

George W. Bean, Early Mormon Explorer

HARRY C. DEES*

Among the notable and great men who explored and colonized the Great Basin, the imposing figure of George W. Bean stands as a sometimes-forgotten pioneer. Although he served with well-known army explorers—Stansbury, Steptoe, Simpson, and Wheeler—no true historical study has been made of this large, restless, one-armed traveler.¹ Most of the material written by him was done in his later years and at a time when there was little interest in Utah pioneers; nevertheless, he recorded an extremely valuable account of exploration in early Utah. The following material, taken primarily from original writings, shows George W. Bean as a pioneer and explorer. No attempt has been made to include his life as a businessman, judge, politician, or Church leader.

George Bean came to Utah in 1847 at the age of sixteen, driving a wagon carrying his eighteen-year-old sister and her baby. Doing a man's work, he had brought his sister across the prairies and mountains in order that she might be with her husband, William Casper, who had enlisted in the Mormon Battalion.

George had been carrying a man's responsibility for several years. He had served in the "posse" of Captain Stephen Markham when the latter had cleared the Nauvoo region of "mobocrats"; he had also served on the police force of Hosea Stout, patrolling the streets of Nauvoo at night. Early in the spring of 1846, he had been sent with an advance group as a "pioneer" when the Church leaders began the move across the Mississippi. Later, when it was decided to send the daughter who had married William Casper along with the first groups to leave for the

*Mr. Dees is instructor of Library Science at Brigham Young University. His special fields of interest are International Relations and Western History.

¹Pension records say that George W. Bean was 6 feet 4 inches tall.

Rocky Mountains, George was chosen to drive the wagon. Prior to this, at age fourteen, he had been ordained to the office of seventy.

Two weeks after George and his sister arrived in the Salt Lake Valley, William Casper rode in from California, bringing with him Ephraim K. Hanks. With the two extra mouths to feed, the supplies sent west with George did not last the winter, and by spring they "were reduced to cooking thistle roots and Segos for food." The winter had been mild, and they had planted an acre of wheat on 1 January 1848. Near the end of March, they moved out to Mill Creek and built a willow shanty and lived on "thickened milk for weeks."²

George then recorded: "After getting our crop in, and ditches made, I volunteered to take a team and wagon [one of some sixty in the party] and go back east to meet the emigrating Saints with Prests Young and Kimball including my parents. . . . Started May 23, crossed the big mountain over snow 10 or 12 ft. deep, swam several crossings of East Canon Creek, rafted over Weber River, double team in crossing Bear River, swam Blacks Fork, rafted across Harms Fork and Green River, which took us three days at the latter stream. I had left Salt Lake Valley with only 20 lb. of ground wheat and a few pounds of pork and beef and we were 4 weeks getting to the head of Sweetwater River and my provisions were gone."

At the Sweetwater, Bean traded his knife for a "large bunch of dried meat" from some Snake Indians. This food lasted until the Platte River, where he earned one bushel of sour corn meal, helping emigrants cross the river. This food served until the party met the first group of Mormon emigrants fifteen miles below Chimney Rock on the Platte River. George turned over his team and returned to Salt Lake Valley with his parents. In the valley "we located near a spring at the side of the road between Mill Creek and Big Cottonwood about 7 miles south of Salt Lake City."

