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Samuel Knight Statement

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Samuel Knight Statement

Statement of an eye witness

Sept. 1857

It was Sunday morning that I left the Meadows to go to Santa Clara, leaving my wife who was sick in bed with a young child, and on that account I done the business that I had in view and returned as soon as I could, while on my way back and when we were near the Magotso where it ~~xxx~~ came into the Clara Creek, about ten o'clock at night, a voice came from the brush, and when the man came out I found that it was John D. Lee, we had heard before that there was a plan on foot for the Indians to surround a company of emigrants that were camped at the spring that is near the spot where the Mountain Meadow Masacre took place, when they got near we were then standing, but in speaking to John D. Lee, he told us that he had been with the Indians that morning, which was in the month of September in the year of 1857, ~~xxx had~~ made an attack on the emigrants, and the fight had been kept up all day, that the emigrants had made a fort of the wagons, throwing dirt under the wagons for protection, that he had been in the fight, and showed us several bullet holes in his clothing, which was evident that he had been in close quarters, one bullet had cut his hat, another his clothes across his body in front, and several had cut through his sleeves, this was on Sunday night, and the war was then kept up till the following Thursday, Lee found out that he had gone too far to drop the matter as he was afraid that he was known as one of the party who had made the attack and to let them go now was to give him away, and having commenced it he must see it through,

It must be remembered that at that time, only ten years after the territory had been settled, and that by people who had been driven from their homes, that at this time an army of United States troops were on their way to Utah, with the purpose of destroying the Mormons, men were stationed in all the dangerous places, women were excited, and the people as a whole were ready for any emergency, this particular company ~~xx~~ was very insulting, saying that they had assisted in driving the Mormons out of Illinois and that they would go to California and gather up a party and come from the South and assist in destroying them again, this together with the abuses that they had committed against the Indians before they came to Cedar had aroused a feeling against the party, so that it did not require much to cause an attack to be made against the company for many in so doing supposed that they were only taking advantage of an opportunity to protect their own lives and that of their family.

The attack kept up until Thursday, when a truce was made by the terms of which, the emigrants gave up their arms, and was escorted out of the valley, and when the party got nearly to the summit of the ground that divides the flow of water that runs to the Meadow settlement and that ran towards the valley where the emigrants were camped, a place where several bunches of oak grow, the Indians fell upon the emigrants, and with the assistance of some white men, destroyed the company except the small children, that were considered too young to tell what had happened, and who took part in the affair. While there is no doubt that the company would ever lived to pass the forks of the Clara Creek and the Magotso, where the Indians were gathering to, there can be no doubt that John D. Lee, was responsible for the attack being made at the Mountain Meadows, and for the above reason John D. Lee, suffered the death penalty. The killing was done as speedily as possible, and no wanton cruelty was indulged in, and if at that time the party could have been allowed to pass without danger of implicating the whites, it is very likely they would have been allowed to go, but it is not likely they would have escaped the Indians, who would have waited for them further on their way.

Samuel Knight

State of Utah,)
County of Washington) ss

Samuel Knight, being first sworn deposes and says,
that I have read the foregoing statement and know the contents thereof
and that the same is true of my own knowledge, and that I signed ^{the} same of
my own free will and choice, and further that the said statement was made
for future use, in settling any false statement that may be circulated
in regards to the subject therein stated, and not to be used for street
talk, and common gossip.

Samuel Knight

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 11th day of August, 1904.

D.H. Morris,
Notary Public.



*My commission expires
April 29th 1908.*