

The 1849 Southern Exploring Expedition of Parley P. Pratt

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Brigham Young's accomplishment in bringing the 1847 Mormon Pioneer Company across eleven hundred miles of prairie, mountain, and desert to Salt Lake Valley without death or serious accident required leadership, planning, competence, and cooperation—as well as sacrifice. But as a demonstration of those qualities, it pales by comparison with the accomplishment in the next two decades of bringing to the valley organized companies of seventy thousand other Mormon converts from the eastern and southern United States and Europe. Even that was far from enough. There remained the challenge of finding places for all these immigrants to live, getting them there, and weaving them into the fabric of Young's inland Mormon empire.

This paper focuses on the eyewitness accounts of a little-noticed, but important, part of the latter effort—the Southern Exploring Expedition of 1849–50.

The Expedition

Four days after he arrived in the Salt Lake Valley, Brigham Young declared that he intended to have “every hole and corner from the Bay of San Francisco to the Hudson Bay known to us.”¹ That seems a bit ambitious, but he quickly got started. Within days of Brigham's arrival in September 1847, Perrigrine Sessions went north to find pasturage for the Church cattle herd and established

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Sessions Settlement—later to be named Bountiful. Provo was established in April 1849, Tooele later that year, and Manti that fall after the Ute Chief Walker invited the Mormons to settle Sanpete Valley.

By then, Brigham was a bit more realistic—but still visionary. In March 1849, in a long letter to Orson Pratt, who was presiding over missionaries in Great Britain, Brigham wrote, “We hope soon to explore the valleys three hundred miles south and also the country as far as the Gulf of California with a view to settlement and to acquiring a seaport.”²²

By November of that year, he was ready to act; and with his control of the Legislative Assembly, events moved quickly. Parley P. Pratt had just come out of the mountains after spending the summer working on a toll road down the canyon that would bear his name. In its November session, while Parley sat there as a member, the assembly voted to commission him to assemble a party of fifty men to explore as far as Las Vegas. He was to raise the needed finances—\$238.50 as it turned out; round up the wagons, ox teams, riding horses and mules; and secure provisions for a midwinter expedition of two to three months. There were twelve wagons, one carriage, twenty-four yoke of oxen, seven beef cattle, thirty-eight horses and mules, and supplies that included trade items for the Indians, fifty pounds of flour for each man, crackers, bread, and meal, sixty pounds of coffee, an odometer, a brass cannon, and plenty of arms and ammunition.

Incredibly, in one week, everything was all assembled and they were ready to go. On 23 November, they assembled at the adobe house John Brown had just completed on his farm between Big and Little Cottonwood Creeks. There, they organized in the Mormon pattern of the day—a company of fifty, divided into five tens, each with its captain, as follows:

ROSTER OF THE SOUTHERN EXPLORING EXPEDITION

Parley P. Pratt, President
 William W. Phelps and David Fullmer, Counselors
 John Brown, Captain
 Robert Campbell, Clerk
 W. W. Phelps, Engineer

FIRST TEN

Isaac Haight, Captain
 Parley P. Pratt
 William Wadsworth
 Rufus Allen
 Chauncey West
 Dan Jones
 Hial K. Gay
 George B. Matson
 Samuel Gould
 William P. Vance

SECOND TEN

Joseph Matthews, Captain
 John Brown
 Nathan Tanner
 Sterling G. Driggs
 Homer Duncan
 William Matthews
 John D. Holladay
 Schuyler Jennings
 John H. Bankhead
 Robert M. Smith

THIRD TEN

Joseph Horne, Captain
 Alexander Wright
 David Fullmer
 William Brown
 George Nebeker
 Benjamin F. Stuart
 James Farrer
 Henry Heath
 Seth B. Tanner
 Alexander Lemon

FOURTH TEN

Ephraim Green, Captain
William W. Phelps
Charles Hopkins
Andrew Blodgett
William Henrie
Peter Dustin
Thomas E. Ricks
Robert Campbell
Isaac Brown
William S. Willis

FIFTH TEN

Josiah Arnold, Captain
Christopher Williams
Dimick B. Huntington
John C. Armstrong
Isaac B. Hatch
Jonathan Packer

The vacancy of three men in the fifth ten was to be filled by recruits from the new Sanpete settlement. Actually, five men—Madison D. Hambleton, Gardner G. Potter, Edward Everett, John Lowry Jr., and Sylvester Hewlitt—joined there; but two of the explorers were sent home after reaching the Little Salt Lake, keeping the expedition at fifty men as planned.

