1882, the Edmunds-Tucker Law of 1887,; Also, the Instructions to the Registrars and the Test Oaths Formulated by the Utah Commission, and the Suggestions of the Central Committee of the People's Party* (Salt Lake City: Joseph Hyrum Parry and Company Publishers, 1887), 73.

[26] Ibid.

[27] *The Deseret News*, June 15, 1889.

system that the Mormons, many being former battalion members, helped to construct became vital for the war effort and was utilized in numerous different ways. The new telegraph system gave rise to the U.S. Signal Corps, which was founded in 1860, the U.S. Balloon Corps, which was founded in 1861 shortly after the Battle of Fort Sumter; and the U. S. Military Telegraph Corps, which was founded in October of that year.

Despite the war, the federal government did not cease telegraph construction. As such, the Telegraph Construction Corps was founded. Consisting of "about one hundred and fifty men, with an outfit of wagons, tents, pack-mules, and paraphernalia,"[28] the corps built over 15,300 miles of lines during the war on both land and sea. A large portion of the lines built by the Mormons, many of them former battalion members, were largely in, or passing through the Utah Territory. Numerous lines built by the Telegraph Construction Corps tapped into them, thus allowing for a much greater range of transmission.

Tapping into these lines also gave the government the ability to communicate much more quickly with the Department of the Pacific, which consisted of the states of Oregon, California, and Nevada. It also included the territories of Idaho, Washington, and Utah. As such, while the Mormon-built lines were not directly at the center of the Civil War, they still played a vital role in the war effort.

Before the Civil War, the effectiveness of the use of the telegraph on the battlefield was questionable, mostly because its use in such circumstances was untested. Except for the Crimean War the previous decade, in which Russia fought against a united France, Ottoman Empire, and United Kingdom, the use of the telegraph in war operations was a purely unknown variable.

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[28] A. W. Greely, *The military telegraph service by A.W. Greely*, accessed August 22, 2022, http://www.civilwarsignals.org/pages/tele/telegreely/telegreely.html.

However, this changed with the conception of the United States Army Signal Corps by Major Albert J. Myer in 1860.[29]

Originally from Newburgh, New York, Myer worked as a telegraph operator in his early years before quitting to pursue higher education at what is now Hobart College. Upon completing his undergraduate degree, he enrolled at Buffalo Medical School. It was during his time here that he again began working part-time as a telegraph operator at the New York State Telegraph Company. On August 1, 1861, Myer wrote a letter to Secretary of War Simon Cameron proposing the creation of a Signal Corps.[30]

On August 6, Myer again wrote to Cameron to request permission to acquire a telegraph train or wagon to transport the necessary equipment to relay intelligence from the field.[31] This would allow the army to be in near-instantaneous communication with its various units and with Washington, DC at any given time.

Roughly two weeks later Myer received a response from Assistant Secretary of War Thomas A. Scott granting permission to purchase a small telegraph train. Scott also ordered him to "establish a system of signals along the line of the Potomac through Maryland, connecting the column under Maj.-Gen. Banks with those under Brig.-Generals Stone and McCall and the forces in and about this city."[32]

At its inception, the Signal Corps relied on a series of flags, torches, and rockets to transmit messages visibly over short distances. They would also use drums and bugles to

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[29] *Senate. 36th Congress. 1st Session. Ex. Doc. No. 60* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1961), 87.

[30] J. Willard Brown, *The Signal Corps, U.S.A. in the War of the Rebellion* (Boston: U.S. Veteran Signal Corps Association, 1896), 46.

[31] Ibid., 48.

[32] Brown, *The Signal Corps*, 50.

transmit messages audibly. However, the Signal Corp made use of the telegraph as well. As such, it was also their duty to transmit military-related messages to and from the field.[33]

Six months after the inception of the Signal Corp, the federal government took control of every telegraph line and office in the nation as they were vital for military communications during the Civil War.[34] This would have included all lines and offices in and around the Utah Territory. As previously noted, the Mormons, including former members of the Mormon Battalion, helped construct many of these lines.

The completion of the transcontinental telegraph also made possible another branch of the military. In the first days of the Civil War, the new office of the U.S. Military Telegraph Corps was created. To help operate the department, Secretary of War Cameron asked Thomas Scott to help him manage the department. Scott, the Assistant Secretary of War, recruited four telegraph operators from the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, Richard O'Brian, David Strouse, David H. Bates, and Samuel M. Brown.[35] These four operators "formed the nucleus of the United States Military Telegraph Corps, which later, at its maximum strength, contained over fifteen hundred members."[36]

In October Anson Stager was appointed General Superintendent of Government Telegraphs in all departments. Born in Ontario County, New York, Stager began working in the newspaper at a young age. One of these newspapers, the Daily Advertiser, was owned by a man named Henry O'Reilly. O'Reilly constructed new telegraph lines connecting Harrisburg to

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[33] Ibid.

