1957

Utah Mail Service Before the Coming of the Railroad, 1869

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UTAH MAIL SERVICE
BEFORE THE COMING OF THE
RAILROAD, 1869

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
HISTORY OF BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS.

by
Ralph L. McBride
1957
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Sincere appreciation is extended to many for their help in the preparation of this thesis.

Special gratitude is extended to Dr. LeRoy Hafen (for whom I hold great esteem), my committee chairman, for his valuable assistance and helpful attitude. Dr. Briant Jacobs, committee member, is given acknowledgement for his inspiration and guidance. The cooperation and assistance of the library staffs of the Brigham Young University and the University of Utah were valuable. A. William Lund, Assistant Church Historian, and his associates were especially kind and helpful with regard to my use of the Church Historian's Library.

To my family and close friends I express humble gratitude for their love and encouragement--and their faith in me.

For final criticism and suggestions, I thank very sincerely

Dr. Richard Poll and Dr. Marshall Craig.
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INTRODUCTION

In making a study of the Utah mail service before the railroad came to the West, it is important that some information be given of the citizenry of Utah, the Mormons. What was it that made them such a united and determined people? They came out to a wilderness and began the conquest of a land that no one else wanted.

The members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, commonly called "Mormons," were peculiar in that they had a faith which they would not give up, even if it meant death. Any group, particularly as large as this people, if it is to remain strong and united, must have proper leadership. The Mormons had such leadership in the personalities of Joseph Smith and Brigham Young.

Joseph Smith was the Prophet, the founder and formulator of the Church. Brigham Young was the practical leader who led the westward trek of his people and directed the founding of an empire in the Great Basin. Because of the dominant role that Brigham Young played in transportation and communication affairs, as well as in all matters pertaining to Utah, a description of the man may be appropriate:

... A man who looks both larger and younger than he is. He is five feet, nine inches in height and weighs about

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1 For information about the Mormons see: John Henry Evans, Our Church and People, (Salt Lake City: The Deseret Book Co., 1924); and Gordon B. Hinkley, What of the Mormons, (Salt Lake City: Published by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1947).
two hundred pounds. He stands erect with broad shoulders. His forehead is high and somewhat narrow, his eyebrows thin his eyes between grey and blue, his fine nose somewhat pointed, his cheeks fleshy, his face clean-shaven except for a fringe of beard under the chin. His hands are well made and shapely. The impression you get from the whole face is of power, frankness, and abundant enjoyment of life.

His dress is of homespun, neat and plain. His necktie of dark silk, tied in a large bow, is passed round a starchless collar. A plain gold chain passes from a button hole in his black satin vest to one of the lower pockets. His stockings, clean and white, show beneath his trousers. Altogether it is the dress of a plain farmer of the well-to-do class.\(^1\)

When the Mormons came to the West, there were friends and relatives left behind. They did not all come at once. Hence, there was need for communication. Not only did individuals wish to communicate with their friends and loved ones, but the leaders of the Church needed correspondence for proper coordination of activities. Later, there was need for communication with the United States Government and the rest of the world.

The mail service was in the hands of these people in three significant instances during the period from 1847 to 1869: (1) between 1847 and 1850; (2) between the latter part of 1856 and over half of 1857, and (3) for the whole period with regard to intra-Utah mail service.

Between 1847 and 1850 they had to supply their own means of communication; in 1849 the Federal Government established a post office at Salt Lake and authorized a mail carrier to be sent between the

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\(^1\) Evans, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 229-230.
Missouri River and Utah—the carrier to operate at his own expense, receiving compensation of forty cents per letter from those to whom he delivered the mail. In 1850 the first real official mail system was established for Utah.

In 1856 a Mormon, Hiram Kimball, received the contract for carrying the mail from Salt Lake to St. Joseph, Missouri. He kept this until about June of the next year, and operated in conjunction with the B. Y. Express Company, owned and operated by the Mormons. After his contract was cancelled, the B. Y. Express continued to operate for several months.

