Shoshonean Peoples and the Overland Trail

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The majority of the Gentile officials in Utah had left their posts by the time the Utah War broke upon the territory. Hurt, however, stuck it out until September 27, 1857. Then, fearing for his life, he fled from the Spanish Fork farm via the Uinta Basin to the haven of the advancing troops, whom he met on the Sweetwater on October 23, 1857.93

This was, it would seem, an ill-advised action of which Brigham Young took full advantage. On October 7, Young wrote the Indian Office that Hurt had seen fit to leave the field of his official duty on the 26th [27th?] of September last, in company with some Indians, whom it is said he had hired to escort him to the United States troops, and without having made any report to me of his wishes and designs, or of the disposition he had made of the affairs of his agency. Such an occasionless and unwise movement on his part, altogether needlessly exposing himself to sickness, hardship, and danger, I did all in my power upon the earliest intimation of his plans, to prevent, as will be seen by a letter addressed to him . . . which unfortunately did not reach his place of residence until a few hours after his departure.

He enclosed a copy of a letter dated September 26 which he said he had addressed to Hurt. It expostulated against Hurt’s rumored intention of “going to the States by some unfrequented route, and in company with certain Indians as pilots and travelling companions,” characterizing such a course as “very unsafe and highly improper in an officer of our government,” and requesting him, when ready to start upon his journey, to call at Young’s office, when he would be furnished a sufficient escort and a comfortable carriage for his “speedy and safe transportation to the protection of the United States troops.”94

On October 16, Young instructed Armstrong to take charge of the property of the various farms,95 and this the agent did to such good purpose that when the new superintendent, Jacob Forney, arrived the following year, he was “agreeably disappointed with the condition of things on the [Spanish Fork] farm, I was led to believe, through Agent Dr. Hurt & others, that the grains—cattle & other property was taken away.” On the contrary, he had found things in good order.96

The state of upset in the territory this year and the next made inevitable a degree of neglect, and, on visiting the Spanish Fork and Corn Creek farms in

93 Hurt to Col. A. S. Johnston, October 24, 1857, Utah Expedition, 205–8.
94 Young to Denver, October 7, 1857, with enclosure dated September 26, 1857, Utah Expedition, 209–10. The possibility must be suggested that the letter to Hurt was written after rather than before his departure, as a good joke on Hurt and as a shrewd stroke to counteract the unfavorable effect upon public opinion of his seeming to have had to flee for his life.
95 Armstrong to Denver, December 1, 1857, Utah Expedition, 210.
96 Forney to Mix, June 18, 1858 (F/262–1858).
the summer of 1858, Forney reported that he thought the farms had not been advantageously conducted, and showed “a lack of judgment and economy in their management.” The farms were, however, even more badly conducted during the next few years.

With respect to Hurt himself, Forney reported on July 9, 1858, that he had not yet returned to the field of his former labors, adding that almost without exception the inhabitants in the neighborhood where he had lived positively denied that he had just cause for leaving as he did. It has to be taken into account, of course, that these informants were Mormons, and that Forney himself disliked Hurt. The agent’s commission expired on August 15, 1858, and he advised Forney that he did not desire a reappointment, an idea with which Forney was glad to fall in. Of all the agents and subagents who labored in Young’s superintendency, Hurt was the only one who served out the full period of his appointment.

Congress finally acted on the suggestion of the Indian Office, and on March 3, 1857, provision was made for an independent superintendent of Indian affairs in Utah, New Mexico, Washington, and Oregon. Jacob Forney, of Philadelphia, was nominated to the Utah office on August 27, 1857. Like the other federal officials and Johnston’s entire army, he was unable to get through to Great Salt Lake City in the fall, and wintered at Camp Scott. The practical result was that during the winter of 1857–1858 Utah had two superintendents, Young at Great Salt Lake City, and Forney at Camp Scott. The government had failed to notify Young officially of his removal as governor, and he made the most of this error of omission. The two superintendents both desired that the Indians be kept neutral in the hostilities which seemed imminent between the Mormons and the government, but each suspected the other of “tampering” with the Indians. Forney also asked that Armstrong, as a Mormon, be removed from office. This had been done already, and Columbus L. Craig was finally appointed in his place.

In the spring of 1858 the new governor, Alfred Cumming, went on from Camp Scott to Great Salt Lake City, and a few weeks later Forney rode in, in company

97 Forney to Mix, undated letter probably written in August 1858 (F/298–1858).
99 Forney to Mix, July 9, 1858 (F/273–1858).
100 Forney to Mix, August 27, 1858 (F/312–1858).
103 [See appendix for note text.]
104 Forney to Denver, January 1, 1858 (F/189–1858).
105 Denver to Forney, January 6, 1858, Indian Office Letter Book, no. 58, 199.
with the troops. On June 30, Young wrote a final report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Forney, he said,

\[\text{tho doubtless having been some time in the Territory and probably officiating partially in his office while at Camp Scott did not until quite recently sufficiently assume its duties that I could feel relieved therefrom. Being now at the scene of his duties, these matters will hereafter devolve upon him, thus closing my official correspondence with this department.}\]

A stiff epilogue was provided by Forney nine days later. On that morning one of Young’s clerks called with a bundle of vouchers for expenditures to June 30, principally for flour and beef issued to various tribes. All, however, were signed “B. Young, Governor & Superintendent of I. Aff.” and, accordingly, Forney addressed his predecessor the following frosty communication:

\[\text{I have the honor to inform you, that I was appointed supt of Ind affairs, for U. T. Augt 27th 1857, an[d] subsequently confirmed by the United States Senate, of which I presume you have been advised.}\]

\[\text{By a reference to the enclosed papers, I perceive that you assume to exercise the authority vested, in me; it is therefore quite obvious that I cannot be the medium of communication between the Indian Department and yourself, in the transmission of these papers.}\]

\[\text{Whenever is suits your convenience I will be pleased to receive all papers and property, belonging to the U. S. in your possession.}\]

Young had to wait with great patience for the settlement of his accounts. They were spread before Congress in a House document in 1862, but four years later they had not been paid. The subject was debated in the House on March 1, 1866, and payment of $38,487.53 was finally authorized in April, the Secretary of the Interior instructing the Commissioner of Indian Affairs on July 7, 1866, to make the requisite payment.

The career of Brigham Young as ex-officio superintendent of Indian affairs was from beginning to end a stormy one. His administrative abilities as evidenced

106 Young to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, June 30, 1858 (Y/34–1858).
107 Forney to Young, July 9, 18, 1868, copy enclosed in Forney to Mix, same date (F/272–1858).
110 U. S. Stat. at L. 14 (1868): 25. The amount approved by the Second Auditor’s Office of the Treasury Department in final settlement was $34,145—$342 less than the Congressional appropriation.
111 Secretary of the Interior to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, July 7, 1866 (I/439–1866).
in the discharge of this responsibility may be called into question, and his single-minded viewpoint on the Saints and their relation to the federal government undoubtedly was responsible for a great deal of the trouble that beset his superintendency. But the larger result of his policy was to establish himself in the minds of the Indians as their friend, a realistic rather than a merely sentimental humanitarian. His due was given him officially by O. H. Irish, then superintendent, who in June, 1865, asked him to aid in the treaty making with the Utes at Spanish Fork. Though some might prefer it to be otherwise, Irish wrote the Indian Office, the fact remained that Young had pursued so kind and conciliatory a course with the Indians that it had given him great influence over them: “It was my duty and policy to make use of his influence for the accomplishment of the purposes of government.”

112 Irish to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, June 29, 1865, 39th Cong., 1st sess., House Executive Document 1, pt. 2 (Serial 1248), 318.
Shoshone Indians, Humboldt plains, 1869. Photo by Alfred A. Hart. Alfred A. Hart Photograph Collection, PC 002, Dept. of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, Calif.
THE record of emigration across Nevada has a persistent local violence which, in its day, gave the California newspapers a sufficiency of reports of “Indian Outrages on the Plains,” and which, in our own time, has survived somewhat gaudily in tradition and the reminiscences and journals of the overland travelers. Between City of Rocks and the Sierra Nevada the warfare was intermittent but desperate through more than a decade, and it had an historic climax in the Paiute war of 1860.1

Intervention by the Office of Indian Affairs, and the activity of its agents among the Nevada Indians during this decade of violence, affords more objective information about conditions on the California Trail than may be had from the narratives of the emigrants, and also provides a viewpoint reflecting, in some degree, that of the Indians.

The United States government took preliminary steps for administering Indian affairs in the Mexican Cession far in advance of measures for political organization of its new territory. In March 1849, President Taylor directed that the Indian agencies for the Upper Missouri and Council Bluffs should be transferred to Santa Fe and Salt Lake. On April 7, James S. Calhoun and John Wilson were named general Indian agents, with Calhoun going to New

Editor’s note: This study, produced here from a revised but not fully complete manuscript, remained a work in progress when it was set aside in 1949. The text has been copyedited as well, so that this printing is a clear and accurate but not exact reproduction. All citations to Morgan’s own works in this manuscript were left incomplete; several notes were left entirely blank, doubtless to be filled in at a later writing or editorial stage. When the referent is clear and data is available, notes are completed here at the editor’s instance, although a few for which he left no text or incomplete clues must remain documentary blanks. The unnumbered manuscript citations Morgan penciled in during revision are inserted as numbered notes with an a after the number.

A fine transcription of many letters from the Utah Superintendency of Indian Affairs relating specifically to Nevada 1849–61 are available electronically through the Nevada Observer’s Reading Room, an electronic newspaper which maintains a collection of historical source material (as of 2006) at http://www.nevadaobserver.com/ReadingRoom.htm.

The general ground of this article has been covered by Effie Mona Hack in the chapter, “Federal Relations with the Nevada Indians, 1850–1860,” in her Nevada: A History of the State from the Earliest Times through the Civil War (Glendale, Calif.: Arthur H. Clark, 1935 [i.e., 1936]). However, Dr. Mack’s pioneer endeavor is inaccurate in a great many respects and is irrelevant in much of its statement of background. The present discussion
benefits from the fuller manuscript records of the Indian Office now deposited in the National Archives, which amplify in important respects the published documents on which Dr. Mack's work was based. Larger administrative questions, and the relations between the superintendents and agents of the Utah Superintendency, are given only passing attention here; the writer has examined the subject in considerable detail in “The Administration of Indian Affairs in Utah, 1851–1858,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 12 (1944): 383–409. [At the time this draft was completed the paper Morgan tentatively cites had been submitted but was not in print. In fact, it never appeared in the journal under the title “Brigham Young as Indian Agent.” The manuscript was instead revised and published in *Pacific Historical Quarterly* 17, no. 4 (Nov. 1948): 383–409 and forms the preceding chapter in this volume. —Ed.] More sketchy for Utah but more far-ranging as an overall picture of what was done in the West is Alban W. Hoopes, *Indian Affairs and Their Administration, 1849–1860* (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1932; New York: Kraus Reprint, 1972).

2 Morgan, “Administration of Indian Affairs in Utah,” 383–84 [pp. 47–58 in this volume].


4 Wilson's letters from Fort Bridger, August 22, 1849, and from Great Salt Lake City, September 4, 1849, were printed in 31st Cong., 1st sess., House Executive Document 5 (Serial 570), 184–87, 104–22. His unpublished letters from San Francisco, December 22, 1849, and from San Jose, December 28, 1849, are in the 1850 papers of the Utah Superintendency in the National Archives [and Records Administration, Record Group 75.15.13]. The San Francisco letter is almost solely concerned with Wilson's dispute with Capt. R. M. Morris, the officer in charge of his escort.

5 Morgan, "Administration of Indian Affairs in Utah," 384–85 [pp. 57–58 in this volume], cites the primary sources for this and the generalized matter immediately following.
which comprised the country lying west of the eastern rim of the Great Basin and south of the southern line of Pahvan Valley (in central Utah) to the western boundary of the territory.*

Young had intended assigning the Indian agent himself, Jacob H. Holeman of Kentucky, to the Parowan agency. However, when Holeman reported for duty on August 11, he sought Young’s permission to attend the great council at Fort Laramie with the Plains Indians, so that he might treat with a band of Shoshoni he had encountered en route to Utah. The governor agreed, and Holeman immediately retraced his way east, accompanied by Rose. The other sub-agent, Day, was to have taken a group of Utes to the treaty-making, but this fell through, and soon after, Day chose to return east with the federal judges. For a while the Mormons believed that Holeman had also gone, but the agent returned to Great Salt Lake City late in October.