[34] David Homer Bates, *Lincoln in the Telegraph Office ; Recollections of the United States Military Telegraph Corps during the Civil War* (New York: Century Co., 1907), 32-33.

[35] William Rattle Plum, *The Military Telegraph during the Civil War in the United States: With an Exposition of Ancient and Modern Means of Communication and of the Federal and Confederate Cipher Systems: Also a Running Account of the War between the States* (Chicago: Jansen, McClurg & Co., 1882), 67.

[36] Plum, *The Military Telegraph during the Civil War*, 26-27.

Philadelphia. He then made Anson a telegraph operator, providing him with invaluable experience.[37]

Stager later became the general superintendent of the Western Union Telegraph Company. It was here that he acquired valuable leadership experience as well. This, combined with his skills as a telegraph operator would serve him well during his tenure as head of the U. S. Military Telegraph Corps.[38]

Anson worked closely with Major Thomas T. Eckert during the war. Eckert was in charge of the operations of the U.S. Military Telegraph Corps in Washington, DC. Like Anson, Eckert too became interested in telegraphy at an early age. Before he served during the Civil War, he had worked as a telegraph operator for several different companies. The experience of Anson and Eckert together made them much more valuable. They were indeed a formidable team.

As the U. S. Army Signal Corp and U. S. Military Telegraph Corps dealt with relaying communications to and from the field, there was inevitably some gray area regarding jurisdictional issues. In the end, the U. S. Signal Corps became responsible for short-distance telegraphic communications while the U. S. Military Telegraph Corps. became responsible for long-range communications.

Despite disagreements regarding jurisdiction, chain of command, and so on, these two new departments of the military played a vital part in winning the war for the Union. Again, however, they relied on the new nationwide civilian telegraph system which had been confiscated for military use. This again included the network of wires both in and through the Utah Territory which was vital for communicating with forces in the Pacific Coast theatre of the

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[37] *Journal of the Telegraph*, February 15, 1869.
[38] Ibid.

war. It must again be noted that the Mormons, including former members of the Mormon Battalion, helped to build many of these lines. Thus, it can be argued they played an important part in the war effort.

In October of 1861, a year after the establishment of the Military Signal Corps, President Abraham Lincoln established the Union Army Balloon Corps. The purpose of such a regiment was to ascend in balloons to an optimal vantage point from which to obtain valuable reconnaissance on enemy troop movements, the size of the enemy force, and so on. This information was to be relayed to the ground by a telegraph wire leading up to a gas-filled balloon containing a pilot and a telegraph operator.

The program ended up being short-lived. Still, the use of the telegraph in the Balloon Corps allowed for the transmission of extremely important intelligence to Washington, DC very quickly or to the Pacific theatre through the telegraph lines constructed with the help of the Mormons, many of them former battalion members.

During the early years of the war, there remained a renewed interest in building a transcontinental railroad from the East Coast to the West Coast as well. However, unlike the Southern Pacific Railroad later finished in 1881 that connected both coasts through the Gadsden Territory, the first transcontinental railroad would traverse the nation beginning in Council Bluffs, Iowa, and terminating in San Francisco.

While several bills to build a transcontinental railroad failed to make headway, in 1862 Congress finally passed An Act to aid in the construction of a railroad and telegraph line from the Missouri River to the Pacific Ocean, and to secure for the government the use of the same for postal, military, and other purposes. The name was later shortened to simply the Pacific Railroad Act. While the Central Pacific Railroad began construction in January 1863, the Union Pacific

Railroad did not begin until shortly after the conclusion of the Civil War as the conflict made it difficult to obtain the necessary labor, supplies, and financial backing.[39]

At last, in 1869 the first transcontinental railroad was completed. With great ceremony, a golden spike was driven into a silver rail. Finally, the Central Pacific and Union Pacific Railroads were joined, forever connecting the East and West coasts. It was a day that would change the nation forever.

During the ceremony, four other ceremonial spikes were driven into the ground as well. These include two from Arizona, one silver and one gold, a second gold one from the San Francisco News Letter, and a silver one from Nevada. All four spikes were driven in using a silver-plated hammer and then removed and preserved. Today the spikes and hammer reside safely in various museum collections.

The construction of the first transcontinental railroad was no small feat to be sure. Many workers had a hand in building it, perhaps the most well-known of which were the massive number of immigrants from China. However, one of the least known and most important is the Mormon Battalion and their fellow Mormon settlers throughout the Utah Territory.

In highlighting the importance of the Mormons in this endeavor, historian John J. Stewart states that the Mormons played a notable role in the construction of the Pacific Railroad. He notes they provided a great deal of both supplies and labor for its construction. They also petitioned Congress to build the railroad.[40]

Samuel Bowles, editor of the Springfield Republican shared these same sentiments, stating that, had it not been for the Mormon Battalion "discovering the pathway, and feeding

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[39] Central Pacific Railroad Photographic History Museum, *Pacific Railroad Act - Transcontinental Railroad and land grants*, accessed September 5, 2022, http://www.cprr.org/Museum/Pacific_Railroad_Acts.html.