All outside mail for the communities of Utah came through Great Salt Lake City, the early official name of the capital of the Territory.

This study of the Utah mail service from 1847 to 1869 is dealt with chronologically. Periodically a few interpolations will be evident, however. The principal sources of information are: government documents, letters, manuscripts, records of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, newspapers of the period, contemporary reports, and recent secondary material.

Because the story of the Utah mail service before the coming of the railroad to the West is not easily accessible to the general public, wherein a considerable amount of research is required, this thesis provides a central location for such information.
CHAPTER I

THE UNOFFICIAL MAIL

Before the United States Government established an official means of mail service for Utah, the handling of correspondence was done through private means. There seems to have been no dependable, regular mail service; those who wanted to correspond had to rely upon those who happened to be going in the right direction.

For word to be taken back to the Saints left behind after the great trek to the West, the authorities of the Mormon Church would delegate certain parties. For instance, Ezra Benson was sent eastward in August of 1847—within a month after the first group of pioneers reached the Salt Lake Valley. The letter which Benson took with him from Brigham Young was the first to be sent from the Valley.¹

The United States postal system was fairly well established by 1847—the first postage stamps in the United States being used during that year²—but the Mormons were too few in number and comparatively insignificant to the East for a mail service to be established for their area:


In giving an example of "chance" mail during this period, this quotation may suffice:

Nauvoo, January 31, 1848

President Brigham Young,

Dear Brother:

As Brother Player is about leaving for Winter Quarters, I thought I would send a short letter to you. . . .

A resolution was made at a conference held in Carbonca, Iowa, at which time it was decided that there be a mail sent from the Mormon settlement to the people in the Great Salt Lake Basin. A record of this states:

Agreeable to the action of the conference held October 6, 1848, on the Pottawattamie lands, Allen Compton, Dr. Ezekiel Lee, James Casto and John Smith left Carbonca, Council Bluffs, to carry an express to G. S. L. Valley.

These brethren went to the ferry at "Summer Quarters" where the local brethren promptly made preparations to make the travelers comfortable for the night. Learning that a large company of Omaha Indians were at Winter Quarters, the brethren thought it advisable to have a stronger force to accompany the express to a point beyond the Elkhorn; consequently they sent back to Kanesville for men as a posse escort.

It cost the brethren in Pottawattamie county $320 to fit out the express for the mountains, which they had to do on credit.

Allen Compton and his party arrived in Salt Lake Valley with this mail November 30, 1848, with 227 letters and many papers. In conjunc-

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1Journal History, MS Historian's Office, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Jan. 31, 1848, p. 1.


tion with this there was an interesting article printed in the *Deseret Evening News*:

May 9, 1897

To the Editor:--

I see in last Friday's paper mention of the men who carried the first mail from Salt Lake to the States in the fall of 1848. I wish to call your attention to the men who brought the first mail from Kanesville to Salt Lake in the fall of 1848. My father, Dr. E. Lee, a man by the name of Crompton [Compton] and Wm. Casto were called by Elders Hyde and George A. Smith, to carry this mail to Salt Lake. A man named John Green and a colored man came with them. They crossed the plains with pack animals and endured many hardships in consequence of the lateness of the season. My father returned in the fall of 1849, and moved his family the next season, 1850.

W. H. Lee

In the year 1849 the Postmaster General established a post office at Salt Lake with Bishop Joseph L. Heywood as postmaster. A bi-monthly mail service was instituted between Council Bluffs and the Valley, Almon W. Babbitt being the carrier. He transported the mail at his own expense, receiving the mail fees in return. In a letter from Wilford Woodruff to Orson Pratt, who was in England at the time, we find this excerpt:

Elder Babbitt called upon me, and wished me to say to you that he had been to Washington and had got a post office

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1 *Deseret Evening News*, (Salt Lake City, Utah), May 11, 1897.