As the colonizing genius of Mormonism, Brigham Young had already devoted some thought to the Nevada area. He had begun to act upon what became his established policy, to locate Mormon colonies at all strategic approaches to the Utah Zion. This policy had a double aim: to forestall Gentiles in seizing desirable areas for settlement, and to win the good feeling of the Indians. On October 20, 1851, he wrote the Commissioner of Indian Affairs,

> There, is one exception to be made as to peaceful relations [in the Territory]; the Indians on Mary’s river [the Humboldt] are exceedingly troublesome to emigrants and travellers, having killed quite a number of white men the past Season. It is desirable that an Agency supported by a Settlement should be established at this point; some of the Citizens of this City and recruits are about raising a Company to go and settle there, and organize a new county which they propose to call ‘Humbolt County.’ This course, I doubt not, will have a tendency to keep them in check, and hold a salutary influence over them, and be far more efficient than a military Post in preserving the safety of the travellor. It may become necessary to chastise them, in order to bring them to terms; but even if it should, if that chastisement could be followed up with good and genial influences, and the means on hand to conciliate and soothe their feelings, the happiest results might follow.  

> Measures were on foot to make this settlement a reality, for the mail party from Salt Lake brought word to California in late October that, “Some twenty or thirty

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* [Here Morgan penciled himself an editorial reminder in the margin: “Comment on myopic significance of ‘Parowan’ as a name for this agency.” He probably meant that the use of the southern-Utah place name hardly encompassed the scope of the actual geography assigned the agency, but he gave no further clue to his thought. —Ed.]

6 Young to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Luke Lea, October 20, 1851 (U/87–1851).
persons from Salt Lake were about establishing a trading post at the head of Mary’s river.” But nothing concrete had been done at the end of the year, and in his message to the Utah legislature on January 5, 1852, Young pointed out anew the desirability of this particular settlement, “In order to preserve peaceful relations” with the Mary’s River Indians, as they had “become of late very troublesome to travelers, stealing their animals, robbing and killing them as they have opportunity.”

At the end of March, however, in reporting to the commissioner of Indian affairs that the mail contractor, Abolom Woodward, had unquestionably been cut off with the November mail from California, Young had to say that the colonizing venture had failed, owing, it was to be presumed, to the known hostility of the natives, and the location itself not being as regards natural resources, such as good land, timber &c. very desirable. These reasons will probably delay any settlement being made at that point, so long as the Territory affords any other unoccupied situation, of equal if not superior facilities, and a quiet understanding with the native tribes: albeit it is supposed, that the Indians who inhabit in the vicinity of Weber, and Bear rivers, living in peace with the citizens of these regions, are the same who frequently extend their excursions to Mary’s river, and there commit the most wanton depredations.

Nevertheless, he reiterated his opinion that a settlement would be far more productive of good, and better subserve the interest, and purposes of the Government, than a military post; to say nothing of the vicinity of the mines, inducing the desertion of soldiers. The influence is more genial, and far better calculated to induce the savage from the vile habits of his nature, and gradually lead him to the peaceful avocations of civilized existence.

The employment of a few farmers, [a] school establishment, accompanying an agency to be established at that point, and the necessary expenditure thereon, in the employment of mechanics, would furnish sufficient inducement for a settlement, from the influence of which the happiest results might reasonably be expected to follow, not only in the safety and protection of the emigrant, and traveller; of the transmission of the mails; but also in behalf of the natives with whom they are brought into immediate association, in restraining them from indulgence in their wild propensities. I therefore urge upon your attention, the propriety of obtaining an appropriation from the present Congress, for the purpose of holding a treaty with

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7 *Daily Alta California*, November 2, 1851, quoting the *Sacramento Placer Times & Transcript*.

8 *Deseret News*, January 10, 1852.
these, and also other Indians of this Territory; and defraying the expence of such stipulations as may be entered into, for land or other purposes. Major Holeman I understand intends visiting the Indians on Mary's river, and will extend his excursions to Carson valley the ensuing season.9

Independently, Holeman had already declared to the Indian Office his support of such proposals. “As the Indians have been very troublesome on this route,” he wrote Lea,

I think it important that something should be done in that direction to protect the property and lives of the emigrants. An Agency at Mary’s River, some 300 miles from this city, would do much good, and have a tendency to quiet the disorderly Indians, if in the hands of a proper person. I consider it the most important point for operations this spring. There was such destruction of life and property on this route, during the last season, that I should like to be instructed to regulate matters there, before the emigration arrives. I think by proper management the route may be made safe. Not, however, without some expense. If I do not hear from you, and the emigration should make a move, I shall use all efforts to give them a safe passage, so far as the Indians are concerned. I shall visit them and endeavor to conciliate them; and if possible establish friendly relations between us—At all events, so far as the limits of this Territory extend.10

A month later, Holeman wrote the commissioner of Indian affairs with more specific proposals. He pointed out that it was about 175 miles from Great Salt Lake City to the intersection of the emigrant roads near the Goose Creek Mountains, another 130 miles to the head of the Humboldt, and 60 miles additional down the river to the canyon (i.e., Palisade Canyon)

making from this to the Canyon, about 365 miles. It is the opinion of the best informed, with whom I have conversed, that a post, or agency established, at or near this Canyon, would afford the best protection to this route. The distance from this Canyon to Reese’s Station10a in Carson Valley, is about 360 miles—this station is in Utah Territory, near the California line and is about 180 miles from Sacramento City. There is a settlement about this Station of about 80 persons, and extends in the direction to this city for near 40 miles. Should I receive no instructions to the contrary, I have concluded to visit this section of the Territory—and should I find it advantageous to the interest of the Government and the Indians, I shall

9 Young to Lea, March 30, 1852 (U/4–1852).
10 Holeman to Lea, February 29, 1852 (H/44–1852).
10a As to Mormon Station [sic; an inserted, possibly incomplete, manuscript note. —Ed.]
make arrangements to establish an Agency, at some point which will be the best calculated to give the greatest amount of protection, and at the same time be most convenient for operations with the Indians. As the emigration will be leaving this valley about the 20th of April, I have concluded to leave this city with them.\textsuperscript{11}

Holeman’s initial relations with Young had been not uncordial, and there is evidence of good feeling on Young’s part to the end of November. The agent’s trip to Laramie, however, and his association with the mountain men who looked with no favor upon the Mormons and their developing settlements, instilled in him a prejudice against the Saints. He wrote the commissioner of Indian affairs from Laramie on September 21, 1851, that the Mormons were driving off and killing the Indians’ game and, in some instances, the Indians themselves, thus provoking the Indians to “attack emigrants, plunder and commit murder whenever they find a party weak enough to do it.” He had other hard things to report about the Mormons during the course of the winter, after his return to Great Salt Lake City.

Young took natural exception to Holeman’s strictures on receiving his copy of the annual “Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs” for 1851, which incorporated as the only communication from Utah the letter Holeman had written from Laramie. Young called on the agent in person to point out that at the time he submitted his opinions, Holeman had never seen an Indian upon whose land had settled whites who made improvements and cultivated the earth, that no Indians had ever been driven off these lands that he had ever heard of, and that the Shoshoni—the only Indians with whom Holeman had come in contact—were not driven to depredations but were so universally known for their friendliness, that immigrants ceased keeping a guard as soon as they reached the Shoshoni country. He hoped, he said, that Holeman’s “longer residence in the Territory and more extended acquaintance had served to correct the views which he had so erroneously entertained and expressed.”

The only satisfaction Young got from the agent was that he “promised to look over the matter” and if he say anything to retract . . . he would take great pleasure in doing so.” Holeman indeed adhered to his views “so strenuously” as to induce in the governor’s mind “the belief that he was at least indifferent to the interests of the community.” The upshot was that Young figuratively washed his hands of the agent. Holeman, left to wonder about the status of the proposed Humboldt expedition, got no satisfaction from the governor, who finally set out for a trip to southern Utah leaving unanswered a letter the agent wrote him on April 19, asking advice and instruction. A man who took the

\textsuperscript{11} Holeman to Lea, March 29, 1852 (H/79–1852).
duties of his office seriously, Holeman thereupon decided to go ahead on his own initiative, and he so wrote the commissioner of Indian affairs.\textsuperscript{12}

Holeman had hoped to get away by April 20, but was detained beyond that time in making his arrangements. On May 2, he reported to Washington,

I have been informed this morning, that a Mr. Williams received a letter from a friend of his, a Mormon, stating that he is associated with a company of white men and Indians, who are stationed near Carson Valley, and that their object is, to plunder and rob the emigrants. He advises Williams, who is a Mormon also, to paint the horns of his cattle so that he may be known, as they do not wish to molest the brethren. We ought to have troops here—These whites associated with the Indians are committing so many depredations on this route, that something ought to be done.\textellipsis\textsuperscript{13}

A letter six days later elaborated on these facts. Holeman had learned that the writer of the letter was “a notorious character, by the name of Reading,” once a member of the Mormon Church, but “now held by them in utter contempt, and looked upon as a great scoundrel.”\textsuperscript{14} Notwithstanding, in consequence of some act of personal friendship shown him by Williams previously, he had sent him this information, thus fulfilling the old adage of there being honor among thieves. This was not, however, to be understood as reflecting upon Williams. “From what I can learn,” he added, “there is no doubt of the existence of this band, and that there [sic] object is, to plunder the emigrants, and all who travel that road,” the principal robberies occurring beyond the intersection of the Fort Hall and Salt Lake roads. He would, he said, use every exertion to reconcile the Indians and prevail on them to withdraw from this band. He had previously expressed the opinion that white men were the instigators of the disturbances on the California road, and the matter was now reduced to a certainty. If he should find it important to the interests of the government, and necessary for future operations with the Indians, he would establish an agency at some point on the Humboldt, as it would have a tendency to protect the route and afford facilities for emigration. If he should establish such an agency, and if the government approved, he would be pleased to have that

\textsuperscript{12} The foregoing is summarized from the detailed discussion of the controversial relations between Young and Holeman in Morgan, “Administration of Indian Affairs in Utah,” 385–92 [pp. 59–67 in this volume].

\textsuperscript{13} Holeman to Lea, May 2, 1852 (H/90–1852). The Williams referred to was Thomas S. Williams, a man of somewhat mixed talents discussed to some extent in my \textit{The Humboldt: Highroad of the West} (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1943), 203–4, 213–19. He broke with the church and left Utah early in 1857, returned after the garrisoning of Utah by U.S. troops in 1858, and was killed by Indians on the Mojave [Desert] in 1860.

\textsuperscript{14} The activities of Return Jackson Redden and his associates on the California Trail are discussed in Morgan, \textit{Humboldt}, 214–20.
agency assigned to him. Mentioning rumors of Indian massacres currently in town, he observed that there was

a great want of certain information relative to the condition and numbers of these bands or tribes, which renders it very difficult to form any opinion of the best course to pursue. From such information as I can get, they seem to have no fixed location, but assemble on the road as the season for emigration approaches—they then infest the road from the goose creek mountains to Carson Valley—a distance of about 500 miles.

In summary,

We are in great confusion here—we want a few troops on this route, very badly. The white Indians, I apprehend, are much more dangerous than the red. The renegades, deserters, and thieves, who have had to fly from justice in California, have taken refuge in the Mountains—and having associated themselves with the Indians, are more savage than the Indians themselves—by their cruelty to the whites, they have stimulated the Indians to acts of barbarity, which they were never known to be guilty of before. It has not been known, until recently, altho' strongly suspected, that whites were engaged with these Indians and believing that the Indians, alone, were the depredators, our people have shown them but little favor or kindness—often, no doubt treating the innocent with severity. This has produced a state of feeling, unfriendly to the whites, generally; and although it cannot be said that we are really in a state of war with these Indians, yet the effect upon our people is the same. These Indians, by their frequent depredations on the whites, are supplying themselves with horses, arms ammunition [sic] &c. and if not checked, they will very shortly be able to make a formidable resistance, as their revengeful feelings will be stimulated by the prospect of plunder. The rugged state of the country, and their knowledge of the mountain passes, will enable them to flee wherever and whenever they may wish—this will render it almost impossible to subdue them by waging war upon them. The best mode to pursue, at present, is to conciliate them, if possible, by kindness—Should this course prove unsuccessful, we shall then have left no other alternative but force.\(^{15}\)

Holeman finally got away from Great Salt Lake City on May 13, with an escort of thirty-five men.\(^ {16}\) The emigrant trains, he reported to the commissioner of

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Indian affairs, traveled within a few days’ march of each other, and as they traveled only from eighteen to twenty-five miles a day, he was enabled to be with the trains as occasion might require, sometimes in front, sometimes in the rear. All got through safely, with very little trouble from the Indians. He himself arrived in Carson Valley on June 18.