[40] Stewart, *The Iron Trail to the Golden Spike*,175.

those who came out upon it, all this central region of our great West would now be many years behind its present development, and the railroad instead of being finished, would hardly be begun."[41]

Through their work on the first transcontinental railroad, the Mormons had a large impact on the growth of the western United States in many ways. As previously noted, these include opening new trade routes domestically and internationally, a vast increase in emigration, allowing commerce to be conducted without a physical storefront, and creating a new travel industry.

With the anticipated building of a transcontinental railroad, Congress began to pursue development through legislation. There were three attempts to pass a homesteading act, all of which failed to make it through Congress. They were all blocked by Congressmen hailing from the South as the issue of slavery once again raised its ugly head. The homesteading acts proposed providing large tracts of land at a time at reduced rates to those agreeing to farm it, however this was not at all favorable to a slave economy. That being said, with the Southern states beginning to secede from the Union at the beginning of the Civil War, there were no longer enough votes to block a homesteading bill. As a result, in 1862 there were finally enough votes in both chambers of Congress to pass the Homestead Act. Abraham Lincoln readily signed the bill into law on May 20, 1862, which went into effect on January 1, 1863. In addressing the new law, he stated in part "I desire to preserve the Government that it may be administered for all, as it was

[41] Samuel Bowles, *The Pacific Railroad--Open: How To Go: What to See ; Guide for Travel to and through Western America* (Boston: Fields, Osgood & Co., 1869), 53.

administered by the men who made it…to afford all an unfettered start and a fair chance in the race of life."[42]

Under the Homestead Act of 1862, the adult head of the family could receive 160 acres of land so long as they paid a nominal filing fee and continually resided on the land for no less than five years.[43] With its passage, many were eager to take advantage of this opportunity to start a new life for themselves out west. However, there were two obstacles in their way, the first of which was the fact that the Civil War was still raging on. As many were focused on the war effort, this period was a very difficult one in which to move. As a result, many hoping to homestead ultimately decided to wait until the close of the war to do so.

The second obstacle preventing many from homesteading out west was the difficulty in getting there. Before the completion of the transcontinental railroad, the only way to move west was by covered wagon, or potentially stagecoach. This meant that many who otherwise would have taken advantage of the Homestead Act could not do so. However, the construction of the transcontinental railroad changed the way people traveled and made moving west exponentially easier.

However, once the railroad made homesteading much more feasible, there was something of an explosion of emigrants moving westward. The Homestead Act allowed over four million homesteaders to establish new homes out west in the 114 years following its passage. However,

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[42] Abraham Lincoln, John G. Nicolay, and John Hay, *Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln*, vol. 5 (Harrogate, TN: Lincoln Memorial University, 1894), XV.

[43] Republican Congressional Committee, *The Republican Campaign Textbook for 1880* (Washington, DC: Republican Congressional Committee, 1880), 147-149.

the act was subsequently repealed in 1976 when the Federal Land Policy and Management Act was passed.[44]

Despite its repeal, the Homestead Act of 1862 was both extremely successful and very important in helping westward expansion. This was put into perspective in 1962 by President John F. Kennedy when he lauded the Homestead Act as "probably the single greatest stimulus to national development ever enacted."[45]

Following the passage of the Homestead Act of 1862, there was another homesteading act passed called the Timber Culture Act of 1873. The premise of this act was to encourage homesteaders to grow trees on their land. They would be provided with a second 160-acre plot of land if they planted trees on one-quarter of it.

In explaining the reasoning behind the Timber Culture Act, Charles A. Morris, Register of the United States Land office, stated that "the object of the Timber-culture law is to encourage and foster the growth of Timber on the western prairies."[46] As westward expansion was occurring rapidly thanks to the new transcontinental railroad, it was thought the new settlers and establishments would need an increasingly large amount of wood to burn and lumber for construction. This act resulted in the planting of millions of acres of new trees, playing an important role both in building new homes and towns as well as heating many homes during brutally cold winters.

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[44] "The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 as Amended," Bureau of Land Management, accessed August 27, 2022, https://www.blm.gov/sites/default/files/AboutUs_LawsandRegs_FLPMA.pdf, 76-78.

[45] United States Congress, *Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States Eighty-Seventh Congress Second Session* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1962), 146.

[46] Floyd P. Baker, *Preliminary Report on the Forestry of the Mississippi Valley and Tree Planting on the Plains* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1883), 17.