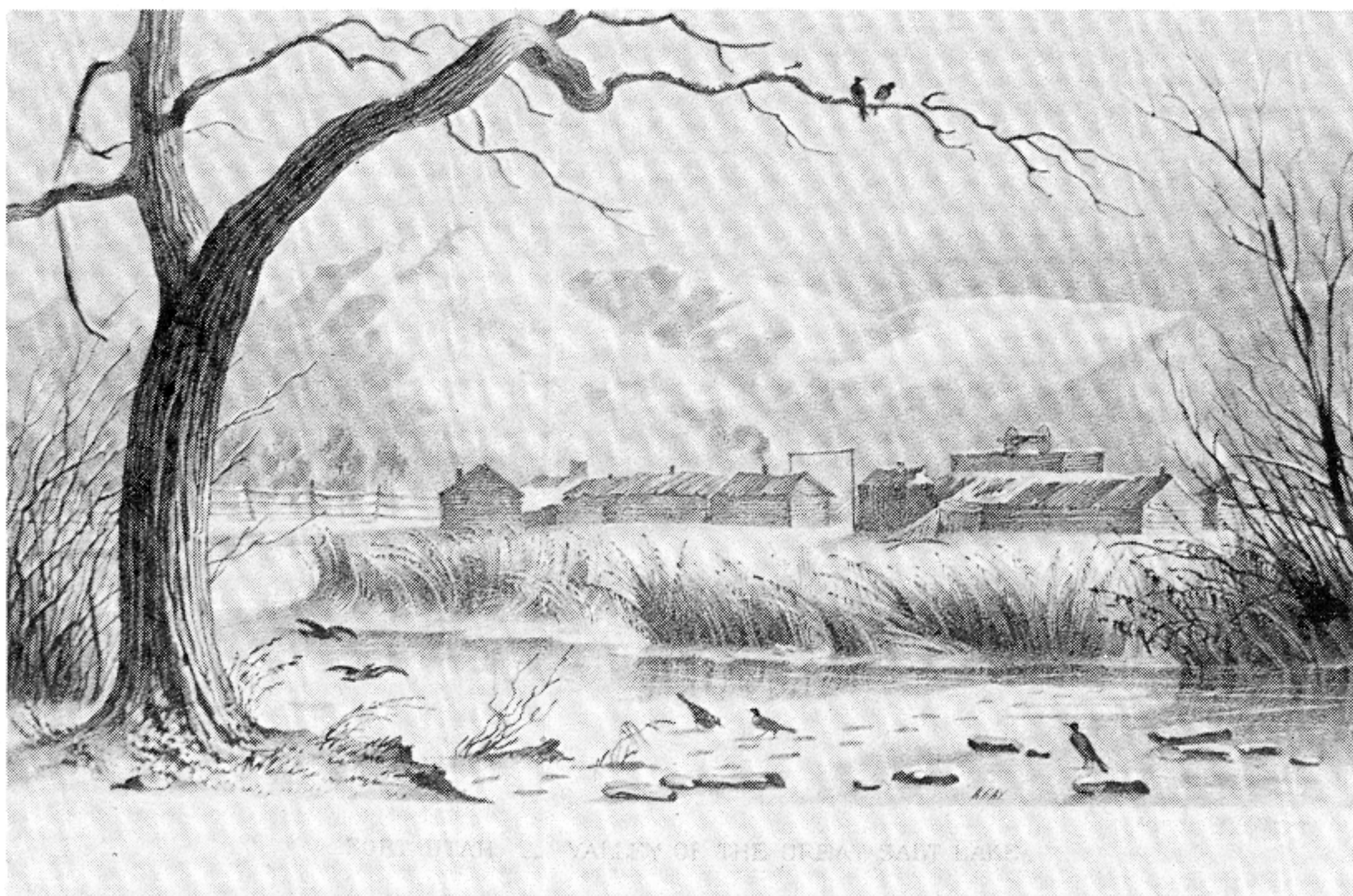
The winter of 1848-1849 was enlivened by a "winter's hunt by rival parties of one hundred men each" which "destroyed about 700 wolves and foxes, 2 wolverines, 20 minx and polecats, 500 hawks, owls and magpies and 1000 ravens."³

²Unless otherwise cited, the material was taken from the original writings of George W. Bean. These journals are in the library at Brigham Young University.

³*The Latter-Day Saints' Millennial Star* (Liverpool), 1 August 1849, Vol. XI, pp. 228-32.

THE SETTLEMENT OF PROVO

There was still a food shortage in the spring of 1849; so a group of men were sent to the Utah Valley about "sixty" miles south to establish a small colony for agricultural purposes and fishing, hoping thereby to lessen the call for beef, "which at the present time is rather scarce, at an average of seven and eight cents per pound."⁴



George recorded the move in his records, saying: "In the early spring of this year [1849] a call was made for a colony of settlers to locate at Provo and father with about 20 others started in the last days of March with our ox teams and boys. There were no families on this first trip. John S. and Isaac Higbee and Dimick B. Huntington were at the lead of the Company. On March 31, we camped 10 miles this side or north of Provo, I had the good luck to shoot a fat crane with father's old rifle. We then moved on to within 2 miles of the river" where the settlers were stopped by a Ute Indian called An-Kata. After some discussion in which Dimick Huntington told the brave that they wanted to be "Too-ege tik-a-boo" or good friends, the wagons moved on to be stopped again by a large party of Indians but were allowed to camp on the north bank of the Provo. "Many of the company had suckers [fish] for

⁴*Ibid.*

dinner but father and I had stewed Crane. And this was my 18th birthday by which I well remember the other particulars."