The effect of his investigations had been to confirm his conviction that

the great, almost the sole cause of all the difficulties—the destruction of life and property on this route, is owing to the bad conduct of the whites, who were the first to commence it—and in many instances the whites are the sole depredators, yet they manage to have it charged to the Indians. I have been informed by respectable and reliable authority, that many of the whites who travel this road, have been in the habit of persuading the Indians into their camps, under the most solemn assurances of friendship—and then, without any cause on the part of the Indians, they would shoot them down—others are in the habit of shooting the Indians whenever and wherever they can find them, whether the Indians are molesting them or not. These white men, frequently take excursions through the country, in search of the Indians, robbing and plundering them of every thing they possess. The Indians retaliate upon the whites whenever they have it in their power, and thus the excitement is kept up. In many instances, innocent persons are made to suffer for the bad conduct of others. . . .

He had found it difficult even “to get any conversation” with the Indians along the emigrant road, since they had no confidence in any professions of white friendship. To those with whom he had talked, he had given presents and assurance of “their great father’s” friendly disposition toward them; all “seemed friendly disposed and expressed an anxiety to be on friendly terms with the whites, yet they doubted our sincerity—but if we walked straight, and had not forked tongues, they would be very glad.”

Holeman further announced his intention of staying on in Carson Valley for a few weeks so that his horses might recruit. In the meantime, he proposed visiting the Indians in the mountains, and if possible, having a meeting with their chiefs, two of whom were said to have complete control over their tribe. In hope of arranging this meeting he had employed two men well acquainted with the Indians in the quarter and on the Humboldt to accompany his interpreter.17 He had great hopes in the success of this expedition, “as one of these men, James Beckwith has been with the Indians many years, is well known to them—He is a very intelligent half breed—he was in the employment of Government as an

16 Holeman to Lea, June 28, 1852 (H/133–1852).
17 The interpreter was Hubert Papan [or Papin], “a very efficient man” who spoke Shoshoni
express man, between the various divisions of the army in this section, during the Mexican War.”

Holeman seems to have reported on July 19, concerning his stay in Carson Valley. The letter certainly would be of great interest, but unfortunately, it is not to be found in the records of the Indian Office; it cannot even be established that it was ever received in Washington. Subsequent to the date of this letter, the agent visited a village of Paiutes numbering some 350 who were “friendly disposed” “but somewhat excited on account of the repeated abuses which they had received from the whites.” A council of some four hours’ duration had a favorable effect upon these Indians, and Holeman thought if they were treated kindly by the whites, there would be no trouble with them. Turning back to Great Salt Lake City, he crossed the Carson desert on July 29, and, by slow stages, traveled back to his official station, which he reached on August 22. He had hoped to meet again with the Indians along the Humboldt with whom he had talked outward-bound, but was more or less disappointed in this, as “the vast number of emigrants on the road, and the disposition of some, to kill the Indians, had kept the Indians from the road.” Those to whom he did talk, he found shy but friendly.

To his efforts along the Humboldt, Holeman attributed the fact that there had been no depredations or attacks on the emigrant trains this year, whereas in 1851 not a train passed without murders and rob[b]eries.” On his return, along the whole course of the Humboldt, he had met “with hundreds of waggons, daily—with many small companies, some on foot, some packing, and frequently a solitary traveller, and none had been molested, as they informed me, by the Indians—many had not even guarded their stock at night, yet they had gone through without any difficulty. There had been some few roberies, cattle or horses stolen,

and Ute. He resided in the mountains some fifteen years and was well acquainted with the Indians and the country. Holeman to Lea, September 30, 1852 (H/163–1852). [See also appendix, note 70 in this volume.]

18 Holeman to Lea, June 28, 1852 (H/133–1852). The redoubtable Jim Beckwith (or Beckwourth, as he was beginning to prefer to spell his name) only eight weeks previously had embellished his reputation as “the gaudy liar” by taking in the editor of the Marysville Herald with a story of having crossed the Plains in advance of the emigration, which he estimated at 75,000. He had, he said, left Fort Leavenworth on March 3, and he claimed that a large proportion of the immigration would “take the route discovered by him, known as ’Beckwith’s Route,’” and would come in at Marysville. His route was claimed to be “the best and nearest one from the other side of the mountains into the Sacramento Valley.” However, the Marysville Express promptly reported that Jim Beckwith had wintered on Feather River, and consequently could bring no news from Fort Leavenworth. Daily Alta California, May 6, 1852.

19 [Morgan inserted two text references to note 19. See the next page. —Ed.]
but those who were robbed, assured me, that it had been done by white men. . . . There had been a great many outbreaks and difficulties between the emigrants, themselves—companies have quarreled, killed each other, and broken up—some, from, their bad conduct have been driven from their companies—many of these men are scattered over the road, without means, living on the charity of others—they, also, steal and commit other depredations, which they endeavor to lay upon the Indians. The truth is, this portion of the emigration, and these pretended traders, are decidedly worse than the Indians, and cause nearly, if not all the troubles on the road. It is the universal opinion of the emigrants that the Indians have been quiet, and have acted friendly throughout—and that all the depredations are the acts of white men—these, however, have been few.

Judging from the difficulties which had occurred during the two preceding years, hundreds of lives and thousands of dollars worth of property had been saved through the efforts of his expedition, Holeman suggested, “to say nothing of the suffering of the emigrants themselves,—besides, the Government, is made acquainted with facts, which will enable her to establish peace and quiet on this route in future.”

Meanwhile, Brigham Young had returned from his southern trip to be faced with Holeman’s fait accompli. In a letter to the commissioner of Indian affairs he discussed his estrangement with Holeman and how it was that he had declined “giving him any instructions as was designed.” His statement of the case was not unfair to Holeman, and he expressed the hope that the enterprise would prove beneficial. “I shall now await the result of his enterprise before acting in the premises.”

That Holeman’s venture did not set well with Young is, however, indicated by the reaction of the Deseret News, which reported on May 29, that Holeman had left “as rumor says, on an excursion to Mary’s river or Carson Valley to treat with the Indians,” without the sanction or knowledge of the Superintendent. “The station assigned the Major by the Superintendent was in the south part of the Territory, as we had supposed, that being the only vacancy, according to the proclamation of the governor on that subject previous to the arrival of the Major in the Territory. We cannot put that together, i.e., how the Major can be on official duty, as Indian Agent, while he is several hundred miles from his post and still going further. . . .

19 Holeman to Lea, August 30, 1852 (H/152–1852).
20 Young to Lea, May 28, 1852 (U/8–1852).
21 Willard Richards, editor of the News, was also Second Counselor to Young in the First Presidency of the church. Young gave private and more forcible expression of his
Young chose not to make an issue of what he might have regarded as Holeman's insubordination, but he dismissed Holeman's claims with polite skepticism in his quarterly report of September 1852, saying simply, “all is peace among the native tribes in this superintendency, even on Mary’s river. We learn of no depredations of importance; this however is the usual result during the heavy emigration; whether they will again commence when that has passed, and small companies again tempt their rapacity time will develope. It is to be hoped that all parties traveling in that direction will give them no opportunity.”

The commissioner of Indian affairs, however, was pleased to give publicity to Holeman’s journey, the object of which, he said, was

to prevent a recurrence, if possible, of numerous and often fatal collisions between the emigrants and Indians. It seems to have been eminently successful, as no murders or robberies are reported to have been committed by these Indians during the present year. To give some idea of the immense travel along this route, and the consequent importance of conciliating the Indians, the agent states that in returning to Salt Lake, he passed on each of several days as many as three hundred wagons.

Objectively considered, Holeman’s trip seems to have contributed to the betterment of relations between whites and Indians along the emigrant road, though his reports are so indefinite as to make it difficult to ascertain whether other causes may not have operated this year to improve conditions in the Humboldt Valley. However, he had in no way rectified that “great want of information relative to the condition and numbers of these bands or tribes, which renders it very

resentment of Holeman’s action in a letter to John M. Bernhisel, Utah’s delegate to Congress, on May 27. Holeman had left, he said, altogether without his consent or any instructions from him. He was inclined to believe the agent was doing everything he could against him, and he announced his intention of improving “an early opportunity of investigating matters pertaining to his doings.” Morgan, “Administration of Indian Affairs in Utah,” 390–91 [pp. 64–66 in this volume].

Young to Lea, September 29, 1852 (U/17–1852). Another letter to Bernhisel exhibited a certain scorn.

Major Holeman . . . assumes that he has accomplished great things. I hope it may prove so, but have my doubts, if it has accomplished any good. I should not have instructed him, if I had given him any to have gone with a large company. It was not at all necessary when there was so much emigration on the road, but I am desirous of getting along with him with as little difficulty as possible, therefore pass by many things, that might with a great deal of propriety be commented upon.

Morgan, “Administration of Indian Affairs in Utah,” 391 [p. 65 in this volume].

difficult to form any opinion of the best course to pursue.” He had nothing specific to say about any of the Indians encountered; no information was provided as to the composition and social organization of individual bands or as to their range and location. Ethnologically, his reports were almost valueless.

Holeman’s relations with the Mormons continued on no particularly cordial plane through the fall and winter. In effect, he wrote the commissioner of Indian affairs that it was to the best interests of the department that Young or himself should be replaced. This had become the idea also of the Indian Office, and on April 30, Edward A. Bedell of Warsaw, Illinois, was named Holeman’s successor. Meantime, the agent had planned a new expedition to Carson Valley, and although rumors of his displacement had reached him in June, he concluded to go ahead anyway. He set out for the Humboldt on July 6, 1853, this time with Young’s sanction.23 In Thousand Spring Valley he had a council with Too-kemoh (“the rabbit”), a Shoshoni chief whose band, Holeman reported, numbered some six hundred,23a and who claimed the country adjacent to Thousand Spring Valley and as far west as the Humboldt. On arriving at the Humboldt, he lay by two days for a council with Ne-me-te-kah (“man eater”), whose Shoshoni band numbered about five hundred. Each of these chiefs he found well-disposed toward the whites. Holeman described Ne-me-te-kah as “an intelligent Indian, noble in appearance, and a very particular friend to the whites. He had never permitted any of his band to disturb the Whites; and told me, that there were bad Indians on the Humboldt—that they would sometimes steal from the whites, but if they did not cease their depredations on the whites, he would collect his band together and make them.” Ne-me-te-kah sent two braves as guides when Holeman resumed his journey down the Humboldt; one of these, Pant-wa-a-rante (“the drowned man”), had a separate band of about two hundred occupying the country around the first crossing of the Humboldt. These guides were instructed to find still another chief, Oh-hah-quah (“yellow skin”), who lived near Stony Point (Battle Mountain) with his band of 450 Shoshoni. Oh-hah-quah was absent on a hunt and could not be found, but two of his braves accompanied Holeman a hundred miles down the river, enabling him to see many more Indians. Seventy-five miles above the Sink of the Humboldt, he met a party

23 Morgan, “Administration of Indian Affairs in Utah,” 392 [pp. 66–67 in this volume]. Holeman wrote Lea on May 21 (H/252–1853) of his intention of going to Carson unless otherwise instructed. He had received intelligence of a restless spirit among the Indians along the California trail and of some minor disturbances. He thought it better to mend matters at once than to allow the breach to widen, and commented anew on the fact that it was much more difficult to manage the whites than the Indians—“they are continually mistreating in Indians, and it is not to be wondered at that the Indians retaliate.”