Four years later, hoping to further aid growth in the West, Congress passed the Desert Land Act on March 3, 1877. The purpose of this law was to provide much-needed aid in the development of barren land in the states and territories that were largely comprised of deserts. Later, in 1878 Congress passed the Timber and Stone Act of 1878. This new law was similar to the Timber Culture Act of 1873. There was a great deal of land out west unsuitable for farming and it was thought that this land could again be used for its resources, timber, and stone. Again, these resources would provide a valuable source of fuel and construction materials.[47]

In examining the impact of the Homestead Act, Timber Culture Act, Desert Land Act, and the Timber and Stone Act, all four pieces of legislation had a common denominator that led to their success. For these laws to be successful, emigrants had to be able to make the trip out west. As the only other options were traveling by foot, wagon train, or possibly stagecoach, this trip may not have been possible for many had it not been for the construction of the transcontinental railroad.

The railroad not only followed the trails built by the Mormon Battalion but the Mormons, including former battalion members, helped to build it as well. Therefore, as the railroad allowed many of the homesteaders to reach the West, it can be argued that the battalion helped to make the homesteading of the West possible and, in doing so, impacted westward expansion.

While other areas of the west were being settled, much of the land in Nebraska had not yet been homesteaded. This was largely due to both the fact that the state had been experiencing massive drought and the fact that the cattle industry was utilizing it for grazing. Of course, as grass was sparse, grazing required a far greater area of land.

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[47] Donaldson, *The Public Domain*, 358-359.

The droughts and the lack of land caused a large population decrease throughout much of the state. Greatly complicating the matter was the fact that the large ranches were fraudulently acquiring massive swaths of land.[48] To address this issue on May 20, 1904 Congress passed the Kinkaid Act. This act placed restrictions on the land one could acquire under the Homestead Act.[49]

As was hoped, this new law stopped the cattle barons from committing such extensive fraud and stealing so much land. As a result, this law made much more land available, and many homesteaders quickly settled in Kansas. This allowed for the development of many more communities throughout the state.

It should be noted, however, that to get to Nebraska some emigrants likely took the transcontinental railroad as there were few other options. As previously noted, the Mormons, including many battalion members, helped to construct the railroad as well. Without the work of the Mormon Battalion, many of the emigrants may not have been able to make the trip out west.

Congress had placed a great deal of focus on the development of the American West, and for good reason. It was rich in resources, had an overwhelming abundance of land on which America's booming population could settle, and had untold possibilities for the nation's economy, the likes of which America had never seen before.

However, before the transcontinental railroad could be built or new emigrants could settle out west, there remained one substantial obstacle. As much of the western states and territories still remained home to many Native Americans, they needed to be relocated to make room for

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[48] Arthur Reynolds, "Land Frauds and Illegal Fencing in Western Nebraska," *Agricultural History* 23, no. 3 (n.d.): 173-179, 173.

[49] John W. Keener, *Public Land Statutes of the United States: A Compilation of the Principal Statutes of Practical Importance at the Present Time Relating to the Public Lands* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1916), 98-99.

American progress. However, not only were they neither ready nor willing to do so, but many were prepared to fight to the death to preserve their ancestral way of life.

Nevertheless, the American military eventually succeeded in subduing the Native Americans, though doing so peacefully was not always possible. They were then placed on numerous reservations where they could continue to pursue their way of life without interfering with American progress any longer.

While the process of their relocation would not be quick, the real work could finally begin. The construction of the transcontinental railroad could finally commence, upon completion of which the American economy would surge, various homesteading acts could finally commence, and westward expansion would increase.

It bears repeating that the Mormons, including former battalion members, helped build the railroad itself which, in turn, played a role in the success of the homesteading acts. The resulting mass emigration out west necessitated the need for the relocation of many Native Americans onto reservations, allowing for an even greater settlement and expansion of the American West.

In the 1880s and 1890s, the railroad began to see competition as the first horseless carriages were starting to be produced, thus necessitating the construction of higher-quality roads. It would not be long, however, until captains of industry such as Henry Ford and Ransom Olds put the first automobiles on the roads. These new cars were able to travel longer distances at higher speeds, granted they were still hitting a top speed of roughly 25 miles an hour. Regardless, more and more Americans were using this new means of transportation to travel out west, whether to make a new home for themselves or simply to take a road trip. Regardless of

their reasons or motivations for long-distance driving out west, it was clear these new motorists required the nation's first highways to do so.