The first settlement was begun a few days later on the south bank of the river, and a fort was constructed with a "bastion" thirty feet square on strong posts in the center. A "6 pounder" cannon was afterward mounted on top to guard against "trouble from a distance."

"There were many hundreds of Indians camped nearby, all very friendly generally and our people did a great deal of trading with them giving guns and ammunition, clothing for skins of various kinds, ponies, etc. . . . Sometimes little troubles arose and finally a great one occurred about the first of August." This trouble was caused by the killing of "old bishop," an Indian, by Doc Stoddard and Jerome Zabriskie during a dispute over a shirt. The two men hid the Indian's body in the Provo River but the Indians soon discovered it and demanded "satisfaction which was not granted." The slayers of the Indian were never exposed and the settlement had to shoulder the blame. The men of the settlement were organized into a militia company, with Peter Conover as captain, and thereafter sent armed herdsmen with the cattle and stood watch at night.

By September, companies of California emigrants were gathering at Provo, where Captain Jefferson Hunt would guide them on to California. The Mormon settlers obtained powder from one of the trains to practice with their six-pounder and to "wake the natives round about." George Bean and his father were coming in from the fields when Lieutenant William Dayton called to George to help fire the cannon. They fired the piece once and reloaded, neglecting to swab the barrel. On the next discharge, the cannon exploded killing Dayton and tearing off George W. Bean's left arm.

Captain Howard Stansbury of the U. S. Topographical Engineers had just arrived in Salt Lake bringing with him an army doctor by the name of Blake.⁵ A fast ride to Salt Lake and a hasty return brought Dr. Blake to Provo where he removed some 200 splinters and dressed George's arm. While the youth was recovering, the Indians spent many hours with him, and, during this time, he learned the native language.

⁵In 1849, Captain Howard Stansbury was placed in command of an army exploring and survey expedition to the Great Salt Lake region. He and his command of 18 men remained in the Great Basin for a year, returning to the East in the fall of 1850.

Although it had been a terrible accident, George W. Bean's journals are almost free of any later complaint regarding the loss of his arm.

There is one entry in which he relates an occasion when he was kicked by a mule and mentions that it had been difficult for him to harness and drive a four-mule team with only one arm. The loss of his arm affected the ways available to him for making a living, and he used his knowledge of the Indian language to find a position as guide, interpreter, or Indian agent whenever he could.

George Bean was often chosen as a guide because of his close relationship with the Indians which had begun following the accident. He had the confidence of the Indians to the extent that one Indian attempted to kill him so that George could accompany a deceased favorite squaw to the hereafter and take care of her. Bean narrowly escaped death on this occasion, and the Indian later explained that he had wanted the very best man he could find to accompany the squaw—and this man, in his eyes, had been George W. Bean.

Generally, relationships with the Indians continued to deteriorate for the new settlement on the Provo, until it was necessary to bring a company of about 100 men from Salt Lake City. At this time, aided by the officers of the Stansbury expedition, the Mormons managed to drive off the Indians. "About 40 Timpanodes were stopped from further depredations," wrote George, but he "missed most of the fun" by having the measles at his sister's house on Mill Creek.

TO SOUTHERN UTAH WITH BRIGHAM YOUNG

In 1850 the Utah Valley settlers moved to the present site of Provo, and George W. Bean served as "assistant superintendent of meteorological observations at Fort Utah under Captain Stansbury." A "good log school" was erected, and George helped teach school in the winter. He had learned a little Spanish from the Indians; so early in 1851 Parley P. Pratt called on him and requested that he go with him to California and South America on a mission, but the trustees of the school would not give him their release.

"About the same time," George wrote, "Prest Young & company called me to accompany his party on a trip to Southern Utah. . . . Arriving at Salt Creek [Nephi] I was detailed

to join a small party of emigrants for Iron County. We were to assist them across the Sevier River & then come up said River. Join the Prests party after he came out of San Pete. Four of us with horses and pack animals made the trip successfully. . . the river being high we blocked up the wagonbeds of the Emigrants, fastened ropes to their wagon tongues and by the horn of our saddles pulled them through safely. Then going up the river 30-40 miles to intersection of trails we found that the Prests party had not arrived & we turned north and found them still at Manti. Here let me remark that I listened to a sermon from Elder O. Pratt which truly converted me to faith in Plural Marriage or Polygamy, commonly called.