23a Stewart terms this estimate excessive, and probably was of a transient population, perhaps from Fort Hall (157–also Hunt, 1856 re this). [This editorial reminder to himself was not completed. —Ed.]
of Bannocks belonging to a band under Tè-ne-ra-wenah\(^{24}\) (“the long man”),

two of whom accompanied him to the sink and promised they would find the

chief—then off in the mountains on a hunt—and meet him at their village near

the Big Meadows on his return.

Few Indians were met after crossing the desert until Holeman arrived at

Mormon Station where he found a number of Paiutes and Washoes, stragglers

from their bands, hunting and fishing along the Carson River. “The Washaws,”

Holeman advised,

reported that they had two chiefs, who were at that time in the Mountains,

they knew not where. This tribe is, and has been very troublesome.

The many depradations which have been committed on the Whites,
in Crossing the Siera Nevada, no doubt has been by this tribe. The Pi-

Utes are in two separate bands, commanded by two chiefs—estimated,
one at 300, and the other at 350—they reside on Carson river and in the

Mountains east and south east of the river—they have been generally

friendly to the whites—they are very poor.

Holeman commenced his return journey on September 7. Again he did not

succeed in seeing the chiefs of the Paiute bands on the Carson, but he sent pre-

sents to the two men, observing that these Indians had been very friendly and that

there had been no disturbance by them during the present season. He crossed

the desert, and at the Big Meadows had the promised meeting with the Bannock

chief, Tè-ne-ra-wenah, whose band he was informed numbered about six hun-
dred. The Bannocks were pleased with their presents, and assured Holeman that

the whites would not be disturbed by them. Above the Big Meadows, Holeman

observed, the Humboldt ran through a very narrow channel for some forty-five

miles; as the bottoms were narrow and afforded little grass and consequently, no

game, the Indians did not reside near the river; and he encountered none until a

point fifty miles below Stony Point. These belonged to Oh-hah-quah’s band and

went with him to their village. From these Indians also assurances of good will

were obtained, and Holeman thought no trouble need be expected from them.

However, Ne-me-te-kah and the whites had not, after all, got on so well this

season. A party of Californians on a trading expedition on the Humboldt had

killed six Indians, taken their horses, and left for California. One of the slain was

Ne-me-te-kah’s son, and he had sent to Oh-hah-quah asking the latter to join in

killing all the whites who passed down the river, but Oh-hah-quah had refused,
at least until he should see Holeman on his return.

At once Holeman hastened up the river. On arriving at Gravelly Ford, he met

two emigrant trains which had been attacked, with four men badly wounded

\(^{24}\) Holeman also renders the name Te-ve-ra-wenah.
and much stock, a wagon, provisions, and other valuable property lost. The
two Indians who had accompanied the agent from Oh-hah-quah’s village were
dispatched in search of Ne-me-te-kah and returned with him two days later. Ne-
me-te-kah confessed he was afraid to see Holeman—

that his conduct had been so different from what he had promised me,
that he feared I would be mad with him—he still expressed a great desire
to be friendly with the whites, but said the whites would not be friendly
with him—that the whites had killed his son and his men, and taken their
horses and guns, without any cause,—that they had never disturbed the
whites or their property—that it had made his heart feel bad, had made
his men mad, and he could not restrain his men—they were determined
to be revenged on the whites.

Holeman explained the difference between the traders and the blameless emi-
grants, and Ne-me-te-kah said finally “that all further troubles should cease.”
Distributing the usual presents, to Ne-me-te-kah and to Pant-wa-a-rante,
Holeman left the Humboldt with the conviction that if those still emigrating
this year would treat the Indians kindly, they would experience no trouble. In
Thousand Springs Valley he found that Too-ke-moh’s band had left for the neigh-
borhood of Fort Hall, where there was more game and where they intended
to winter, so without delay, he continued on to Great Salt Lake City, where he
arrived September 29, to find that his successor had reported for duty.

In this, his final report as agent, Holeman reiterated his conviction that it was
very important to the peace and safety of travel on the California trail that the
government should establish a post along its length.

the road is lined with trading posts, from California to within 150 miles
of this city—principally by men from California—they station themselves
at every point where good feed is to be found—their stock in trade con-
sists principally in Liquor—scarcely an article is found, such as the emi-
grants stand most in need of—by their unkind treatment to the Indians,
they make them unfriendly towards the emigrants—scisms arise, which
they take advantage of, and steal, and commit more depredations on the
emigrants, then the Indians—all of which they manage to have charged
to the Indians. I was told by the Indians, that propositions had been made
to them by some of these traders, to steal the stock of the emigrants,
run them off into the vallies of Mountains, and after the emigration had
ceased passing, they could come, bring them guns, ammunition and blan-
kets, and trade with them for the stock stolen. I endeavored to put a stop
to this species of trade and traffic. I informed them that they were violat-
ing the laws, and subjecting themselves to fines and punishment, and that
I should be compelled to put the laws in force against them—they laughed at me—they defied me and the laws—they told me, there were so many of them, that they could and would do as they pleased, law or no law. As I had not a force, sufficient to enable me to enforce the laws, I could do nothing with them—it was useless to attempt. . . . I feel satisfied, that until the Government throws protection over this route, and places the means within the reach of the officers to enforce their authority and the laws, there can be no safety to the travel—the whites who infest the country are far more troublesome than the Indians.  

The new Indian agent, Edward A. Bedell, had arrived in Great Salt Lake City on August 15, and Young promptly redistricted the territory. No successor had ever been named for sub-agent Day, and Indian affairs in the territory had been administered without much regard for the original agency plane, which in any event, had been a nearsighted arrangement having primary relevance to the well-being of the Mormon community. Now the superintendency was divided into two districts—the eastern and the western—with the U.S. Territorial Road (approximately present U.S. 91) adopted as the line of division. Bedell was named to the eastern district and Rose to the western.

The California trail was, however, almost neglected for the next two years. A fruit of this neglect was an initiative taken by the inhabitants of Carson Valley toward having an Indian agency especially established for their benefit.

From the beginning, Young had recommended that something of this kind be done, and it was more probably owing to inadequate staffing of his superintendency than to indifference that a sub-agent was not specifically assigned to the Humboldt-Carson area. As early as 1851, Young had wanted an agency on the Humboldt, and on December 31, 1853, he proposed four new sub-agencies, including one for Carson Valley and the Humboldt River area. As nothing was done by the Indian Office toward authorizing such a sub-agency, the inhabitants of Carson Valley themselves took action. On January 21, 1855, 145 citizens of Carson petitioned that, in view of the unprotected state of the residents of Carson and the adjacent valleys, an agent be appointed to assist them in trading with the Paiutes and Washoos. “We have in our Valley, some permanent settlers, who are making improvements as fast as Circumstances will permit, already having in operation a large Flouring mill and saw mills. Many more Emigrants would make this their home, Could they feel that their lives and property were secure from Indian depredations.” They recommended the appointment of Thomas

25 Holeman to Young, September 30, 1853 (U/26–1853).
26 Morgan, “Administration of Indian Affairs in Utah,” 393 [p. 67 in this volume].
27 Ibid.
Knott as agent, and delegated him to bear their petition to Washington.\textsuperscript{28} Knott himself argued his qualifications to the Indian Office, referring to his two-year residence in Carson Valley, and explorations he had participated in during the last year.\textsuperscript{29} He had, he said,

erected 2 saw mills and a large [fl]ouring mill in the said Valley have been one among others that have had to suffer losses to keep on good terms with the Indians; I had to bestow many dollars worth of provisions & clothing on those Tribes; and now it is for your Honors to say whether we as a small company of unprotected American people shall receive any support or protection from the General Government. . . . It is not a desirable place to be situated in those mountains, and among these Savage Tribes. And if the Department see proper or feel disposed to take any notice of this, which we feel to be for the good of the American people, they will please give me an answer to this.\textsuperscript{30}

Knott did not, get much satisfaction from the Indian Office, which wrote him on April 17, that the agency and sub-agency provided by law for Utah Territory had been filled, and that there was no authority for appointing an additional agent.\textsuperscript{31}

The next developments along the California trail originated in the Superintendent's Office in Great Salt Lake City. By the spring of 1855, the Utah Superintendency had both a new agent and a new sub-agent. En route east to bring out his family, agent Bedell died at Green River on May 4, 1854, and was succeeded by a Kentuckian, Dr. Garland Hurt, a zealous official who proved quite as much a thorn in Mormon flesh as Holeman but who also set up the first large Indian farms in the territory. Rose, the sub-agent, gave way to another

\textsuperscript{28} Petition to the Senate and House of Representatives, January 21, 1855, copy attached to Knott to Department of Indian Affairs, April 10, 1855 (K/76–1855). This petition was signed by 145 residents of Carson Valley, including such familiar names as John and Enoch Reese, James and John McMarlin, William B. Thorrington, Henry Vansickly, and Stephen A. Kinsey. I have not established wither it was ever presented to Congress. It was never printed as an Executive Document.

\textsuperscript{29} The explorations are described in general terms in Morgan, \textit{Humboldt}, 223–33. Knott had been with John Reese and Oliver B. Huntington in the westbound reconnaissance for Lt. Col. E. J. Steptoe from Great Salt Lake City, and he and two others accompanied Reese in the exploration, splitting off from Huntington's eastbound party, which seems to have been the first exploration of the Reese River country, among Indians who, Knott said, “had never seen the face of an American before[!]”

\textsuperscript{30} [Morgan did not complete this citation, but from the context the quotation is likely from the April 10, 1855 letter cited in note 28. —Ed.]

\textsuperscript{31} Manypenny to Knott, April 17, 1855, Indian Office Letter Book, no. 51, 274. Manypenny did not say so but there was none but financial reasons to prevent his naming an additional sub-agent! Full agents, however, could be provided for only by Congress.
Mormon, George W. Armstrong, who on July 1, 1855, upon authorization by act of Congress, was promoted to the status of a full agent.\(^{32}\)

Unfinished business dating from Holeman’s time required Hurt’s attention during the summer. Hurt wrote the commissioner of Indian affairs on July 14:

During the time of Maj. Holeman and while he was on the Humboldt a party of emigrants killed several Indians, among whom was the Chief’s son. This came near resulting in a general massacre of some trains then in the neighborhood, but was settled by heavy promises on the part of Maj Holeman. These promises with many others which have been subsequently made have not been met, on the contrary depredations have been frequently committed upon them by inconsiderate persons which have provoked the Indians to commit[al] of crimes which might have been avoided. They still claim the fulfillment of the promises made them, but are becoming very impatient, and are wreaking their vengeance upon small parties who are continually passing the road. It is eminently desirable that something be done to stay the hand of destruction to life & property that has so long been waged in that region[.]. I have therefore, equip[p]ed myself for that purpose—and shall take with me a sufficient amount of presents to be able to meet their expectations, and shall endeavor to negotiate with them for peace, and if possible for the right of way through their Country binding them to guarantee our people perfect safety to life and property.\(^{33}\)

Hurt limited himself to the business at hand, going only as far as the South Fork of the Humboldt, where he met with the chief Holeman had called Ne-me-tek-ah.\(^{34}\) “It was fortunate,” he subsequently reported to the Indian Office,

that my visit among them preceeded for [by] a few days the feeble emigrant parties that passed through this season, for had not something occurred to divert their attention the scenes that were enacted near Ft. Boyse in Oregon last season would have been repeated in the valley of the Humboldt in a more frightful and heartrending manner. The Indians claim that we have eaten up their grass and thereby deprived them of its rich crop of seed which is their principal subsistence during winter. They say too that the long guns of the white people have scared away the game

\(^{32}\) [This citation was left blank in the manuscript, but Armstrong’s appointment is cited in Morgan, “Administration of Indian Affairs in Utah,” 393 n. 44 (p. 68 in this volume). Morgan’s manuscript fails to document Armstrong’s July 1855 full appointment. —Ed.]

\(^{33}\) Hurt to Commissioner of Indian Affairs George W. Manypenny, July 14, 1855 (H/999–1855).