As the automobile was still in its infancy, coast-to-coast highways had yet to be built. An early automobile pioneer named Carl G. Fisher decided to rectify this problem. He founded the Lincoln Highway Association through which the Lincoln Highway was eventually constructed.[50] This new highway extended from New York City to San Francisco. However, as there was a lack of funds the highway could not be completed all at once. Instead, it was built in many sections. The new highway eventually ran through thirteen states and in doing so also ran through many historic routes including old Indian and military trails as well as much more well-known routes such as the Donner Pass and the Great Sauk Trail. Once completed, the Lincoln Highway, named for President Abraham Lincoln, changed the way people traveled.[51]

The construction of the Lincoln Highway was a boost not only to interstate travel but also to the automobile industry as well. While still in existence, and many sections still bear its name, much of the Lincoln Highway was gradually been upgraded to the U.S. numbered highway system in the mid-1920s. Roughly thirty years later, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed into law the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1956. This allowed for the construction of a nationwide e interstate highway system. A sprawling new system of interstate highways was built across the nation, many of which were linked to Lincoln Highway.[52]

While the Lincoln Highway was important prior to the passage of the Federal Highway Aid Act, it became that much more so afterward. It and numerous other highways that followed

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[50] Jerry M. Fisher, *The Pacesetter: The Untold Story of Carl G. Fisher* (Victoria, BC, Canada: FriesenPress, 2014), 132.

[51] "Origins of the Lincoln Highway," History - lincoln highway association, accessed August 28, 2022, https://lincolnhighwayassoc.org/history/.

[52] "Title I—Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956 - Govinfo," GovInfo, accessed Au.gust 29, 2022, https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/STATUTE-70/pdf/STATUTE-70-Pg374.pdf.

parts of Cooke's Wagon Road became an invaluable link in a massive chain of highways linking the East Coast to the West Coast. These highways allowed for much greater travel, for both business and pleasure, allowed military vehicles to be transported much more easily, and exponentially changed the shipping industry as well.

Aside from the Lincoln Highway there are several hundred miles of interstate spanning New Mexico, Arizona and California that also follows Cooke's Wagon Road. Interstates 25, 85, 10, 101, and California State Highway 79 all follow portions of Cooke's Wagon Road.[53] That this route was incorporated into so many present-day highways shows "the significance of the Battalion's early route selection in establishing the best and most direct way across the American Southwest to the Pacific."[54]

It must be reiterated that part of the Lincoln Highway follows a portion of the railroad which the battalion helped to build. It could be argued that in helping to build the railroad, the battalion played a role in our modern highway system. It could also be argued that, with their impact on our highway system, the battalion also played a role in modern ground travel, military defense, and shipping. Through these impacts, the Mormon Battalion again had an impact on the growth of the western United States.

Through their construction of Cooke's Wagon Road and their role in helping to build the first transcontinental railroad and the transcontinental telegraph, the Mormon Battalion took part in some important American innovations in the mid to late nineteenth century. The railroad changed the way Americans from all walks of life traveled and conducted business and how the nation carried out trade with the rest of the world. This put the nation on the economic map, so to

[53] *Mormon Battalion Trail Study, 21-22.*
[54] Ibid., 1.

speak. It also transported over four million emigrants out west to their new homesteads so that they may attempt to carve out their piece of the American dream.

The telegraph gave the nation a whole new means of near-instantaneous communication. This changed life in America as everyone knew it. Establishments could conduct business over much greater distances, people could communicate with loved ones that lived far away, the news could be conveyed much more quickly, and so on.

The telegraph also gave the Union a leg up over the Confederacy during the Civil War. Through the establishment of the United States Army Signal Corps, the United States Military Telegraph Corps, and the Union Army Balloon Corps, the federal government relied heavily on the telegraph for gathering intelligence and communicating with military leaders in the field both in the East and in the Pacific theatre. Through use of the telegraph system which the Mormons, including many battalion members, helped to construct, the Union had a major advantage in winning the war.

The Mormon Battalion also helped to partially lay the groundwork for a future highway stretching from the East Coast to the West Coast. This highway later became part of a massive nationwide system of highways, which again changed the shipping and travel industries. It also continues to play a significant role in national defense through the transportation of military vehicles and equipment as well.

Through these accomplishments, the Mormon Battalion help to increase westward expansion. In doing so they helped make the United States the strongest economy in the world and helped to propel westward expansion into the twentieth century in many ways. The role of the Battalion, and the Mormons as a whole, in these events played an important role in the shaping of the American West

Chapter Eight: Conclusion

The overarching, main hypothesis is that both the Mormon Battalion and Cooke's Wagon Road they constructed had a major impact on westward expansion. This impact came over time and took many forms. Through six chapters the following arguments were made, proving this thesis.

In chapter two, there were two key questions put forward. The first is why were the Mormons persecuted. Secondly, why did James K. Polk decide to help them and how did helping them serve to further his political agenda? It was shown that Mormons were persecuted both for their political beliefs, that of polygamy and communal living, as well as for their political power. It was also shown that President Polk used the Mormons to help defend the United States during the Mexican-American War, thus securing further land from Mexico and fulfilling his campaign promise of Manifest Destiny.

In researching the Mormon Battalion and its impact on Western expansion, there were two questions put forth in chapter three. The first question explored was whether the battalion would have been as comfortable on the first half of their march had it not been for the efforts of the women who accompanied them. The second question posed was whether the battalion would have been as successful had it not been for their guides who led from Santa Fe through the extremely inhospitable territory of the Southwestern United States and what was then Northern Mexico.