"About May 1st, we started on up Sevier River passing over the Cedar divide via Marysvale, Circleville then leaving river bore westerly over rocky ridges and across Prairie Dog Valley . . . got into a great snow storm May 9th & finally reached Buckhorn Springs & camped at Bear Valley where we found ourselves buried under about 1 foot of snow on the morning of May 10th. Moving on we soon began to meet the pioneers of Parowan mostly mounted and a hardy looking lot of fellows they were. We staid several days in this vicinity visited the Iron and Coal deposits, the famed hieroglyphic cliff NW of Parowan and then returning by Beaver, & Parowan Vallies, Round valley and old crossing of Sevier— home.⁶

"In October, 1851, was again called, this time to accompany Gov B. Young and party of territorial officials to make a location of the Capital of Terry [Territory]. Decided on the site for Chalk Creek and the Capital to be named Fillmore and the County to be Millard—in honor of the President of the U. S. who made the official appointments. Secretary Babbitt, Judge Snow, Marshal Heywood, Ind Agt Rose besides several others. . . . We made a treaty with Pahvant Chief Kanosh . . . then on returning we kept on South side of Sevier river 15 miles then crossed at a quicksandy ford, where a good many got wet. Had a lively time at night with brandy punch, speeches & songs, Apostles, prophets, high civil officials, & teamsters all jollified together. . . .

On the return trip the explorers went by way of "San Pete Valley" and crossed the Sevier higher up, "went by way of

⁶George W. Bean seemed to have kept many of his trips recorded in a pocket journal and in 1860 put them all together in a biography. This is taken from that biography. He also wrote another biography in 1890.

Warm Creek [Fayette], Gunnison and present Manti." New Mexican traders were encountered at Manti. They said that they had a license from "Gov Calhoun" and wanted Indian prisoners for slaves. Brigham Young told them that they would not be allowed to traffic in such trade, but later information indicated that they had continued in the practice in spite of President Young's order. A writ was issued and George W. Bean accompanied Marshal Joseph L. Heywood and arrested the traders. After forty-one days the traders were released—on the grounds that there was no law on the subject in Utah.

In February of 1852, George W. Bean in the capacity of interpreter for Indian Agent Rose went to the Uintah Valley with him. They made their way via Spanish Fork Canyon to Chief Tabby's camp west of Duchesne Fork. Tabby furnished guides who took them to the north fork of the Uintah River where Louis Roubidoux had formerly established a trading post "which was a rendezvous for the mountaineers for twenty-five years." Finding neither white man nor Indian there, they returned on 8 March 1852, traveling via Soldier Summit.

During that spring and summer, George explored Provo Canyon and the mountains east of the city. He also assisted William H. Dame when the latter "surveyed out Provo City and the farming land surrounding it."

In April 1853, Brigham Young started south with a party intending to extend settlement beyond Parowan; but when President Young arrived at Provo, he was confronted by a mountaineer named Bowman who claimed that he had been hired to assassinate him. Bowman hinted that he had plenty of help not far away; so President Young cancelled his trip to the south, going only as far as "San Pete." William M. Wall and thirty men, including George Bean, were ordered out of Provo to tour the southern part of the territory to "ascertain if any strange party or proceedings could be found." The group rode for nineteen days through southern Utah, but there was no trace of "enemies in our borders."

THE WALKER WAR

By 1853, the Indians' campgrounds and fishing spots were being taken over by the white settlers and a result was that the emigrants on their way to California were plagued with thieving and pilfering by the Indians. Sometimes the retaliation by

the California-bound trains was severe, and the desire for peaceful relations suffered.

In July 1853, according to Bean, an Indian was beaten almost to death with his own gun by a white man over a dispute as to how the Indian should treat his squaw. The Indians demanded compensation for the beating, but the white man refused. Later in July, the ill feeling resulted in the Indians' killing Alexander Keele at Payson.

The morning following Keele's death, Colonel Peter Conover's company of militia was called out from Provo to "quell any further disturbances." The militia found the Indians stationed in the canyons, preparing to withdraw to Sanpete Valley. It was decided to send Colonel Conover with about forty of the best horsemen to Nephi to warn the people and to aid them if necessary. George Bean was sent from Payson to Provo with information and found that due to false rumors of a massacre at Pondtown (Salem) the authorities were getting ready to send more troops to Payson. A dispatch had been sent to Salt Lake asking for aid; so it was decided that George should take a fresh horse and ride to Brigham Young with the correct information. He arrived just in time to stop the first group of mounted troops from leaving Salt Lake City.