\(^{34}\) Hurt renders the name Nim-oh-lee-cap.
and now there is nothing left for them to eat but ground squirrels and pis-ants.\textsuperscript{35}

Although Holeman had no proper authority to negotiate a treaty with these Shoshoni, he decided to take the responsibility upon himself. On August 7, 1855, he concluded a treaty between the U.S. government and “the chiefs, head men, and warriors of the Sho-Sho-Nes nation of Indians (commonly called snake Diggers) occupying the northern, and middle portion of the Valley of the Humboldt River.” The treaty—which was understood to be subject to ratification by the president and Senate of the United States—provided that the Indians would respect the lives and property of U.S. citizens in their territory, have friendly feelings for them and grant them a right of way through their country, respect the supremacy of U.S. laws, and when called upon, would help arrest and bring to justice, persons who committed crimes within the limits of their country. In return, the U.S. promised the friendship and good will of its citizens and government, together with $3,000 in presents to be delivered to them on or before September 30, 1857.\textsuperscript{36}

Well-intentioned as it was, Hurt’s treaty ran afoul government red tape. A duplicate rather than the original was transmitted to Washington,\textsuperscript{37} and the department finally informed Hurt that since only the original of such a document,

\textsuperscript{35}Hurt to Manypenny, August 27, 1855 (B/105–1855). A more general account of Hurt’s expedition was written by his clerk, Columbus L. Craig, for the Deseret News, August 29, 1855. The council with these Indians was held at Haw’s Ranch with A. P. Haws acting as his interpreter, for which and for whom see Morgan, Humboldt, 217–20, 225. While on this expedition Hurt discovered, at a number of points, quantities of garnets, or “rubies,” as he termed them (Hurt to Manypenny, September 1, 1855 (H/1074–1855)). The Huntington-Reese reconnaissance of the previous fall also had made such discoveries, and it is probably that the name of the Ruby Mountains dates from about this time.

\textsuperscript{36}Hurt’s original copy of the document is filed in the Indian Office records with “‘Treaties, Talks and Councils,’” (H/1032–1855), Utah. A duplicate is in the papers of the Utah Superintendency, [Record Group 75.15.13], B/105–1856. [Though never ratified by the Senate and therefore never in force, the text may be found more readily in Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties, ed. Charles J. Kappler, vol. 5 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1941), 685–86. —Ed.] The Indians who signed it by mark were Nim-oh-lee-cap (“man eater”), Sho-cap-it-su (“old man”), Pan-tow-quan (“diving mink”), Two-quan-du-at-su (“young groundhog”), Sho-cap-it-su Senr (apparently a father-and-son relationship with the second Indian named), Pow-wan-tah-wah (“strong smoker”), Jan-cup-pah (“climbing man”), Ink-ah-bil (“red man”), Ko-too-bol-se, and Wot-sow-witsu-mot-tow (“the four Shians”). The orthography of all these names is somewhat difficult and the transcription may not be exact.

\textsuperscript{37}Hurt’s explanation of this aberration was that the duplicate was forwarded to the superintendent soon after his return to Great Salt Lake City, “whose sanction I deemed necessary, and without which I did not suppose any notice would be taken of them at Washington, in which event I prefer[r]ed the original copy to remain in my own office.” Hurt to Acting Commissioner Charles E. Mix, March 27, 1857 (H/638–1857).
as signed by the Indians, could be presented for the constitutional action of the president and the Senate, nothing had been done in the matter.\(^{38}\) The extreme slowness of the mails resulted in Hurt's not getting this communication until March 27, 1857, and as by that time it was too late for action, he simply let the matter slide.\(^{39}\) Thus, the only definite attempt throughout the 1850s at negotiation of a treaty of any sort with the Indians came to nothing.\(^{40}\)

The agitation for appointment of an Indian agent or sub-agent for the Carson-Humboldt area now began to acquire real force. From the beginning, Carson Valley had been marginal to Mormon colonization of the mountain-desert country, never wholly accepted and not quite rejected. Separatist political activities of the settlers there, however, had resulted in formal creation of Carson County in 1854, and in the dispatch of a characteristic colonizing mission under Orson Hyde, apostle and probate judge, in the later spring of 1855. On February 2, 1856, the Utah delegate to Congress, John M. Bernhisel, called to the attention of the Indian Office a message he had received from Genoa, Carson County, dated December 4, 1855: “It really needs an Indian agent or sub-agent in this county. There are two tribes that rend[z]vous or roam here. The Washoos and the Pah Utahs. Many of the latter are very good workers. An agent here would be very useful to them, and a relief to the people.”\(^{41}\)

The commission recommended to the secretary of the interior on February 15, that a sub-agent be appointed for the Carson territory,\(^{42}\) and accordingly, he was advised that if he would name a suitable person for the office of sub-agent, he should be appointed. Here, however, the matter bogged down, for Manypenny replied that he knew of no person in the Territory of Utah whom he could recommend for the office of sub-agent in that territory.\(^{43}\)

\(^{38}\) Mix to Hurt, September 1, 1856, Indian Office Letter Book, no. 55, 73.

\(^{39}\) Hurt to Mix, March 27, 1857 (H/638–1857).

\(^{40}\) Morgan, “Administration of Indian Affairs in Utah,” 395–400 [pp. 69–74 in this volume], discusses efforts to arrange for treaties with the Utah Indians to acquire land titles. These never reached the stage of active negotiations with the Indians.

\(^{41}\) Bernhisel to Manypenny, February 2, 1856 (B/19–1856).

\(^{42}\) [Morgan failed to cite the commission's recommendation in his manuscript, thus we are left without his specific source. —Ed.]

\(^{43}\) Secretary of the Interior Robert McClelland to Manypenny, February 19, 1856 (I/47–1856). Manypenny's reply appears as an endorsement on this document under date of March 7. The fact that he could or would name no suitable person for appointment is evidence that he either had forgotten or had no faith in recommendations Young had made at various times since 1853 for appointment of men he regarded as qualified. Cf. Morgan, “Administration of Indian Affairs in Utah,” 391–93 [pp. 65–68 in this volume]. Since this article had not appeared in print at the time Morgan drafted this article he did not specify the pages he intended to cite, but the pages supplied here address the topic and may have been the ones he intended. —Ed.].

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The problem could not be solved by ignoring it, however. On April 10, 1855, Hurt wrote earnestly recommending provision for this additional Indian agency, “to embrace Carson County and Humboldt River County.” The cost of travel to Carson for an agent located in Great Salt Lake City would, he said, exceed the salary of a full agency. “An agent could be located there only two hundred miles from Sacramento City, and as the Indians are very numerous in that region a great saving to Government would be made in establishing the Agency.” As a suitable person for the appointment, he named Decatur J. Thompson of Great Salt Lake City, “A Kentuckian, of fine education a warm friend of the administration Party now hostile to factionists.” Hurt’s recommendations were warmly endorsed by J. F. Kinney, chief justice; W. W. Drummond, associate justice; William Bell, postmaster; and David H. Burr, surveyor general for the territory.44

Bernhisel himself returned to the wars in June. “Having recently received several communications from citizens of Carson county, in the Territory of Utah, urging the establishment of an Indian agency in that region of country, and the appointment of an Indian agent, I would respectfully request you to favor me with your opinion as to the necessity and propriety of the desired agency, and that you would state what would be the amount of the salary of a minor agent.”45 In reply he was assured that in the judgment of the commissioner of Indian affairs, “the interests of the citizens as well as the Indians, of Carson Valley Utah Territory, would be promoted by the establishment there of such an agency as you refer to,” and was informed that the salary of a minor agent was fixed by law at $1,000 per annum.46

Bernhisel’s labors in the House finally bore fruit when on March 3, 1857, an additional Indian agent was authorized for Utah,47 but for some reason not clear—unless it was the general upset in Washington over Utah affairs—the post was not filled until [May] 1858, when Frederick Dodge was named to the post.48

Meantime, with his refreshed interest in Carson Valley, during the spring of 1856, Brigham Young instructed Agent Hurt to undertake a visit to that area. Preoccupied with establishing his new Indian farms, Hurt was reluctant to go,49 but he set out on May 17. His report on his expedition is long and instructive. On arriving in Thousand Springs Valley on May 31, he learned that Indians had mur-

44 Hurt to Manypenny, April 10, 1856 (H/168–1856). A letter of similar import was written the previous day to the secretary of the interior. Both were merely filed on receipt.
45 Bernhisel to Manypenny, June 17, 1856 (B/93–1856).
46 Manypenny to Bernhisel, June 26, 1856, Indian Office Letter Book, no. 54, 401, 402.
48 [Morgan left part of the date and the note blank in the manuscript, obviously intending to complete it in a later revision. Dodge’s appointment was ratified June 4. Journal of the Executive Proceedings of the Senate of the United States of America, vol.10 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1887), 437. —Ed.]
49 Hurt to Manypenny, August 30, 1856 (H/288–1856).
dered Carlos Murray, an event instrumental in breaking up Haws's Ranch on the South Fork of the Humboldt.\textsuperscript{50} Hurt traveled to what he termed “the bridge on the Humboldt”—evidently at the first crossing of that stream—where he met a large band of Indians with whom he had negotiated the previous summer. The Indians seemed “well disposed” and promised to try to get back the livestock which had belonged to Murray and turn it over to his brother-in-law, A. P. Haws. From this point on, until passing Stony Point on June 12, the road was thronged by Indians, who came by the hundreds into camp each night. “They presented a sad state of destitution, and said that many of their children had perished during the winter. They are all parties to the treaty of last summer, and seem to be trying to live up to their treaty obligations.” The Indians living about Stony Point, whom Hurt identified as being called To-sow-witches or “white knives,”\textsuperscript{51} so named for a beautiful flint found in the mountains and formerly used by them as a substitute in dressing their food. He did not encounter in numbers on the out-bound trip except for a party of about fifty on the evening of the fifteenth, who said they lived north and had come over to trade with the emigrants; this group was well-supplied with guns and horses and was anxious to trade for ammunition. At the meadows, and about the sink of the Humboldt, Hurt encountered some two hundred Paiutes quite as wretched as the diggers, from whom it was learned that about six hundred of this tribe were camped in the mountains north of the sink. An all-night journey across the desert brought Hurt to Ragtown on the morning of the twenty-third, and here and on the following three days of traveling up the Carson, he met with other Paiutes, numbering in all about one hundred fifty. Many of them had acquired some knowledge of English and having become domesticated were employed by the Carson settlers as herdsmen and farm laborers. The “Was-saws” living in the Sierras, Hurt learned, claimed the Carson as their land and had made several attempts to collect rent, but not being very numerous, they had found a mild course the better policy. The agent reached the settlements on the Carson on June 28.

The homeward-bound trip was commenced July 30, by way of Washoe and Truckee valleys. The meadows at the sink of the Humboldt were reached on


\textsuperscript{51} The term “To-sow-witches” was loosely applied to all the Indians west of present Utah, in central as well as northern Nevada. See, e.g., Armstrong to Young, September 30, 1856 (A/149–1857). Julian H. Steward, \textit{Basin-Plateau Aboriginal Sociopolitical Groups}, Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin 120 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1938), 154 comments on this name as one of those which “have gained some prominence in literature but are not band designations.” The name in actuality “was usually applied only to a small group at Iron Point, near Battle Mountain, where good white flint occurred, though there was no consistency in its application.”
August 6, when Hurt found two hundred or more of the Paiutes harvesting the grass seed, an important article of their diet. Above Stony Point there was news that the Indians were exhibiting the greatest hostility, attacking the emigrant trains night and day; in some part, this information seems to have been mere rumor, but Hurt learned that things were not as peaceful as was to be desired. From the old chief, Ne-me-te-kah, he learned that although the Indians were starving for meat, the emigrants would sell them no powder; and the more anxious the Indians were for the powder, the less inclined the whites were to trade it to them. Hurt was, however, encouraged to hear that a band under a chief named Pho-cup-ut-su had planted fifteen acres of wheat, potatoes, and squash at Haws’s Ranch that year.

The most critical section of the trail was the stretch between the Bear and Humboldt rivers. Scarcely a train this season had not lost property or been fired upon in this section; Hurt estimated that no less than three hundred head of cattle, and sixty or seventy horses and mules had been stolen or killed here. A difficulty was that the area was more or less neutral ground into which all the surrounding tribes made incursions in search of plunder. If the government did not take steps to check the growing insolence of the reckless and unprincipled men of the various tribes active in such enterprises, Hurt reasoned, their success would encourage others, “and in a short time, perhaps in another season, their merciless deeds may exceed any thing known to the history of Indian barbarity.” He laid particular stress upon this because he thought “no part of our extended country [is] more exposed to Indian ferocity, than this great Western thoroughfare, and there is perhaps no class of our people more deserving the fostering care of government than the emigrant citizen. . . .”