In examining the role of the women in the first half of the march, it was found that they did play some very important roles in keeping the battalion comfortable. The first of these roles was that of laundresses and seamstresses (an important role given the men had very little

clothing). Secondly, as many members of the battalion brought their families with them, these women included, the women also took care of the children.

With the hardships on the trail, the men sometimes became sick or injured upon which the women would both serve as caregivers as well as take over the work of the incapacitated men. Lastly, but no less important, the women provided the battalion with much-needed moral support. As conditions on the trail sometimes led to episodes of what is known as prairie fever, which in rare circumstances drove individuals to attempt suicide, this support was of the utmost importance.

If not for the women in the first half of the march, many of these tasks would have remained untended. While the role of the women was an important one, that is not to say that the battalion would not have persevered without their help. However, the battalion may have been in a better position with their help than it would have been without it.

In researching the role of the guides that accompanied the Mormon Battalion from Santa Fe to San Diego, it was discovered that the role they played was not only important but, at times, may have been a matter of life and death. As they were accomplished mountain men, these guides had many useful skills. Despite being in unknown territory, they were able to locate the best routes, and what little food and water was available in the desert through which they were marching.

The guides were also able to speak numerous native languages allowing them to communicate with the tribes the battalion encountered. This was extremely important as this allowed them to engage in trade for much-needed food. This also allowed them to avoid potential conflict due to miscommunication as well.

These guides found sustenance to sustain the battalion, who were surviving on otherwise extremely meager rations, and led them safely to their destination of San Diego. If not for their extremely important work, there may have been numerous deaths due to starvation and dehydration. It is also possible the battalion may not have been able to locate a passable route had it not been for the surveying skills of their accompanying guides, thus not being able to complete their journey.

Both the women and the guides on the Mormon Battalion played substantial roles, thus contributing greatly to the battalion's success. However, it cannot be conclusively proven whether the battalion would have failed in the absence of either. Despite the importance of the women and the guides, the battalion made many accomplishments in their own right that cannot be ignored.

In chapter four it was shown that the Mormon Battalion contributed to westward expansion in four ways. The first contribution was their construction of Cooke's Wagon Road. Second, the battalion helped to construct the Spanish Trail and the Salt Lake Cutoff. The third contribution was the many towns and cities the battalion built or rehabilitated as they marched across the country. Lastly, some members of the battalion contributed to the discovery of gold in California, ushering in the gold rush of 1849 forever changing the face of the American West.

In examining military records and journals, it was found that, in building Cooke's Wagon Road, the battalion removed many obstacles that would otherwise have made the trail impassable. They also leveled the ground, thus creating a much safer, much more level route westward. This trail was used by the many hundreds of thousands of emigrants that followed them westward in the following decades, many of whom were fellow Mormons making their way to the Utah Territory.

Further records show that, in helping to build the Spanish Trail and the Salt Lake Cutoff, the battalion helped to provide a much safer and much more direct route between the Utah Territory and California. This trail was frequented by the many hundreds of thousands of miners on their way to the gold fields in Northern California. As Utah Territory was the last stop before the mountains, it became a major source of food, supplies, and lodging, causing an economic boom.

It was also found that, as the battalion marched across the country, they built many new towns and rehabilitated many others, many of which are not only still in existence but are thriving metropolises. After their enlistment was up, many of the former battalion members marched from California to Utah where they established many towns throughout the entirety of the Utah Territory.

Those that did not immediately return to Utah instead sought employment with Johann "John" Sutter at his sawmill near what is now Sacramento. It was here that they played a role in the discovery of gold. This resulted in the California gold rush of 1849. Through this discovery, the battalion had a large impact on westward expansion in a variety of ways including the establishment of many new boom towns, a surging economy, and the establishment of many new businesses and industries, many of which are still in business today. These are but only a few of the ways the gold rush, in which former battalion members took part, impacted the growth of the western United States.

Through these four avenues, the evidence shows that the Mormon Battalion had a considerable impact on westward expansion. That is not to say, however, that there were not others who contributed to westward expansion in significant ways as well. Rather, that is to say

simply that the contributions of the Mormon Battalion to westward expansion are extremely evident and should not be overlooked.

In chapter five it was shown that the Mormon Battalion played a large role in the growth of the American West through their part in two land acquisitions that occurred in the mid-1800s. The first was the Mexican Cession of 1848. This acquisition was one of the provisions of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo which formally ended the Mexican-American War and gave the United States nearly 530,000 square miles of land from Mexico. The second was that of the Gadsden Purchase of 1853, which gave America an additional roughly 29,700 square miles of Mexican Territory. Research has shown that the Mormon Battalion not only aided in these land acquisitions, but they also played a large part in the development of this newly acquired land in many ways.