This difficulty, called the Walker War, after Chief Walker, led to many problems in southern Utah. George Bean spent much of his time traveling to the various chiefs with messages from Brigham Young. "Towards winter Walker moved south carrying with him much stock from Mormon settlements."

The Mormons began to fortify their town with mud walls; but, when Walker appeared in Parowan in the spring, he seemed friendly; so Brigham Young sent Bean, Porter Rockwell, and John R. Murdock with a message of peace. As George put it, "O. P. Rockwell, Amos Neff and myself were called by Prest Young to take Walker in hand & keep him peaceable if possible." During this time, Bean had many stormy experiences while keeping Walker and other Indians from again disturbing the settlements. On one occasion, George had to hide under some grain and another time had to retreat to Salt Lake until the Indians "cooled off." Walker was eventually appeased by the Mormons' sending beef, flour, and Indian goods. Rockwell and Bean were told to keep the Indians peaceful, even if it cost the Church \$10,000 a year!

When Colonel E. J. Steptoe of the U. S. Army arrived in Salt Lake in 1854, determined to punish the Indians for the slaying of a Lieutenant Gunnison and seven others, Bean and Rockwell were employed to treat with the Pahvants for the surrender of the "Gunnison murderers."⁷

It required many trips, but finally eight Indians were surrendered in January of 1855. George Bean accompanied Major John L. Reynolds to Fillmore to receive and convey the prisoners to Salt Lake City. Bean at this time was a deputy U. S. Marshal.

George reported: "But such a turn-out of murderers was never before seen: one squaw, for the Mormon killed; one old blind fellow; one foolish chap; one outsider that had no friends; another old sick fellow and three little boys." The army people were disgusted, but Chief Kanosh said he could do no better; so the eight Indians were taken and tried. The squaw was used as a witness; so only seven went to trial. Of the seven, three were convicted of manslaughter and sent to prison for three years.

The trial had assumed aspects of a three-ring circus as Indians and soldiers were present in large numbers. Kanosh was there, "being a Chief at all the scenes." George also mentions that, during the proceedings, "several disgraceful occurrences took place with certain government officials, soldiers and squaws of Chief Ammon's camp."

During the trial, George Bean had been chief interpreter and as U. S. Deputy Marshall delivered the prisoners to the penitentiary.

The results of the trial were not pleasing to Colonel E. J. Steptoe. When he reported the trial in April, he said, "Although as government prosecutor I presented facts to prove all guilty, only three were sent to prison."⁸

GUIDE FOR MILITARY EXPLORERS

Colonel E. J. Steptoe reported in his letters that he would continue on to the West Coast, and that "my intention until recently was to follow Captain Morris' new route until he turned

⁷Colonel E. J. Steptoe was taking troops to the West Coast when rumors were spread that the Mormons were in revolt. He was given a commission as governor of Utah but on his arrival in Utah did not use the commission.

⁸Colonel E. J. Steptoe, letter dated April 1855 to Davis. Microfilmed by the Utah State Historical Society Library.

up to the Humboldt. Instead of following him I determined to find a S. W. course to Carson Valley and save 300 miles. A party sent out a few days since to explore returned and reported that there was not sufficient grass and water for the number of animals with us."⁹

George Bean, as a member of the party, reported the exploration: "In the latter part of March, myself, O. P. Rockwell, George W. Boyd, and Peter W. Conover were employed by Col. E. J. Steptoe to make an exploration west from Rush Valley for a wagon road to the South side of Salt Lake toward Carson Valley, to save 160 miles of round-about travel to get to California. John Nebeker was one of our party. We fitted up a pack outfit and struck west from Government Station at Rush Lake, went through Johnson's pass across Skull Valley, by way of Granite Mountain in the middle of the Salt Desert, striking the old Hasting Wagon trail at East edge of the Desert. We found a good spring of fresh water at Granite Mountain, and from there to Redding Springs we crossed an almost continuous sheet of salt water and mud for several miles in face of the most severe sand and windstorm I ever experienced. It was cold and piercing and blew off the packs from the mules' backs several times, and splashed the salt water over us until the whole outfit was covered with a stiff crust of salt, and very cold.

"We reached Redden's Springs on the west side of the Desert about 4:30 and took refuge under the lee side of a tule swamp until morning. By morning the fury storm had passed but the night was very disagreeable and we were without wood.