It was two years before any other measures were taken to conciliate the Indians along the California trail. Events were not propitious during 1857 for any sort of activity out of Great Salt Lake City. During that summer, things went from bad to worse in the Humboldt area, so much so that when Brigham Young called for abandonment of the Carson Valley settlement in consequence of the approach of the Utah Expedition, his post west was sent by the new “central route.” In his annual report to the Indian Office in September, Young vehemently protested against the behavior of the emigrants on the California trail. It was, he said, the practice of the citizens of Utah to give the Indians food, tobacco, and other presents, so that the Indians thronged the road with a view to receiving such presents. “When therefore travellers from the States make their appearance they throw themselves in sight with the same view and when they are shot at some of their numbers killed as has frequently been the case, we cannot but

52 Hurt to Young, September 1856 (U/12–1856).
expect them to wreak their vengeance upon the next train.” He voiced his outrage at a company of some three or four hundred returning Californians who “travelled those roads last spring to the Eastern States shooting at every Indian they could see, a practise utterly abhorrent to all good people. . . . It is hard to make an Indian believe that the whites are their friends and the Great Father wishes to do them good, when perhaps the very next party which crosses their path shoots them down like wolves.” First and foremost, among the things to be done if friendly relations with the Indians were to be maintained, he suggested, was that travelers “omit their infamous practise of shooting them down when they happen to see one.”

Congress had made provision in March, 1857, for an independent superintendent of Indian affairs in Utah, and on August 27, a Philadelphian, Jacob Forney, was nominated to the office. He had to spend the winter at Camp Scott with the U.S. troops, however, and it was not until June, 1858, that he entered Great Salt Lake City.

Although conditions had been bad in the Humboldt area in 1857, during 1858, the Indians were found by the mail contractors to be friendly though very poor. On August 30, however, a five-man mail party to California was attacked on the Humboldt some 325 miles from Great Salt Lake City and robbed of everything, though the men were not personally harmed. Reports came to Forney that “several thousand hostile Indians” were assembled in the Humboldt Valley, “and that the mail and all connected with it, and all travellers were threatened.” At his request, Governor Alfred Cumming made requisition on General Albert Sidney Johnston for troops to march to the Humboldt without delay, and accordingly, Captain [James W.] Haw[e]s, with 150 men, was dispatched on this mission, with orders not to proceed beyond the first crossing of the Humboldt.

54 Young to Commissioner of Indian Affairs James W. Denver, September 12, 1857 (U/19–1857).
55 Morgan, “Administration of Indian Affairs in Utah,” 405, 407 [pp. 79, 81 in this volume]. The author struck the remainder of this paragraph and two notes that may be of interest to modern students, reproduced here with the notes placed inserted:

As early as January, when he recommended the appointment of one John Kerr as agent in the newly created post [Forney to Denver, January 1, 1858 (F/189–1858); Forney to Acting Commissioner Mix, February 10, 1858 (S/273–1858)], he was devoting some thought to the Carson area, and on May 28, while still at Camp Scott, he announced his intention of visiting the tribes from Great Salt Lake City to Carson Valley during the coming season [Forney to Denver, May 28, 1858 (F/251–1858)].

56 Forney to Mix, August 6, 1858 (F/296–1858).
57 Forney to Mix, September 3, 1858 (F/309–1858).
58 Forney to Mix, November 5, 1858 (F/337–1858). [This expedition summarized somewhat differently in Donald R. Moorman and Gene Sessions, Camp Floyd and the Mormons: The Utah War (Salt Lake City: Univ. of Utah Press, 1992), 195–97].
As far back as May 28, Forney had anticipated a trip to the Humboldt Valley, and he had originally expected to begin about August 25. Now, with the dispatch of troops to a critical area, it was imperative that he make the trip, that no circumstances should arise to bring about “a conflict between the Military & the Indians.” The new agent for Carson Valley, Frederick Dodge, arrived by stage just in time to go with him, and the two men set out on September 12, with five camp attendants. The troops had left the city on the Wednesday before the eleventh [i.e., September 8] and Forney overtook them at Cedar Springs, two hundred miles along the way. In the Goose Creek Mountains he pushed on ahead, and on September 24, by way of “a narrow and decidedly one of the most strange Kanyons in the Territory”—Bishop’s or Emigration Canyon—he reached the Humboldt Valley. Along the way he had met with “Chief Po-Ko-Tell’s” band of Shoshoni. This chief, to be famous three years later for a massacre perpetrated in the City of Rocks area, he described as a young man who seemed to exercise complete control over his band, who “acknowledged no chief superior to” himself. They claimed to be friendly, and to substantiate these claims had testimony from Colonel F[rederick]. W. Lander, then surveying the “Fort Kearney, South Pass, and Honey Lake route” to California. The haunts of these Indians in summer were Deep Creek, Raft Creek, and other neighboring valleys; in winter, they roamed near the northern Utah settlements. All he found “very destitute, many entirely naked.” Along the way, at the first mail station beyond the settlements, Forney picked up a chief of one of the Humboldt bands, “a decent old man,” who proved of considerable service to them. On reaching the Humboldt Valley, Forney initiated a series of talks with the Indians of the area, culminating with a council on September 30, with four [i.e., five] chiefs representative of two bands, Py-poo-roo-yan San-Pitch, We-ra-yoo, Tse-mah, and Paw-sha-quin.

Forney moved on down the river to Stony Point to confer with the two bands of White Knives of which he had heard. One of these was on Snake River, where the band had gone north to winter. But on October 3, he talked to the other, which numbered two or three hundred, and had a chief exercising complete

59 Forney to Denver, May 28, 1858 (F/251–1858).
60 Forney to Mix, September 11, 1858 (F/313–1858).
60a Additional details on this portion of Forney’s trip are provided by letters to Mix written en route: “Among Hills, about 120 miles west of Salt L. City,” September 16 (F/318–1858); “Rock Creek,” September 18 (F/314–1858); “Valley of 1000 Springs,” September 23 (F/322–1858).
61 The possibility suggests itself that these Indians roamed fairly widely, since Forney says they were Shoshoni who recognized Washakie as their great chief. This was well west of Washakie’s country. A chief, San-Pitch, was among the Indians slain by Connor’s forces on January [29], 1863, in the Battle of Bear River [i.e., Bear River Massacre], and the one here named may have been the same.
control over them. Hoping to meet with the Paiutes, Forney traveled another hundred miles down the river, but at the mail station five hundred miles west of Great Salt Lake City, he learned this band was at Pyramid Lake, and by reason of the shortness of the season and having so much to do elsewhere, he decided to turn back. These Paiutes were, in any event, in Dodge’s Carson Valley agency.\footnote{Forney to Mix, November 5, 1858 (F/337–1858).} Forney separated from Dodge on October 8, and returned to his official station on October 29.\footnote{Forney to Mix, October 29, 1858 (F/331–1858).} The troops had preceded him back and when they were still fifty miles from the Humboldt, he had decided that there was no need for them. Forney considered his expedition to have been successful beyond all expectation in instilling friendly feelings in the Indians. Additionally, he had information of general interest for the department:

There are four “Bands” of Sho Sho Nees living in and about Humboldt Basin. These claim the Valley for about two hundred miles, extending from the eastern boundary to a range of hills about 30 miles west of “Stony Point,” which is the dividing line between them and the Pey-Utes, and I cannot learn [that] either encroach upon the others land. The land claimed by the four Sho sho nee Bands is divided into two, about equal parts, two Bands occupying each, together. The White-Knife Sho-sho-nees, live in the Western portion, and are ruled by two chiefs.

Whilst I consider Humboldt valley one of the largest and best watered in the Territory, and adapted to agricultural & herding purposes, yet, in its natural state, it affords very little for Indians to subsist upon. Like every other portion of this Territory, with which I am acquainted, Humboldt Valley is devoid of game, with the exception of a few Antelope and Rabbits. The Indians there, like those I met in Raft Creek Valley, and many others in this Territory, are obliged, to sustain life, to eat, besides the usual game, snakes, lizards, swifts, wolves, Grass hoppers, crickets, ants and their eggs &c &c. All the Indians I saw west of the settlements, are poor, miserably poor, many entirely naked. In this trip, I met four Bands of the Sho-Sho-Nees, and over 600 Indians who had never been officially seen by any Government officer, previously.\footnote{Forney to Mix, November 5, 1858 (F/337–1858).}

\textit{Basin-Plateau, 153.}
On returning to Great Salt Lake City, Forney set about expanding the Indian farms. He proposed four reservations: on Henry’s Fork in present Wyoming for the Shoshoni and Bannocks, in Cache Valley for the scattered bands adjacent to Great Salt Lake Valley, in Ruby Valley for the Shoshoni of the Humboldt area, and in Skull Valley or on Deep Creek (Ibapah) for the Gosiutes. Forney preferred Ruby Valley to the Humboldt Valley because of the latter’s adjacency to the troublesome Oregon Bannocks and its “destitution” of timber. Only the latter reservations became a reality.

Forney had two new agents to assist him. Garland Hurt’s commission expired in August, 1858, and his successor, named the following January, was Andrew Humphreys of Indiana, a conscientious man [who] was assigned to the reservations in the central Utah valleys. The Mormon agent, George Armstrong, was to have been replaced by one R. C. Morgan; the latter declined the appointment and it was given to Columbus L. Craig, who had at one time been Hurt’s clerk. But Craig also was soon removed from office, and in the fall of 1858, Robert B. Jarvis of [blank] was nominated agent. Jarvis reported for duty on [blank], and was soon placed in charge of the Deep Creek and Ruby Valley “reservations.”

These two new farms were of particular importance because the California mail contractor, George Chorpenning, was working out a “central route” for his mail stages, and Captain J. H. Simpson had begun the explorations which culminated the next summer in establishment of his route to Carson Valley and a stream of travel across the central Nevada valleys.

Forney’s ideas as to the Deep Creek and Ruby Valley reservations crystallized upon receipt of a letter from Howard Egan, Chorpenning’s route agent west of Great Salt Lake City, on February 29. In that communication Egan pointed out that depredations by the Indians in the Nevada area arose from their “ever recurring want” of food and raiment: “I conceive the only effectual and reliable way to eradicate the evil, is a farm, under proper supervision.” An establishment of

64a The Gosiutes have been found culturally and linguistically identical with the Nevada Shoshoni, but the name as applied to the Shoshoni of the Great Salt Lake desert are among official reports and travelers journals. Steward, Basin-Plateau, 132–33.

64b Forney to Denver, February 15, 1859 (F/414–1859).

* [Robert B. Jarvis’s appointment, which Morgan cites but does not document, does not appear in the indexed Senate Executive Journal. —Ed.]

65 [George] Chorpenning and Howard Egan worked out their route to Ruby Valley in the fall of 1858. From that point on, the Hastings Cutoff around the Rubies and down the South Fork of the Humboldt was adopted; this was the route traveled next summer by Horace Greeley and described in his An Overland Journey from New York to San Francisco in the Summer of 1859 (New York: C.M. Saxton, Barker & Co., 1860; Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, c1999), 258–274. After [James H.] Simpson’s explorations across the Great Basin in the summer of 1859, the captain’s outbound route was adopted for the stage lines, and the California trail proper (the Humboldt route) was left to emigrants and stock drivers.
soldiers would solve nothing; “a farm—a concentration of Indians to some one or more points is the only effectual cure for the evils of which I complain.” 66

Accordingly, on March 5, Forney instructed Agent Jarvis to undertake locating the respective Indians on the two proposed farms. He was to obtain the assistance of Harrison Sevier, a Tooele County settler of note, in establishing the Deep Creek reservation, and of Howard Egan in establishing one in Ruby Valley. He stressed that the Indians themselves would have to work the farms that were opened. “I will pay for no white labor on these farms after they are under way. The idea of hiring white men, as heretofore, to raise grain for the Indians and they lying about, is to me abominable and will not be tolerated any longer. A few white men may be necessary on each farm for one or two months.” 67

Egan, informed of these developments, wrote Jarvis on March 7, of the imperative need of doing something at once to ameliorate the condition of the Indians; by the last mail he had received “an account of the slaying of 8 cattle and 2 mules . . . from pure necessity and to avoid death by starvation. And from present indications I see no chance to preserve our mules from a similar fate; unless some immediate steps are taken we shall be seriously crippled in our operations. . . .” 68

In turn, Forney wrote the department concerning his plans. About the first of December, he said, the California mail had ceased to be carried on the Goose Creek and Humboldt road, and had since and would undoubtedly continue to be carried

on a new Road, directly West from this City, south of the old Road, to which it unites near the sink of the Humboldt. This new and much improved route is the result of extensive explorations by Mr Howard Egan and Major Chorpenning. It shortens the distance at least 250 miles between this city and Carson Valley and they are confident it can be still more improved. It is quite obvious that this new road must attract the principal travel, possessing special advantage over the old road. As in addition to Water and Grass there is along the new route plenty of timber, with no interruption at any time by snows, also avoiding several large and troublesome Streams and high hills.