Fig. 1
JOSEPH L. HEYWOOD
established in the valley. Mr. Heywood, postmaster, and he, (Babbitt) had taken the carrying of the mail from Kanesville to the valley, six times a year, and that all the friends could now correspond with their friends in the valley the same as in any other part of the U. S., if sent via Kanesville. 1

Even though it was a luxury to have such a service, there were some who complained about the mail fee, which was charged by the contractor--this being his only means of income on the route. An account of this condition is given in the following quotation:

Salt Lake Postage--Some have thought it very hard and extortionate to be obliged to pay 40 cents postage on a letter from Salt Lake here. The last mail brought through was by Mr. Egan. He brought many letters for poor people, widows and soldiers' wives. We advised Mr. Egan to give these out free of charge--he did so; and as he had had a hard time coming through with the mail, lost many of his animals on the way, etc., we thought it no more than right that he should have forty cents from such as could pay it. We have yet to learn that we were wrong in our council to him.

We sent a private mail to the Valley last fall at an expense of more than three hundred dollars. No man, or set of men, can carry a mail there or bring one back without sinking a good deal of money. One man cannot go through alone; he must have a strong guard. It is better that all bear a proportion of this expense, than to crush or oppress three or four men that endure the hardship of transporting the mail across the Plains in severely cold weather. Let those who find fault with this amount of postage on a letter, volunteer their services to take a mail through to the valley with that reduction of postage, which they require Mr. Egan to make, and we will employ them if they are responsible men. 2

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2 Frontier Guardian (Early Mormon publication in Kanesville, Iowa, microfilm Historian's Office, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City), Mar. 7, 1849.
The mail carriers witnessed many things which to us seem almost impossible. In showing some of these conditions and experiences, there is an interesting account given by Almon Babbitt concerning one of his trips to Salt Lake:

I left the States with the U. S. mail on the 25th of May, with a guard of five men, twelve horses, and a light carriage. I crossed the Missouri river at Council Bluffs and went up as far as Fort Laramie on the north side of the Platte. On my way to Fort Laramie, I passed on the north side of the river, and counted on the south side upwards of six thousand wagons, persons mostly in good health, and teams in good condition, the feed being good that far on the way. At that point commenced the Black Hills. Here commenced the sacrifice of property by way of discharging freight and by frequently abandoning the craft, for I think I am safe in saying that five hundred wagons were either burned or left standing by the roadside, and other goods and provisions to an astonishing extent, the most valuable of which were carefully interred in the style of a grave, with a head and foot stone, with inscription of name and age of the person, together with the kind of disease the person died with. From Fort Laramie to Great Salt Lake, the distance of five hundred and fifty miles, I passed four thousand teams, making ten thousand teams on my way out. I learned of some twelve deaths; two were killed by the Indians, one at the crossing of the Loup Fork of the Platte, the other on the south side of the river; seven were drowned and the other died of sickness. 1

A letter written by George A. Smith had this to say concerning Babbitt's May journey:

A. W. Babbitt left this place on Thursday for the Great Salt Lake in company with six men, 18 mules, and several horses. . . . he sleeps on the wind, (alias, India rubber bags filled with air,) and intends to go through in 30 days. The Indians on the Plains have lost many of their horses by the hard winter. We hope they will not steal any of Babbitt's horses; but they will require watching. 2

2Millennial Star, op. cit., p. 233.
On July 1st, Babbitt arrived with another mail from Kanesville. Nearly a month after his arrival he left for the East again, having with him seven horses, and a light wagon.1

Before leaving for the East, however, he was elected--along with Dr. John Bernhisal--to be Utah's delegate to Congress. One of their chief motives was to have the State of Deseret inaugurated.2 It was the purpose of these men to work together in Washington for the admission of the Saints as a sovereign and independent state into the Union--on an equal footing with the original states. Babbitt was well acquainted with many of the members of Congress, especially on the side of the Democrats.3

On July 26, 1849, he left Salt Lake with his last mail. On August 21st he arrived in Camp of Israel, Spring Creek, 345 miles from Winter Quarters--26 days from Salt Lake.4 He arrived in Kanesville, Iowa, the first part of September, after being on the way for thirty-six days from the Valley of the Great Salt Lake.5

This trip was certainly not one of ease; he had to suffer hardships and loss of property. The experiences which were had by these mail

1Settle, op. cit., p. 70.