"We must not fail so we followed the edge of the Desert in a southerly and easterly way for two days, then crossed back toward Rush Valley again. . . . We found the Salt marshes impassable this time of year and the miry sloughs further south . . . quite the same and decided a wagon road was now impossible, at least for two months." The return trip was by way of Lookout Pass to the Government Station of Rush Lake and then to Salt Lake.

On Bean's return to Salt Lake, he was stunned to discover that his name had been listed in fall conference of the Church and voted on as a missionary. Steptoe had offered to engage him to go west, and also George had received a second attrac-

⁹*Ibid.*

tive offer to act as interpreter at the Spanish Fork Indian agency. Steptoe was offering a generous \$5.00 per day, leaving George in something of a dilemma; so he "sought advice again."

Speaking with President Brigham Young, George found that he "was wanted" to go to the Las Vegas Springs for the Church and form a settlement there.

Although he had a new baby girl and only ten days to answer the call he made his decision and prepared to go to Las Vegas Springs. "Having some money I bought up a bin full of wheat, some land, but this being the great grasshopper year in Utah there was nothing much raised in the fields. We had several cows, etc., and some cash, leaving my wife and child, my most concern, well provided for, so my thoughts were at ease."

As the "missionaries" prepared to leave, Lieutenant S. Moury was sent by Steptoe with excess stock and about fifty soldiers to take the southern route to California while he himself went by way of the Humboldt. Bean was hired to guide Moury to southern Utah, but the arrangement was not satisfactory to either side. Bean reported, "I found the party a hard lot to travel with—not saints by any means." Moury wrote to Washington that the Indians were all being stirred up by the Mormons and that "at Parowan, my two Mormon Guides left me at their own request. It gave me no regret to lose them. . . ." ¹⁰

Bean reported that after reaching Las Vegas Springs he and "our Santa Clara brethren went down to the Colorado River and thence down said river as far as El Dorado Canyon, suffering terribly from the heat."

The journals state that after the fort was built "we also did a great deal of exploring in the mountains and along streams extending from the El Dorado to the Mouth of the Rio Virgin River." The Las Vegas group discovered salt, and opened a lead mine which was mined by N. V. Jones. ¹¹

Bean made a trip to Southern California with cattle and then went back to Las Vegas. Later he went to Salt Lake to

¹⁰Stephen Moury, *Report of Journey from Salt Lake City to California*. . . . Filmed copy in the Utah Historical Society Library. Dated 23 July 1855.

¹¹Although the Las Vegas colony was planned as a mission to the Indians, N. V. Jones was sent to mine lead as Brigham Young was afraid that a supply from the East would be cut off by the U. S. Army. Due to the threat of Johnston's army the lead mine took priority over the Indian mission.

discuss the problems in the mission with Brigham Young. As it was decided to discontinue the mission at Las Vegas in late 1856, Bean returned to Provo.

JOHNSTON'S ARMY

In 1857, as the U. S. Army invaded Utah, Bean was sent to Carson Valley, with Peter Conover and O. B. Huntington, as a guide. "We were to take a direct westerly course across the deserts and make the trip as quickly as possible, reckoned as twelve days." Huntington got "mystified," and they spent 18 days on the trip, living on horsemeat the last three days. They "suffered much for lack of water" but reached the sink of the Carson River and went on to Washoe Valley. The Mormons in the area were told to pack up and return to Utah; and Bean and others went over the mountains with surplus cattle to sell, in order to buy wagons, teams, and supplies. George sold the cattle before reaching California and took a "pencil order" on the bank at Placerville. Taking the mail stage on to Folsom, he then rode the train to Sacramento, "surprised to find everything so comfortable." After only a day in Sacramento, George returned by horseback to Centerville in the company of William R. Smith, who had some \$24,000 on his person in payment for some of the cattle. Others remained in Sacramento and purchased wagons, guns, powder, and other supplies.

The Mormons left Carson Valley in October and arrived in Salt Lake on 1 December 1857. They went by the route of the Humboldt River, Thousand Spring Valley, Goose Creek, and City of Rocks. George arrived home in December and that winter his family again increased with the birth of children to his second and third wives.

In March, George was called by Brigham Young to go into the desert west of Fillmore and Beaver to "find hiding places in case Johnston's Army came in." He and his party started in the middle of March through deep snow "through Juab County to Chicken Creek, to Holden and across the Sevier River where they joined with other men on the same errand." On the top of West Mountain Range on 8 April, "we faced the roughest snow storm that it was ever my lot to meet. We got into any shelter possible and waited all the rest of the day and night—twenty-seven hours of snow without cessation, and heavy wind

most of the time." They lost five horses, had wagon covers torn to bits, and some of the cattle strayed as far as forty miles.