The farms would “without doubt afford protection to the U. S. Mail, Employees and Stock,” while at the same time there would follow “the occupation of a large

66 Egan to Forney, February 19, 1859, copy filed with Forney to Denver, March 9, 1859 (F/405–1859).
67 Forney to Jarvis, March 5, 1859, copy filed with Forney to Denver, March 9, 1859 (F/405–1859). This communication has a number of details of interest concerning what was known of the localities and the Indians involved.
68 Egan to Jarvis, March 7, 1859, copy filed with Forney to Denver, March 9, 1859 (F/405–1859).
extent of country by active and industrious farmers, which has been heretofore a dread to white men.” He proposed using no white labor on the farms excepting two men on each farm for several months; no expensive buildings were to be put up. “In short the Indians must work or be treated like other persons that refuse to labor. . . . I may feel over sanguine, but I feel confident that Indians can be got to work” The cost of cattle and implements to place the farms in full operation would not, he estimated, exceed $3,500. Deep Creek Valley he termed the only valley unoccupied by whites, susceptible of agriculture, in the country claimed by the Gosiutes. “The valley is small, being only 15 by 4 to 8 miles in extent, and in it, a white settlement is in progress of being made.” Ruby Valley, “the most eligible location for the Humboldt Shoshonnees”—at the point where the farm was proposed—was 250 miles from Great Salt Lake City; it had “an abundance of grass, water and timber, & there are as yet no white Settlements in it, but several are in progress of commencement this spring.”

A week later, Jarvis left with Egan for Deep Creek and Ruby valleys, and Forney sent two wagons after them loaded with flour, wheat, and some farming implements. At the end of May, the superintendent was able to advise that Jarvis reported favorably concerning the two farms, but about this time Jarvis abandoned his work, came to Great Salt Lake City, and resigned. Although regretting the loss of the agent’s services, Forney was able to report that he had “a good Farming Agent on each farm” and that it was the general opinion that the Indians would soon do all the work.

Who carried on the work at Deep Creek is not known. The agent at Ruby Valley was one William H. Rogers, who, in December 1860, described himself as “now near seventy years old,” and who had spent his life in the West, principally among the Indians. It was fortunate that there was someone devoted to the
interests of these farms, because after Forney visited them in late August of 1859, for more than a year they had to get along without supervisory attention owing [to Forney’s activity as an investigating official in the wake of] the [Mountain Meadows] massacre.*

business carried on here as it has bin but it was not my place to report or to complain to you unless cold on and vixed and worrid as I was I tried to grin and bare and amidst a thousand difficulties I have kept my poste and soported my self by living more like a saviag then a white man

In an earlier letter, July 23, 1860 (R/928–1860), Rogers described some of his trials and tribulations: unprovided with funds, he had “Spent the entire Autumn, Winter & Spring in uncertainty as to what course to pursue,” and had “Exerted all my Energies & Exhausted all my means, to maintain myself in my position, but finding my private means Exhausted & driven to seek my own subsistence for credit,” he wanted the counsel and aid of the Department.

* [Forney’s actions as an investigator of the Mountain Meadows Massacre are summarized in his own letters of May and August, 1859 which appeared in separate contemporary publications but are collected as appendices 9 and 10 in Juanita Brooks, The Mountain Meadows Massacre, 2nd ed. (1950; Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1962). Forney, in fact, observed “I fear, and I regret to say it, that with certain parties here there is a greater anxiety to connect Brigham Young and other Church dignitaries with every criminal offense than diligent endeavor to punish the actual perpetrators of crime” (Hubert Howe Bancroft, History of Utah,1540–1887 [San Francisco: The History Company, 1890], 561).

In his revisions Morgan cut two pages from the manuscript (36 and half of 37) which included a second note 73 and note 74. Both notes had been left blank for later completion. The excision from msp. 36, the first paragraph, was dropped entirely, and included the following text:

Contributing to Forney’s difficulties may have been his difference with the Carson agent, Dodge, which are examined below. But more serious were charges of misfeasance, if not even malfeasance, of office, leveled against him by Judge Charles E. Sinclaire and John Cradlebaugh. Their hostility in some part may have been motivated by the fact that Forney sided with Governor Cumming in opposing the Gentile extremists after the entrance into Utah of Johnston’s army, but there was sufficient irregularity in his finances for the Indian Office to order a hearing in Great Salt Lake City in May, 1860, but on the basis of evidence elicited the Indian Office was sufficiently dissatisfied to order his removal from office in July and to name Benjamin Davies of [blank] to succeed him. Davies did not reach Utah until the fall of 1860, and his activities are not pertinent to this study. It is here chiefly important that during 1860 the Utah Superintendency was in such an administrative mess that the Department function in Utah almost exclusively in the local labors of Humphreys at the central Utah farms and of Dodge in the Carson Agency.

Although Dodge in Carson Valley was answerable to Forney as superintendent, the Carson Agency soon acquired a status so independent to constitute it virtually a separate principality of the Indian Office. Contributory causes were the remoteness of the agency and, perhaps, a certain intransigence in Dodge; but some informality in Forney’s bond soon created a grievous tangle of his financial affairs. On April 20, 1859 Dodge wrote Mix of his ”sad and humiliating condition” and the hazard to his private reputation consequent upon the
Forney gave Dodge his official instructions at their camp on the Humboldt on October 6, 1858. Much would be left to his judgment as the practical administration of affairs in his agency, but Forney recommended that as soon as possible Dodge should ascertain the number of tribes and their location in his agency, make geographical explorations with a view to settling the Indians upon suitable reservations, and endeavor to persuade the Paiutes living in the western portion of the Humboldt Valley to locate on a suitable reservation in Carson Valley. In addition, during this first winter, he was to “exercise circumstantial supervision over the several bands of the Sho-Sho-Nees at present living in the eastern portion of Humboldt Valley.”

Proceeding on to Carson Valley, as one of his first acts, Dodge issued a public notice that the practice which had previously prevailed—of trading, selling, and giving spirituous liquors to Indians “especially on the great thoroughfare of the Carson and Humboldt rivers”—was in violation of U.S. law. Hereafter, violators would be liable for fines ranging up to $500 and to imprisonment ranging up to two years. A “rigid observance by all persons, of the above laws and regulations,” he announced, would “greatly tend to promote the welfare of our Indian population, and the safety of our great Overland Mail and Emigrant Route, particularly that portion on the Carson and Humboldt River.”

Following this vigorous announcement of his presence, Dodge began to size up his responsibilities. Nine weeks later, he estimated to Forney that there were some 6,000 Paiutes in his agency, of which he had seen and given presents to

protesting of Forney’s drafts, two of which he had cashed and used in paying the expenses of his agency; he asked that the drafts in question be honored and he himself, if necessary, held responsible for the amount. Ultimately the financial affairs of the Agency were arranged by placing with the Assistant U.S. Treasurer at San Francisco funds on which Dodge might draw. This must be seen as background to a discussion of the agency itself and of the friction with Forney.

The second paragraph above was ultimately moved and reworked into msp. 45, so Morgan’s second note 73 and note 74 thus became notes 86 and 87. The Beinecke Library at Yale University now holds a file of material from Forney and his chief accuser, John Cradlebaugh, directly relating to Forney’s trouble (United States Office of Indian Affairs Papers Relating to Charges Against Jacob Forney, Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library); a larger file may be found in the Special Files series of RG 75, ser. 98 (L2), reel 24, file 127. The Yale material was in the hands of collector and Utah State Historical Society board chairman Herbert S. Auerbach but would have been unavailable to Morgan at the time he was writing. —Ed.

75 Forney to Dodge, October 6, 1858, copy in Dodge to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Carson Valley, February 18, 1859 (D/635–1859).

76 Printed broadside dated Carson Valley, Utah Territory, October 30, 1858, copy enclosed in Dodge to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, February 18, 1859 (D/635–1859). Nevada bibliographers wonder whether this was the first Nevada imprint; it might be added that it was printed at Placerville.
3,735, and that there were some 900 Washoes,\(^{76a}\) of which he had seen one band numbering 342 souls. He thought the Paiutes “the most interesting and docile Indians on the continent,” and that by proper management they might “be made to compete with the whites in agricultural pursuits,” as they were extremely anxious to cultivate their lands and would make excellent men to work—some of them could take hold of a scythe and mow, or drive oxen or a four-horse team, as well as a white man. The Paiute bands he located as being on Smoke Creek near Honey Lake, under “Wun-a-Nuc-a” (“the giver”); in Carson Valley at the forks of the river, under “San-joaquin”; at Gold Canyon on the Carson, under “Had-sa-poke” (“horse stopper”); at the big bend of the Carson, under “Wa-He” (“fox”); three bands under “O-derk-e-o” (“tall man”), “Pe-tod-se-ka” (“white spot”), and “To-Sarke” (“grey head”), who frequented the country around the lakes and sinks of the Carson and Walker rivers; below the big meadows on the Truckee, under “To-no-yeit” (“woman helper”); near the lower crossing of the Truckee, under “To-keepe” (“lean man”); at the mouth of the Truckee, under “Ge-Nega” (“dancer”); along the shores of Pyramid Lake, under “Wat-se-que-order” (“four crows”); and along the shores of lower Mud Lake, under “Wun-a-muc-a” the Younger, or “Second,” as Dodge phrased it.

He found the Washoes divided into three bands: one under “Capt Jim,” the head chief of the entire nation, that resided in the vicinity of Carson, Wahoe, and Eagle valleys and the Tahoe area; another under “Pos-Sarke,” located in Little Valley between the east and west forks of the Carson; and a third band under “Derr-Dick” in Long Valley, southeast from Honey Lake. He regretted being unable to speak in very favorable terms concerning the Washoes, who were “not inclined to agricultural pursuits, nor to any other advancement towards civilization,” and had no clothing “except the merest apology for a breech-clout.”

All the Indians he found miserably poor, and Forney was told that whatever policy might be adopted in relation to them, none could be worse or more productive of evil both to them and to the whites than “the present joint and promiscuous occupation of the country.” He thought the Paiutes should be allowed to retain some of their present locations, particularly the valley of the Truckee. No other area seemed so well adapted to reservation purposes as the Truckee Meadows, which had great natural advantages, and unlike the other valleys, was as yet unsettled except for one settler “whose improvements consists of a tolerable good frame house” in the center of the Meadows; he could either be bought out or ordered off, as the Department might see fit. But Dodge recommended immediate action, as he was advised that as soon as the snow disappeared there would be quite an emigration to these valleys. Dodge openly

\[^{76a}\text{He later reduced the estimate to about seven hundred. Dodge to Greenwood, August 9, 1860 (D/184–1860).}\]
expressed his sympathy for the Indians—“him whose name we are all proud to own; (the true American)”—and the straits to which they were reduced by the white invasion of their hunting grounds. The Indians only lacked something to eat, “and [t]here lies the secret of most of the Indian depredations upon this great line of travel.” The encroachments of the emigrants had “driven away the game upon which they depend for subsistence. They cannot hunt upon the territories of neighboring tribes, except at the risk of their lives. They must therefore steal or starve. Every few miles too on this great thoroughfare, both on the Humboldt and Carson Rivers, can be found a whiskey shop, the proprietors of which have the presumption to call trading posts.” And some of these “inhumane venders” were willing to take the last badger or rabbit skins of the Indians in exchange for their “poisonous Liquor.”