In helping to expel the Mexican troops from California, thus causing them to retreat to Mexico where they surrendered to American forces shortly thereafter, the battalion played an important role in the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. The land the United States acquired as a result would become the states of California, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, and parts of Wyoming, New Mexico, and California. It was through Cooke's Wagon Road, built by the battalion, that the development of this territory became possible.

As previously noted, Cooke's Wagon Road allowed many emigrants to travel westward and settle in this new land. As a result, many new cities were built, and many new industries and businesses were established. These include mining, farming, raising livestock, and metalworking to name but a few. Without the use of Cooke's Wagon Road, it would have been more difficult to travel westward, thus development of the west may not have otherwise progressed as rapidly.

With the Gadsden Purchase of 1853, the United States acquired from Mexico what would become southern Arizona and New Mexico. This land contained a large portion of Cooke's Wagon Road which was important to the development of this land. The portion of the trail extending through the Gadsden Territory provided an ideal route for a southern transcontinental railroad. Once built, this railroad had an impact on industry and agriculture throughout the West and was contributed to creating new international trade routes as well. As a result, the economy of the United States continued to grow.

Together the Mexican Cession and the Gadsden Purchase increased the size of the United States by nearly 560,000 square miles. In doing so, America gained access to a wealth of new resources that allowed the West to flourish. However, it was Cooke's Wagon Road that provided the best route of travel to this area of the country and allowed these new land acquisitions to grow and prosper at an exponential rate.

In chapter six it was shown that the Nauvoo Legion, which disbanded upon the exodus of the Mormons from Nauvoo, Illinois, and was later reestablished as the Deseret Militia, played a central role in defending the Utah territory against the Ute Indians. Research has shown that the Deseret Militia, which included former members of the Mormon Battalion, played an important role in westward expansion through such defense against the Native Americans. Later known as the Utah Territorial Militia, they ensured the safety of hundreds of thousands of emigrants who settled in the Utah Territory or who were passing through looking to settle elsewhere.

As emigrants made their way westward and settled in the Utah Territory, they found themselves under threat from the Native Americans. The settlers were settling on their land and disrupting their way of life. This resulted in anything from small skirmishes to all-out wars.

During such times, it was the militia who came to their aid. As a result, the emigrants were able to persevere in their new lives on the Western frontier.

There were also many emigrants passing through on their way to the gold fields of California who constantly came under attack from Native Americans. Again, the militia came to the aid of these emigrants as well. As a result, the attacks on those simply passing through the Utah Territory decreased, allowing for further settlement and thus greater expansion further westward.

The Utah Territory, which comprised all of what is now Utah, most of Nevada, and parts of Colorado and Wyoming, was roughly 265,000 square miles. As such, the militia defended an extremely large area from the Ute Indians, allowing many new settlements to not only be established but to thrive. Had it not been for their efforts, while the West would certainly have been settled eventually, it may very well have taken much longer and may have come at a greater cost.

Lastly, in chapter seven it was shown that, through the construction of the battalion had a further impact on westward expansion through four more avenues. These include the construction of the transcontinental telegraph, the first transcontinental railroad, the various Homestead Acts, and in laying the groundwork for future highways. It was also hypothesized that through the construction of the transcontinental telegraph, the battalion had an impact on military communications during the Civil War as well.

The battalion simultaneously laid the groundwork for the transcontinental telegraph line. Newspaper accounts and first-hand testimony from Brigham Young also show the Mormons, including former members of the battalion, not only provided supplies for the construction of the telegraph but helped to build it as well. Following the trail, the telegraph line provided a direct

and near instantaneous means of communication from coast to coast, changing life and commerce throughout the western United States in many ways. As this region was no longer essentially cut off from the rest of the nation, it began to grow more rapidly.

In helping to build the transcontinental telegraph the Mormons, again including former members of the battalion, played an important role in communications in the Civil War as well. The telegraph was central to the establishment of the United States Army Signal Corps, the U. S. Military Telegraph Corps., and the Union Army Balloon Corps. All three of these divisions utilized the transcontinental telegraph to relay military intelligence both from the battlefield and from one coast to another. Thus, the telegraph played an important role in the Union victory.

The battalion also played an important role in the construction of the first transcontinental railroad. As with the telegraph, the Mormons, including many members of the battalion, helped to construct the railroad. The railroad played a role in opening up the American West to greater opportunities for travel and converse. Through its various connections to ports along the Pacific Coast, the railroad also made the United States a major player in international trade as well.

The battalion also had a role in the success of the various Homestead Acts of the mid-1800s to early 1900s. These new laws were meant to entice individuals to move out west and settle its often inhospitable terrain. While good in theory, these laws faced a major obstacle. It was still extremely difficult to travel to the western United States. However, with the completion of the transcontinental railroad, which members of the battalion helped to construct, many more individuals took advantage of the Homesteading Acts and settled out west.