After two or three days the party moved west to White Mountains and located a "resting place" on Snake Creek. Bean and others pushed west "toward the Pahrnegat Valley outside the Great Basin."

They met up with groups from southern Utah and "became well acquainted with Southeast Nevada." They returned to Utah in June to find "all forgiven of rebellion, treason, arson and other crimes we had not committed."

In 1857 George and his brother worked on the wagon road up the Provo Canyon and, in the company of William M. Wall, located a ranch in the "lower part of Provo Valley." There they later doctored "lame cattle" for the government freighters.

EXPLORING WITH SIMPSON

In October of 1858, George W. Bean was engaged by Major J. A. Reynolds to make a trip west to aid the government in opening a new route to Carson Valley.¹² Wrote George: "I engaged at \$5.00 per day and furnished and set out immediately with Captain J. H. Simpson, Chief of Topographical Engineers, as guide and interpreter. . . . I had quite a time with Captain Simpson, who was greatly prejudiced against everything Mormon, and it was several days before he offered to speak to me, except as to the route or distance to camping places." Simpson finally gave up, and he and George had some "spirited arguments on Polygamy and Priestly Authority." Simpson was a very strict religious person who did not travel on Sunday if it could be avoided. Simpson called Brigham Young some "hard names," and George threatened to leave, going as far as getting on his horse before Simpson would apologize.¹³

This expedition was a result of General Albert S. Johnston's desire to open a route to California by way of Carson Valley. The group of about forty men included soldiers, five wagons, a geologist, and George W. Bean. They left 19 Octo-

¹²The Bean papers say the expedition left about November 1858, but the official army records say the expedition left on 19 October 1858.

¹³James Hervey Simpson was a noted army explorer who before and after the Civil War made many surveys looking for better routes in the West. In 1858, he "submitted a report on a new route from Salt Lake City to the Pacific Coast."

ber 1858 with instructions to explore westward as far as the late season would allow.

They moved west through Rush Valley to Johnson's settlement then south through Skull Valley. Through this area, the group crossed "a desert as level as a floor" and "devoid of every vestige of vegetation." They went westward to Short Cut Pass in Thomas Range where they decided to go no farther since water was thirty-five miles away. The group returned on a more southerly route, finding a new pass which would shorten the distance by some twenty miles. Later that year, the route was used to carry the mail to California.¹⁴

Although Simpson's printed report used the wrong first name for Bean, he spoke of him with satisfaction. George says that Simpson offered him \$100 per month for all winter to assist in writing up a history of Utah." As usual, George "sought advice of my wise friend President Young," and he "suggested that I keep a careful distance from their influence."