Dodge wrote Forney a month later in even more forceful terms about conditions on the Humboldt. He had received from a Carson resident, Charles B. Lafitte, statements by John Rondeaux and Oliver Cromwell, both characterized by Lafitte as being “esteemed, reliable, and truthful men,” concerning certain events in November. Late in that month, the mail company sent Cromwell out with ox teams loaded with provisions for the stations on the Humboldt, and on being asked by the Indians if he was from Col. Forney, he had replied yes, thinking they were trying to say “Californy.” The Indians, who it was claimed had been promised cattle, flour, and the like by Forney, followed him for several days and were becoming very unruly when Cromwell fell in with a certain Jim Stevenson who understood the language and finally explained things to the Indians. “I think it is exceedingly wrong to make these promises to the Indians on the Humboldt, and then not keep them,” Cromwell said censoriously. “For it endangers the Emigrant parties coming over and the people along the whole line.” Rondeaux had a tale about crossing to the Sink of the Humboldt, eastbound on November 9; on reaching a trading post kept by two partners, Tyler and Bennett, he learned that some Indians in the vicinity were given liquor, ammunition, and flour by the partners as pay for standing by in a planned assault upon some incoming immigrants. These statements, said Dodge, confirmed “a sad state of affairs on the Humboldt,” and showed “the absolute necessity of the strong arm of the government, to ‘awe’ the ‘brigands’ of that River.” There was not a speck of law in the entire seven hundred miles from Camp Floyd to the California line and from Oregon to New Mexico—not even a justice of the peace. The “monsters” went to the Humboldt area “for no other purpose than to enrich themselves by plunder.

77 Dodge to Forney, January 4, 1859, copy filed with D/635–1859, [as] cited in note 75. The letter was printed, with the omission of a sentimental verse with which Dodge satisfied his feelings, in Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1859, in 36th Cong., 1st sess., Senate Executive Document 1 (Serial 1023), 741–45.
They are principals in murder, and recipients of robberies, and sad spectacles of which have been chronicled from year to year, in the newspapers, but the true history and enormity of crime, is now beyond an earthly restitution, and must therefore ever remain with the perpetrators and their God.” As for himself, he said he was “powerless—without money and without law.”

Without waiting for comment by Forney, eleven days later Dodge wrote to the commissioner of Indian affairs directly, to complain about not receiving Forney’s replies to his letters and about the financial embarrassments consequent upon not being provided with funds. Moreover, he could not “reconcile his mind” to the fact that the department was aware of “the sad condition of Indian Affairs in the western part of this Territory.” He complained that Forney had authorized a stage driver named Chapman, by letter dated August 2, 1858, to act with the authority of an Indian agent, “to the great detriment of the public good,” in issuing powder and lead to hostile Indians a man so indiscreet as to tell the Indians all along the line of travel, six weeks ahead of Dodge, that the agent was coming with large loads of goods for them, when in actuality, Dodge was sent to establish himself in his agency “without goods and without a dollar.” Dodge thought his agency one of the most important on the continent, requiring the agent to be veritably Argus-eyed, since the mail and emigrant route was a great resort of “‘Friends’ whose sole purpose is to enrich themselves by plunder, and charge the same to the Indians.” Procrastination and broken promises would certainly not do for the Indians on the Humboldt, he insisted; his ten years’ experience on the frontier had taught him, indeed, that it was “the most disastrous course that can be pursued towards Indians of any locality.” With his other enclosures, Dodge sent copies of his letter to Forney of February 7, and the statements by Rondeaux and Cromwell.

Meanwhile, Forney was experiencing a natural irritation over the tone of Dodge’s letter of February 7. To the commissioner of Indian affairs he wrote that there seemed to be “a determination, by certain individuals, to misrepresent and falsify my official acts. Whether the motives are to benefit the public or subserve political aspirations is not for me to say.” Enclosing Dodge’s letter, the Cromwell and Rondeaux statements, and a hostile article cut from a California newspaper, he commented:

78 Dodge to Forney, February 7, 1859. A copy of this letter, together with Laffitte’s letter dated at Genoa, Carson Valley, January 27, 1859, Cromwell’s statement undated but attested by John F. Long, and of John Rondeaux’ statement (signed by mark before Dodge [on] January 28, 1859), was transmitted to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs under date of February 18, 1859.
79 Dodge to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, February 18, 1859 (D/635–1859).
80 The slip is not identified, but it is to be found in the [sentence incomplete]. It speaks of Dodge’s intention of going to Salt Lake by the next stage “to see the promises made by Dr. Forney to the Shoshonee Indians fulfilled” and comments that the Indians were “justly
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What Mr Dodge can mean when he says “I am powerless without money and without law” seems strange to me. I sent him $1,000, the last of December, & paid an order for $150 more, and told him when he needed more to let me know. And as to law, the Governor long ago took the steps necessary to remedy that evil.

I made no promises to furnish the Sho So Nees, on the Humboldt, with flour and Beef. If necessary, I can furnish an affidavit from every employee with me, to that effect.

I did most of my talking with the Indians in the presence of Agent Dodge.

Col. Reese and Mr Clements, the former the first settler in Carson Valley, are both highly respectable gentlemen; neither of them ever heard of Cromwell or Rondeaux.

Howard Egan Esqr, principal Route agent for the mail line, knows nothing of Cromwell, and yet, has a list of all the road employees.

Major Chorpenning and Mr Egan were at Stevenson[’]s Station, in Humboldt Valley, in November and December. Major C. was frequently in my office after he returned, before he left for Washington, he spoke favorably of the Indians. Mr Egan was there again in January, and heard of no disturbance of the Humboldt Sho Sho Nees.

I am confident those Indians have not misbehaved since I was among them last fall, notwithstanding the imaginary statement of a supposed Oliver Cromwell.81

To back up these assertions, Forney enclosed sworn statements by Hiram B. Clements and John Reese. Reese, who had left Genoa for Salt Lake [City] in the mail stage of November 13, had a long conversation with Stevenson at his Station on the Humboldt.82 He termed Stevenson “a very correct and gentlemanly man”

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indignant” at not receiving promised cattle. Also mentioned is the difficulty between traders and a small party of immigrants, “when the traders armed fifty Indians, by means of which they overawed the immigrants. This matter Major Dodge assures me he will see properly punished.” The correspondent of the [blank] added by way of postscript, “I informed you by telegraph of the appointments made by Governor Cumming for this county. As I have intimated above, the persons appointed are all members of what is known here as the Mormon clique; consequently great dissatisfaction is the result among those of the opposing faction.” Dodge was clearly behaving insubordinately in ventilating official business in public press without waiting to learn from his superior the latter’s side of the affair. [Morgan left the blanks in the manuscript to be completed later. —Ed.]

81 Forney to Denver, March 11, 1859 (F/407–1859).

82 Practically nothing has been known about the location and names of the mail stations on the Chorpenning route. Clements locates the Stevenson Station as being “in the Humboldt Valley, 225 miles from Rag Town.” The Tyler and Bennett Station was “at
having “great control over the Indians, by whom he is much respected;” Stevenson had at no time intimated that he expected trouble from the Indians unless through the misconduct of white men debauching the Indians with liquor. On the whole route, Reese said, the mail party was visited daily by Indians, “who on no occasion manifested any hostile feelings, but were kind, getting wood for us. Nor did we receive from them the slightest intimation of any idea among them that Superintendent Forney, or any Indian Agent, had promised them anything.” As to the difficulty at Tyler and Bennett’s station, Bennett was in Carson Valley at the time Reese left, and had been for several days. Consequently, he could not have been at the station at the time of the affray spoken of by Rondeaux. Reese said he had been well acquainted with Bennett since 1853 and with Tyler since 1850, the latter having traveled with him “from the States to Carson Valley,” having been in his employ for two years. Both were “reliable, honorable men, just such, as . . . ought to be where they are for the safety of the Emigrants.” By contrast, he knew nothing of Cromwell, Rondeaux, and Lafitte. Reese’s explanation of the disturbance at Tyler and Bennett’s station was that an emigrant party of twenty-one people had purchased an ox at an agreed-upon price from a trader named Blanchard, who had a trading post some ninety miles east of Tyler and Bennett’s, but after butchering it, refused to pay for it, then left. Blanchard went on ahead of the emigrants, sending word among the Indians to come armed to Tyler and Bennett’s, which they did in considerable numbers. “Shortly after Blanchard reached the station with the Indians, the train came up, who after talking the matter over before Mr. Tyler, paid the amount and the matter was settled as I suppose.”

Clements, a resident of Carson Valley since 1856, and elected a member of the Utah legislature on October 31, who had come by the mail stage from Genoa on November 27, had also heard nothing of Indian complaints against Forney, or of any Indian difficulties along the route. Intimately acquainted with George W. Tyler and his partner, Bennett, he “knew them to be reliable honorable men, and well suited for the Post they have.” Lafitte, he said, had come into Carson Valley for the first time on or about the twentieth or twenty-first of November the previous year as clerk to Major Ormsby. He knew nothing of Cromwell or Rondeaux.

the sink of the Humboldt directly at the commencement of the Desert.” Reese mentions a station at Gravelly Ford, “which had been broken up by the Indians in consequence of the bad conduct of the white men,” including a certain Alexander Stewart. He also mentions “a trading post about 90 miles east of Tyler & Bennetts,” kept by a man named Blanchard. These latter were establishments of the type that annually appeared and disappeared in the Carson and Humboldt valleys. However, Blanchard had a post on the Humboldt as early as 1857; Daily Alta California, [blank], 1857.

The friction between Forney and the Carson agent in no way diminished as the weeks went by. There was certainly an element of intransigence in Dodge, but he presently had some real grievances in consequence of some informality in Forney’s bond which created a blockade in the latter’s accounts. On April 20, Dodge wrote Mix of his “sad and humiliating condition” and the hazard to his private reputation consequent upon the protesting of Forney’s drafts, two of which he had cashed and used in paying the expenses of his agency. He asked that the drafts in question be honored and he himself, if necessary, held responsible for the amount.  

Again in July, when another draft was protested, he wrote the Indian Office asking what course to pursue, as he had “addressed Supt Forney on the subject without avail.” The upshot was that funds on which Dodge could draw finally were placed with the Assistant U. S. Treasurer at San Francisco, and this had the effect of giving the Carson Agency a quasi-independence which may be regarded as an appropriate counterpart to the confused political affairs of the region itself during this period just before creation of the Territory of Nevada.

Incursions by marauding Indians in the country between the northern Utah settlements and the head of the Humboldt during the summer piled work on both Forney and Dodge. Raiding Bannocks and Shoshoni in a running flight during the last week of July killed half a dozen emigrants near Raft River, and a

85 Dodge to Mix, April 20, 1858 (D/656–1859).
86 Dodge to Greenwood, July 8, 1859 (D/25–1859).
87 [Morgan left this note number blank, but the note is the same as note 74. This paragraph reworked text that had been cut from msp. 37; regrettably the note had been left blank there as well. —Ed.]
88 A description of this affair by four survivors, in a statement sworn in Carson Valley on September 2, is enclosed in Dodge to Greenwood, September 3, 1859 (D/38–1859). It was in consequence of this fight that Major Lynde [blank] was ordered to the Humboldt (cf. his report, published in [blank]). Johnston and Cumming were engaged in a dispute as to the nature of their authorities, civil and military; the former would not honor the letter’s requisition for troops, but did send a force of his own accord. Forney’s practical object was thus attained, but he confessed discouragement to the Indian Office over having to carry out his duties within a realm of conflicting orders. Forney to Greenwood, August 10, 1859 (F/47–1859). [The blanks were left by Morgan in the manuscript. The Lynde report he cites here may be the brief letter concerning the condition of the road dated January 27, 1860 in Letter of the Acting Secretary of the Interior Transmitting Reports and Maps of the Fort Kearney, South Pass, and Honey Lake Wagon Road, in 36th Cong., 2nd sess., House Executive Document 64 (Serial 1100), 14, or it may be a misattribution he would correct later. The entire document reports F. W. Lander’s road-maintenance effort between western Kansas and Nevada and includes several references to military presence along the trail. Its effect on the native population is attested by William H. Wagner of the Topographical Engineers, who was also traveling the road when “we met several men of the band under the chief Ne-met-teh. They were hunting in the Goose Creek mountains. I tried to engage one of them as guide, but the presence of some companies of the United States army, under the command of Major Lynde, intimidated them so