It was a diverse group, varying widely in experience and skills. Eight of them—Rufus Allen, John Brown, Sterling Driggs, William Henrie, Joseph Matthews, Benjamin Stewart, William Vance, and William Wadsworth—were especially skilled explorers, having been in Brigham Young's Pioneer Company in 1847. Three of them—Brown, Henrie, and Matthews—had been hunters in the pioneer company and had the same duty with the Pratt expedition. William W. Phelps, a surveyor and engineer, was made topographical engineer. Ephraim Green was named chief gunner, and his wagon pulled the brass cannon. Dimick Huntington was named Indian interpreter. Robert Campbell, an experienced secretary, was made clerk and was assigned to keep the official journal. His wagon carried the odometer by which he kept remarkably accurate mileage. He wrote in the journal nearly every day, recording mileage to every campsite and many geographical features. He recorded the temperature, morning and night, the snow depth, and the width and depth of every stream. Campbell further described the timber and other plant cover, the soil, the availability of mill sites and building stone, and anything else that would identify good places for settlement. His journal was the basis for the expedition's official report to the Legislature—an eleven-page document that Parley dictated and Campbell wrote in an open wagon during a snowstorm, "lying on my belly and a hundred other positions."³ Other journals were kept more or less daily by John Armstrong, John Brown, and Isaac Haight. The oldest member of the expedition was Samuel Gould, seventy-one years of age; the youngest Abraham Lemon, age eighteen. The average age was about thirty-five. Parley was forty-two.

Leaving 24 November 1849, they traveled to Fort Utah, recently established on the Provo River, and then to the site of present-day Nephi, where they turned up Chalk Creek to cross the mountains and reach the Sanpitch settle-

ment on 3 December in the Sanpete valley. There they found one house already built by the colony that had arrived just two weeks earlier. They proceeded to the Sevier River, where they met and camped with Ute Chief Walker, who gave them useful information about their route and the country they would find. In bitterly cold weather, they then followed the Spanish Trail up the Sevier River to the vicinity of Circleville, where they faced the daunting task of crossing the snow-choked high country between the Tushar Mountains and the Markagunt Plateau.

With immense labor, they managed that crossing and reached Little Salt Lake Valley after a month on the trail. Realizing that the oxen were too worn down to continue, they separated. Most of the men remained with the wagons and oxen, continuing on to explore Parowan and Cedar Valleys. There they discovered the iron ore that led to Brigham's call of the Iron Mission in the fall of 1850. Meanwhile, Parley took twenty men on horseback over the rim of the Great Basin to explore the Virgin River country. They were advised by the Indians that the country to the south was worthless. With their horses and provisions giving out, they decided to go no farther, so they returned up the Santa Clara River to Mountain Meadows and rejoined the wagon party at Parowan.

After a memorable feast and celebration, they started home on 10 January, traveling through increasing storms and deepening snow as far as the present-day site of Fillmore. There they were in trouble. The oxen could drag the wagons no farther, and their provisions were getting dangerously low. To save those provisions during what turned out to be nearly two snowbound months, they made the decision to separate again. Parley and half the party—mostly the men with families—went ahead on horseback; and the others remained with the wagons, letting the oxen recruit and then coming on when the weather broke. There, as has been previously mentioned, in an open wagon during a snowstorm, Parley dictated while Campbell wrote the eleven-page official report Parley carried home and presented to the Legislature on 5 February, just eight days after he arrived.

Both groups suffered. The mounted group, virtually out of food, was saved when Parley and Chauncey West took the strongest horses and dashed ahead the last fifty miles to Provo and sent back a rescue party from Fort Utah. They reached home the end of January. The wagon party remained snowbound for seven weeks and then had a terrible time crossing the mountains to reach Round Valley. They didn't reach home until the end of March.

By the time they did, the wagons and oxen had traveled 526 miles, as measured by their odometer. Half the party, those exploring the Virgin River Basin on horseback, traveled an additional 190 miles. The expedition was a far more difficult ordeal than they imagined. The storms were more constant, the snow deeper, the temperature colder—as low as twenty-one degrees below zero on the down trip and thirty below on the return—and the oxen less able to find feed under the snow. Crossing snow-choked mountains took immense labor and sac-

rifice. The provisions proved inadequate.