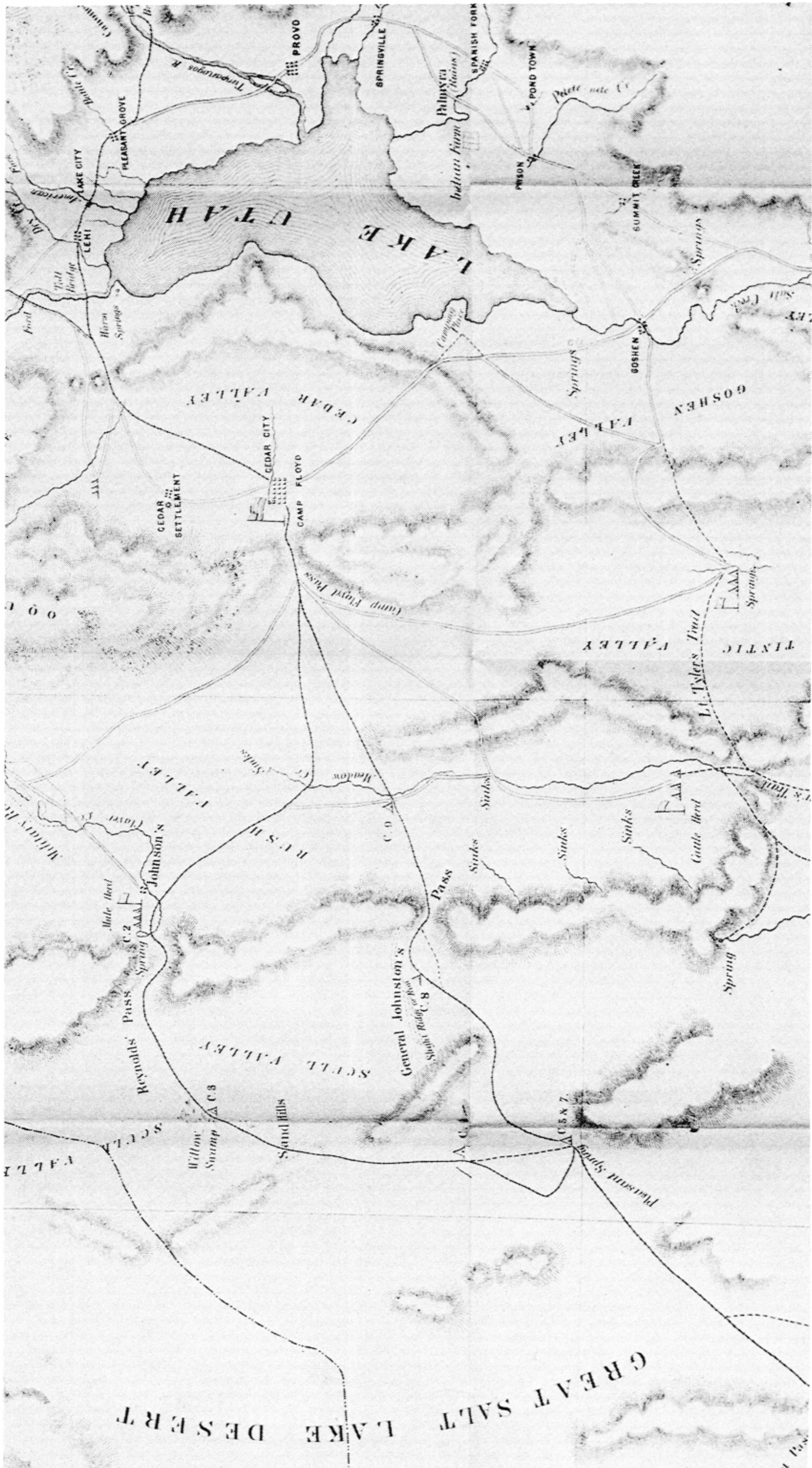
George continued to explore Utah but mostly for the Church; he went to Uintah Valley in 1861 to search out places for settlement, but the basin was made into an Indian reservation.

After serving in the state legislature from Wasatch County, George was called to take a small party on the Sevier River above Gunnison. This proved to be a failure when they encountered Orson H. Hyde who told them that "the settlement of Sevier Valley is in my hands."

In 1872, after public service as judge, tax assessor, and lieutenant colonel in the Black Hawk Indian War, George spent "thirty" days exploring the valleys east of Provo with Lieutenant George M. Wheeler.¹⁵ This expedition was complicated by Indian troubles caused by a rumor among them of a "Voice from the West" who would lead them to victory over the "whites." The "Voice" did not materialize, and George led Wheeler to the "Hot Pots" at Midway, Strawberry Valley, and back down Spanish Fork Canyon. The group went south and climbed all the high mountains "surrounding Utah and San

¹⁴James H. Simpson, *Wagon Routes in Utah Territory*, Senate Executive Document 40 (Serial 984) 35th Congress, 2nd Session. 1858.

¹⁵In 1871, Lieutenant George M. Wheeler was selected to take charge of the survey territories in the U. S. west of the 100th meridian. Unlike previous Army explorers, Wheeler went from North to South and liked to climb and measure tall mountain peaks. His work in the West from 1871-1879 produced a monument of records.



Report of the Secretary of War, communicating . . . , Captain Simpson's Report and Map of Wagon Road Routes in Utah Territory, (Washington 1859).

Pete Counties." Wheeler continued on east and south, but George returned home by way of Thistle on a borrowed army mule.

In October 1872, George went with the Indian agent and a group of Indians to Washington, D. C., where he met President U. S. Grant.

In 1873, George was called to tour the Fish Lake country and meet with the Indians. On his return from this trip Brigham Young called him to settle in the Sevier County area. Although the Richfield area was considered his home until his death, George W. Bean continued to roam. He traveled back east to his birthplace, where he visited relatives for months, toured southern Nevada with the idea of settling there, and prospected for gold in the central mountains of Utah.

The last years of his life were spent in ill health caused by exposure, poor food, and the cannon accident of 1849. George W. Bean died in Richfield 9 December 1897.