The battalion also played a noteworthy role in 20th-century travel as well. With the development of the horseless carriage and later the first automobiles, the need quickly arose for suitable roads. As a result, the first highways were constructed, including the Lincoln Highway

which ran from New York City to San Francisco. This Highway, along with many others that would later be built under the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956, helped to change the way Americans travel for both business and pleasure and helped to revolutionize the shipping industry in the United States.

Through the construction of the railroad, which the highways followed, the battalion helped to shape the development and expansion of the West. The railroad was significant in changing the way Americans traveled, conducted business, communicated, and even gathered military intelligence. As such, the impact of the battalion can still be seen today.

Again, the arguments articulated in these chapters prove the overarching thesis. The Mormon Battalion and their construction of Cooke's Wagon Road did in fact play a part in westward expansion. In doing so, they changed the American West in many ways, the impact of which can still be felt today. However, this is not to say that there is no further work to be done.

In the last several years there have been some new and exciting discoveries that provide numerous avenues for further research on the Mormon Battalion and its impact on Western expansion. These include the discovery of forty-five missing muster rolls, missing land applications, and missing pay vouchers. Historians have also uncovered the identity of a woman who marched with the battalion as well. Five known women made the entire march all the way to San Diego but, until this recent discovery, the identities of only four were known. These new findings present many new opportunities to further add to the battalion's story.

With the uncovering of the long-forgotten muster rolls, which were found in the National Archives, the identities of all members of the battalion are now known. If any of these previously unknown individuals left behind any letters, journals, or other primary sources, historians may be

able to derive from them further information about the battalion and the building of Cooke's Wagon Road.

These muster rolls may be able to serve another potentially important purpose as well. They could allow for important genealogical research, hopefully leading to living descendants. Finding these descendants may result in uncovering further first-hand sources that were handed down through the generations.

Further study of the newly uncovered land applications could also be very important in adding to the story of the battalion's impact on the growth of the western United States.. These applications may potentially yield clues as to how the battalion, and the Mormons as a whole, settled and developed settlements across the western United States. As such, these applications may further help in understanding the entirety of their impact.

Thorough scrutiny of the battalion pay vouchers could also prove extremely beneficial. While on their historic march, the battalion members sent their earnings back to the Mormon Church in Utah. Studying the pay vouchers may prove useful in determining how these funds were distributed and spent in further development throughout the Utah Territory.

Lastly, the identity of the fifth woman to make the entire 2,100-mile march with the battalion, Mary Clarke Steele Brown, could provide further insight into the role of women on the trail. It is known, as discussed in chapter one, that women played an important role in the battalion's success in the first half of their march. Now that Brown's identity is known, further research can be done into any accounts she may have left behind. Such accounts would not only strengthen the argument for the importance of the women on the first half of the march but could potentially shed new light on her role on the remainder of the journey as well.

These newly uncovered documents have vast implications for new avenues of research. As such, these primary resources have the potential to further validate what we already know about the battalion, Cooke's Wagon Road, and its impact on westward expansion. On the other hand, however, they also have the potential to add substantial new, previously unknown information as well.

It should be noted that researching the Mormon Battalion and their role in westward expansion presented challenges not uncommon in history. The first major challenge was the period in which the events surrounding the battalion took place. The second was the lack of primary resources the Mormon Battalion left behind.

The period in which these events took place presents a challenge involving preservation. Given that most of the events discussed took part in the 1840s and 1850s, the first issue is that of preservation. Of course, there are fewer primary resources the farther back in time one researches as many simply did not survive for various reasons such as poor preservation. As most were constructed of wood, it was not uncommon for the buildings housing these documents to burn down as well.

The second challenge is the fact that few of the battalion members left behind diaries or journals. As the Mormons were agricultural people, this may have been partly due to a lack of literacy or inability to write among some. Whatever the reason, while there are first-hand accounts, they are few. In many cases, others who interacted with the battalion left few accounts as well.

This is especially true of the Native American tribes they encountered in settling the Utah Territory. As the Native Americans were largely illiterate and could not write, many of the first-hand accounts they left behind are in the form of oral histories. Unfortunately, while oral

histories are certainly very important, they often come with little to no corroborating evidence through which to verify them.

Despite these challenges, new information about the Mormon Battalion has been discovered. While it is true that some information presented is not new, it is necessary to have a foundation to build upon. While some aspects of the battalion's influence on westward expansion have been previously discussed, others have received little to no attention.

It is in tying together their previously known impacts with further information on those aspects that are little known that a much better, fuller understanding of their importance in westward expansion arises. New information is presented on the individuals who traveled with the battalion and the roles they played, their role in building and improving other trails as well as many towns and cities, and their role in the construction of the transcontinental telegraph to name but a few. In presenting the "big picture," so to speak, of what the battalion accomplished, this dissertation presents new information in numerous areas.

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