But they accomplished their mission. The official report lists twenty-six places desirable for settlement. Brigham sent colonies to almost all of them, many within two or three years and all within fifteen. They recommended, for example, Peteeneet Creek for a settlement that would become Payson. Yohab (Juab) Valley was “in every way calculated for a city Settlement.” Nephi was settled there. The report noted the presence of coal near the present-day site of Salina, the rich bottom lands on the Sevier where Richfield would be built, and reported the river was “apparently navigable, for small steamers.” Those who know the Sevier will assume they must have been thinking of very small steamers. Parley was less than enthusiastic about the Virgin River country, calling it “a wide expanse of chaotic matter . . . a country in ruins,” but noted the presence of three to four thousand acres of desirable land in the twin valleys where Washington and St. George would be built. Of the expansive meadows, good soil, cedar, and tall pines in the present-day area of Beaver, the report noted, “This is an excellent place for an extensive settlement.” And so it went.

The most immediate result of the expedition’s findings was the dispatching of a mission to settle Parowan and subsequently Cedar City to exploit the iron ore in the region. Of all the places he saw, Parley was most enthusiastic about Cedar Valley. He describes “its soil mostly black loam, very rich.” He writes of streams running out of the mountains, the waters running “nearly level with the ground . . . [and] easily managed.” “But best of all,” he penned, “remains to be told. Near the large body of good land on the Southwestern borders are thousands of acres of cedar contributing an almost inexhaustible supply of fuel which makes excellent coal. In the centre of these forests rises a hill of the richest iron ore, specimens of which are herewith produced. . . . The climate of this country seems to us very delightful.”⁴

Brigham was not one to delay; within the year, 119 men, 310 women, and 18 children were called to the Iron Mission, arriving to establish Parowan on 13 January 1851. From Parowan, many moved the following year to settle Cedar City, closer to the iron ore.

Another direct result was the settlement of Fillmore, intended to be the territorial capital. Based on Parley’s report, Brigham had the Territorial Assembly create Millard County on 4 October 1851 and later that month led a group of lawmakers to select a site for the state capitol building. The first settlers to arrive camped their first night precisely where Parley’s snowbound wagon company had dug in on Chalk Creek to spend part of the previous winter. By February 1852, just two years after those miserable shelters were dug, the settlers had built thirty houses and a schoolhouse, all arranged as a fort.

A third early result was the calling of missionaries to the Indians in southern Utah. Parley’s report and especially Campbell’s journal speak of the friendliness of the Indians, particularly along Ash Creek, the Virgin, and the Santa Clara, where the Paiutes pleaded with them to come settle among them and

teach Mormon farming methods. Brigham responded by sending John D. Lee and others in 1852 to establish Harmony, on Ash Creek, the first settlement over the rim of the Great Basin. Other missionaries arrived in 1854 where they built Fort Harmony. From there, Jacob Hamblin and others moved down to establish Santa Clara, where they taught and assisted the natives. Several towns in the now-booming Virgin River Basin stem from that small beginning.

Journal Accounts

But while the official report led to the practical results of the Southern Exploring Expedition, the human drama—the interplay of relations among the explorers and between them and the Indians and a sense of the explorers’ immense labor and suffering and of the spiritual strength and commitment that sustained that effort—can come only from the journals. What these journals describe, aside from knowledge of the land they were sent to discover, is what has to be as unique an exploring expedition as the West ever knew. These were men sent out in winter, suffering frequent and heavy snowstorms and temperatures often far below zero. In these conditions, picture men sent to ride into the mountains to find a way over snow-choked passes, composing a song about what they found and singing it as they rode into camp to report. That happened twice on the expedition. Picture them, almost every night, chilled and sometimes frostbitten after a day of exhausting labor, holding camp prayers, singing, and sometimes even sermonizing before crawling into their blankets.

Or, for a different mood, picture them preparing an elaborate banquet, 250 miles from the nearest settlement, in a celebration that included hours of speech making. Imagine them in their snowbound camps, holding daily lyceums of learning or dancing cotillions—even appointing one of their number, Campbell, to teach others the steps.

The journals describe Indian customs and attitudes. Except for a brief and harmless skirmish on the Santa Clara, relations were friendly. While tensions were building to a point of violence and death in Utah Valley to the north, the natives of central and southern Utah welcomed the explorers, traded with them, and invited them to come and settle. In the Cedar City area, Indians offered to sell them all the land they could see for a pocket knife.

What comes most clearly from the journals, though, are images of immense labor—of struggling five days to cross the high country between the Sevier River and Little Salt Lake Valley, shoveling head-high snow to climb precipitous ridges, hauling oxen up by ropes tied to their yokes so the oxen could then pull up the wagons, and of the wagon company struggling homeward over Scipio pass after seven snowbound weeks. Bogged down in four feet of snow, they fashioned their wagons into sleds but were unable to move when the snow softened, even with eight or ten oxen and most of the men pulling each wagon. There, they spent ten days going fourteen miles.

But along with the toil and suffering, the journals reflect occasional humor. For example, when in Juab Valley, Armstrong records: "After crossing a slough, I set fire to a patch of grass to burn out a wolf. I told the boys to watch the fire and see what would come out. They watched the fire and presently Isaac Brown came out and they got a good laugh."⁵

The writings reflect Mormon brotherhood and enthusiasm, as in the way the explorers entered the infant settlement at Manti. Armstrong writes: "Just before we got into San Pitch settlement I blew a trumpet for camp to stop, fired off cannon." Campbell gives more detail. "Camp draws near the settlement. One house up, about 46 families in tents wagons &c. 1 p.m. fired off cannon. Bre sing 'Some fifty sons of Zion' 'All is Well,' 'Come all ye sons of Zion' while passing the wagons and tents at the encampment of the Sanpitch Settlers. Cross city creek & camp South bank."⁶

There are fascinating insights into the conditions and practices of the Indians. On the Sevier, Campbell writes, "Capt Walker & another Indian rides into Camp said Glad to see us knew he would see us soon, for he dreamed he would. . . . Indians come in by the dozens, good many nice horses and packs & Dogs &c. Blowing from the west, snowing, cold. Many of them sick with the measles, hear them making medicine, see them sucking one anothers feet, forehead &c. Stabed a Dog because their village sick."⁷ Later, he records: "Parley, Dan Jones & Dimic goes & prays for Indians at Walkers request, rebukes their measles by laying hands on them in the name of Jesus. . . . Indian shoot a Pi Ute boy they had bought for a gun, because they were sick & afflicted in camp."⁸ Neither the Indian nor the Mormon way of healing worked; some weeks later, Walker sent to Isaac Morley, leader of the Manti settlement, for medical help, which was given. In a letter to Brigham Young, Morley reported Walker's statement that without this help, all the band would have died.

In the company itself, from time to time, its members needed healing blessings, which worked better. The journals report several instances. One, for example, was recorded by John Brown on 25 January during the long, cold ride to reach home:

Next morning it was still snowing we packed and went on in the storm, all walking and driving our animals one of which turned aside and I went to drive it into the trail, it kicked me on the knee and knocked me over in the snow. The horse was shod, it gave me great pain so much so I could not stand the brethren ran to my assistance I asked them to lay hands on me they did so and I was healed instantly by the prayer of faith in the name of Jesus. I went on my way and never felt the pain after, giving God the glory. About noon we reached the Sevier.⁹

The journals reflect a love of music and its importance in keeping spirits up. As had riders on the Spanish Trail, the expedition found it impossible to follow the Sevier through Marysvale Canyon. Instead, they explored for a way over the

Antelope range to the east. Campbell records: “Parley comes into Camp, having been a head exploring, sings Extempore

O Boys we’ve found out the trail, Leading thro’ a beautiful vale
 We’ve found the trail boys where over we go
 Tis a rich grassy vale mid the mountains of snow
 And the meadows beyond it look pleasant and fair
 And the evergreen forest is flourishing there
 O come come away to this sweet Southern vale
 Through the mountains of snow boys we’ve found out the TRAIL.”¹⁰

John W. Van Cott’s book, *Utah Place Names*, suggests several sources of the name Marysvale: that it was named by Catholic miners for the Virgin Mary, that Brigham Young named it for his wife Mary, that Brigham named it Merry Valley because his party sang and danced there on a trip south, or that Parley Pratt named it Merryville. Campbell’s journal records that Parley liked the “rich grassy vale” so much that “a name for this valley came into his mind: Merryvale.” That would seem to settle the question.

Farther up the Sevier River, two miles south of Circleville, Circleville Canyon also seemed impassable. It now seemed time to leave the river and cross the high country between the Tushar Mountains to the north and the Markagunt Plateau to the south. John Brown, Campbell, and one or two others explored to find a pass. As they rode into camp after a long, exhausting day, again music played an encouraging role. Campbell’s journal records: “Exploring Coy return R. C. [Campbell] composes the following when coming home & sings it to camp:

We’ve found out the trail boys where over we go
 It lyes thro the mountain, deeply covered with snow
 It’s a rough rocky road, the rout we have been
 But there is plenty of Deer, for them we have seen
 We looke’d away far beyond, but nothing could see
 Save the blue expanse of Ether so clear & so free
 But to a high Mountain some of us did go
 And we spied out a trail where the Mormons can go.”¹¹

His journal continues. “Parley had it sung again, then Captn Brown makes report of the rout, as being impracticable but barely passible, rocky road all along for 6 miles, winding over a succession of kanyons, steep ascents and descent, cobble stones all the way, nearly perpendicular in places. Snow drifts where the horses could not pass, we had to get off & stamp the snow away & make a track. The snow being in drifts on the lee side of the ascents. Southerly Wind.”

In giving his report, Brown warned that “It was a great undertaking and a very hazardous one to cross so large a mountain at this season of the year. There is danger of being snowed under.”¹² Nevertheless, Armstrong records: “Camp in

high Spirits to go & try it. Parley prays, singing in Camp . . . T at 6 a.m. 2 degrees below ciphers.”

To comprehend the difficulty and danger of this mountain crossing, consider the experience of John C. Fremont on his fifth expedition four years later. After the 1848–49 disaster of his fourth expedition in the San Juan Mountains of Colorado, in which he lost ten men and 130 pack animals, Fremont was still obsessed with finding a railroad route through the central Rockies along the 38th parallel. By February 1854, following the summer branch of the Spanish Trail, he had struggled past Fish Lake, down Otter Creek to reach the forks of the Sevier, and on to the mouth of Circleville Canyon. He now faced the mountain crossing and would cross the same pass Brown had discovered four years earlier, but by an easier route. Solomon Nunes Carvalho, an artist with the expedition, describes the ordeal:

We commenced the ascent of this tremendous mountain, covered as it were, with an icy pall of death, Col. Fremont leading and breaking a path; the ascent was so steep and difficult that it was impossible to keep on our animals; consequently, we had to lead them, and travel on foot—each man placed his foot in the tracks of the one that preceded him; the snow was up to the bellies of the animals. In this manner, alternately toiling and resting, we reached the summit. . . . When I surveyed the distance, I saw nothing but continued ranges of mountains of everlasting snow, and for the first time, my heart failed me.¹³

Fremont’s party struggled on over the pass into Little Salt Lake Valley and on to the tiny settlement of Parowan, leaving one man, Oliver Fuller, starved and frozen to death in the snow. Fremont later wrote his wife: “We owe our lives to these good Mormons, who not only cared for us for two weeks, but gave us food and new horses to continue our journey.”

Carvalho wrote: “We had now triumphantly overcome the immense mountain, which I do not believe human foot, whether civilized or Indian, had ever before attempted.” Apparently, the good people of Parowan had not told him—or in his youthful pride he forgot or ignored—that four years earlier, Parley’s fifty men had attempted and accomplished exactly that, not on horseback like the Fremont expedition but with ox teams and wagons, a far more difficult task.

If anyone is to appreciate the incredible labor of that crossing, he or she must see the country close up. We have carefully compared large-scale contour maps with the journals. We are satisfied we have identified the route and have closely followed it on the ground. An extremely rough jeep road from near the head of Birch Creek Canyon contours around the flanks of eleven-thousand-foot Circleville Mountain at about the eight-thousand-foot level. Six times it plunges in and out of ravines and deep canyons, at times on grades manageable only in the lowest gear of four-wheel drive. Wagons don’t do well on side hills, so Pratt’s wagons had to be hauled up the ascents and lowered down the

descents, not at an angle as the road goes but directly up and down on much steeper grades. In a typical understatement, Campbell's journal mentions "plenty cedars." There are plenty indeed; much of the way is covered by dense pinyon-juniper forest. If we add cutting of trees to the back-breaking labor of shoveling snow, clearing rocks, and hauling oxen up, then the hugeness of their accomplishment becomes more clear.

There were five days of such labor. Consider Campbell's account of part of just one day:

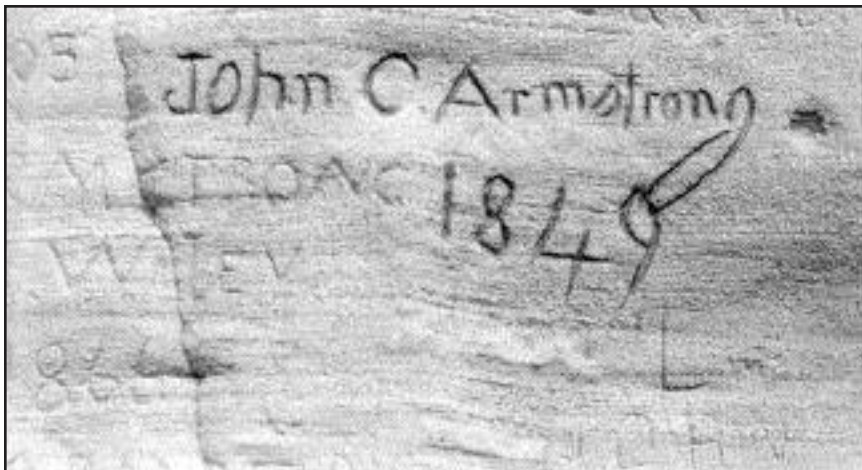
Ascend steep rocky long hill. Wind blowing the Snow in our faces on the ridge. . . . Descend steep hill, 12 men hold back with ropes & both wheels locked, then ascend, wind to the right & ascend long hill . . . sideling & Rocky, but the snow so deep Rocks covered . . . then descend sideling steep Rocky hollow, men with ropes held back, ascend & strike to the right, steep, Rocky, snow drifted very deep, then descend, Steep Rocky pitch to 1st Kanyon . . . ascend nearly perpendicular, snow drifted very deep on the ascent side of the hill. Wind from the south . . . like to tear our wagon covers away & cold on the sides of our face, descend to 2nd Kanyon creek . . . snow shovelled away up this ascent & on each side of the oxen snow nearly as high as the oxen, nearly perpendicular ascent, hitch rope round the oxen yokes & men stand on the summit & pull the oxen up, then they pull the wagons up, that is the oxen. Descend into 3rd Kanyon creek. . . . Fulmer & Phelps make a temporary bridge over the creek. 2 ½ miles from where we started this morning. Start up & keep to the right round the mts. Snow very deep, being drifted along where we pass thro men ahead breaking road, shovelling the snow, others holding their wagons, move sideling into Hollow & Camp turn the cattle out no water. Snow 2 feet deep at encampment. . . . Parley calls R. C. into carriage where Dan Jones & Wadsworth were. Sings hymn. Parley said he felt like praying. He prayed, asked the Lord to forgive the camp for their vanity, folly, & wickedness. Interceded with the Lord not to hedge up our way, but to enable us to get out of these Mts. & to find a pass, to have mercy & compassion on this Camp, & to treat us kindly & for the sakes of those in Camp who keep thy name sacred, & seek to fulfill our mission &c &c Schyuler Jennings swore & dam'd Capt'n Jones in Gods name to take his horse away from near his waggon & threat him with club in hand . . . had pleasant talk till nearly 10 p.m.¹⁴

After such a day, Brown records, "Some were almost ready to despair." So perhaps it is understandable that Jennings, no doubt bone weary with nerves frayed by constant labor, would explode in such a manner over what might seem a minor annoyance. Remarkably, this and a similar outburst the next day are the only indications in any of the journals of a breakdown in morale or civility.

Two more days of that kind of labor brought them through the pass. Another day brought them down a rugged canyon, near the bottom of which a number of men carved their names or initials in what Armstrong's journal calls a "cornish rock" because it looked to him like the cornice a stonemason might cut to put over a door. His name, in big, bold letters, is still there, as are a number of others that are difficult to decipher. It is one of the ironic injustices of history that on today's maps, the pass John Brown discovered, the canyon they

descended, and the wash they traveled on reaching Little Salt Lake Valley are named Fremont Pass, Fremont Canyon, and Fremont Wash.

Much labor still lay ahead, but there were light moments, too. Armstrong



John C. Armstrong signature was left in what became Fremont's Pass during Parley P. Pratt expedition, 1849.

Photo from the William R. Palmer Collection, Sherratt Library, Southern Utah University

describes the reunion when Parley's mounted company returned from the Virgin to rejoin the wagon company at the site of Parowan:

A fine warm day. The boys got me to make them some boxing gloves and spent the day boxing, bowling, etc. I made some good apple pudding and it was a treat out here. About six o'clock in the evening the boys were dancing cotillions when we heard a gun fired off at a distance, the dancing ceased in a moment and it was laughable to see every man run and get his gun loaded and then the cannon loaded and fired off in less time than it takes me to describe it. The guns and pistols followed so fast it sounded as if there were two or three hundred of us. Then we gave a few loud huzzahs, for we knew it was Parley Pratt. . . . Presently he was among us with capt. Dan Jones. . . . Then the little Captain told us he had a canteen full of whiskey [which he had obtained by trading with a California-bound company they encountered at Mountain Meadows]. Then he handed it all around. Then we gave three more loud huzzahs Brother Pratt and brother Jones joining in with all their might. . . . They told us we must prepare a large dinner for the whole camp tomorrow. Put up a liberty pole and have a Jubilee.¹⁵

The next morning, Armstrong continues his account: "It is now three o'clock in the morning Tuesday and I am helping them prepare the dinner. Here we have large kettles boiling meat to make mince pies. . . . At half past five the horn was sounded, the camp got out of bed with one consent commenced cooking with all their might."

Campbell records: "15 min past 2 all sat down to an excellent Dinner prepared by Wadsworth and Driggs. Plenty coffee, roast Beef, Pumpkin & Squash, with Pies, minced, apple &c. . . . Some sitting on stools, Boxes, others on robes on the ground." In several pages of journal, he describes the speech making that follows with speeches by Pratt, Phelps, Fullmer, Dan Jones, and John Brown. Each speech was followed by three cheers and the roar of the cannon until finally Parley said enough ammunition had been wasted for one day.¹⁶

After that celebration, it took nearly three months of more suffering and labor before the last of the expedition finally reached home. In his official report to the Legislature, Parley ended with these words:

I now wish to bear witness of the fifty who accompanied me on this expedition, and to have them in honorable remembrance. With scarce an exception they were patient and cheerful under all circumstances. Willing to be guided and controlled, and I can truly say that, in twenty years experience in the toils and hardships of the Church I have never seen men placed in circumstances better calculated to try their utmost strength and patience. And at one time another half mile of deep snow intervening between them and camp would have caused every man to sink exhausted without being able to force their way any longer.

They are first Rate men, and I have promised to remember them for the very next undertaking which requires toil, Labour and sacrifice.¹⁷

Whether the men of the expedition appreciated being remembered for more toil and sacrifice is hard to say. For most of them, labor and sacrifice there would be. Isaac Haight, for example, learned in April conference, just two months after his return home, that his stay there would be brief. His journal records that "I with six other Elders were appointed to go to England on a Mission and leave our Families which seems rather hard after enduring the fatigues of the winter. Yet I am willing to go and forsake all for the Gospel sake, and go to work to prepare for the journey."

For Parley, too, there was no rest; within a month of his return, he was back at work on his toll road, which earned \$1,500 in tolls in the summer of 1850. By the following March, with his earnings, he was en route to Chile to open South America for Mormon missionary work. That was his tenth full-time mission. His eleventh, in 1854, took him back to Chile. On his twelfth mission, in 1857, he was murdered in Arkansas.

Some of the expedition veterans became bishops, stake presidents, and mission presidents. Some were mayors or other civic officials. Several served in the territorial legislature. Many served missions—some of them several and many overseas. Chauncey West served as far from home as Ceylon and India. George Nebeker colonized the Moab area and then Carson Valley—both failures. He then spent thirteen years in charge of building up the Church in Hawaii. He was instrumental in acquiring the property on which the temple, the Polynesian Cultural Center, and Brigham Young University—Hawaii now stand. Some,

besides Parley, died early and violently. Isaac Brown was killed by Indians; Josiah Arnold was murdered in a break-in attempt; Sterling Driggs was killed in a threshing machine; and William Willis died in a sawmill accident.

But their influence remains. Their legacy, and that of all their expedition companions, is a state that today, 150 years later, still reflects the results of their efforts.

Notes

1. Journal History of the Church, 28 July 1847, chronological collection of clippings and other information, typescript and microfilm, LDS Church Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, hereafter cited as Journal History.

2. Journal History, 9 March 1849.

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