5Ibid., Sept. 3, 1849, p. 2.
pioneers may seem to us great stories of adventure and glory, but I am inclined to think that things were not always as rosy as we moderns picture them. In demonstration of this we read of Babbitt's final trip:

Mr. Babbitt certainly deserves our thanks and praise for his perserverance in swimming rivers, and towing over his wagon on rafts made with a hatchet and tied together with larrietts. It cannot be a very pleasant job to freight a rude sort of raft with a wagon and push off into a rapid current and pull out about one quarter of the distance across, than take one end of a rope in your teeth while the other end is attached to the raft, and plunge into the stream like a spaniel and swim over with craft and cargo in tow, being swept down stream over snags and sawyers for a quarter or half mile, as Mr. Babbitt informs us has been his lot in two or three instances.¹

As Babbitt left the mail service, another carrier was needed—one who was reliable enough to serve the people properly. At times he gave service which was a little unsatisfactory—mainly because of personal reasons. He was disfellowshipped from the Church for severely slandering Orson Hyde and the Saints in Pottawattamie County, Iowa.² In March of 1849, Babbitt was being replaced by Allen Compton³ (who had already had some experience with the mails) but apparently he still remained in the service until he was called to represent the people of Utah in Washington.

¹Ibid., p. 4.

²Ibid., No. 19, 1848, p. 1; Frontier Guardian, loc. cit., Feb. 21, 1849.

³Early Utah Records, loc. cit., p. 50.
Compton's service also proved to be somewhat unsatisfactory at times, probably because the profit was too little.  

Allen Compton and his associates were to leave in April. Prior to their leaving, they met in the office of President Brigham Young to receive instructions concerning their journey with the mail. At this meeting Compton was chosen to be the captain of the group with Benjamin Hawkins and Henry Woodard as counsellors. They were counseled by President Young to stick together at all times and to attend their prayers, etc. This was April 12th. On April 11th, the day before, they had met in another meeting to discuss their principle obligations:

You are hereby instructed not to allow the horse or mule that carries the mail to travel only as the animal is led by yourself, or one of your company; and you are not to allow the animal to feed at any time, until you have first taken the mail off the animal's back and made it secure.

You are all directed to travel in close company—never to scatter along the road or leave each other—and if anything is the matter with one, all of you tarry till he is ready to proceed, and then continue your journey together. By attending to these instructions, the blessings of the Lord will attend you.

If you should happen to meet any companies of Saints emigrating to this place, you can read the list of letters to them, but on no account do you open the mails until they arrive at the Kanesville post-office, and then when the mail is opened, the letters that may be directed to any person whom you may have met, can then be taken out and reshipped to the owners, who will then be as much benefited by them as at any other time.

And the company that goes with the mail, namely, Allen Compton, Benjamin Hawkins, Jedediah S. Woodard, William Casto, Thomas Johnson, Thomas Preece, Oliver B. Huntington, George Haskell, Norman Brown, David Study and Henry Woodard, are to go in a body to the post-office, see that the mail is delivered, and when all things are found satisfactory to the postmaster,

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1 Settle, loc. cit.
then you will be discharged, and not till then.

Brigham Young
Heber C. Kimball
Willard Richards

Allen Compton and his nine associates left Salt Lake City April 14, 1849, with thirty or forty horses, carrying five hundred and two letters. They arrived at their destination at Kanesville the last of May. In the *Millennial Star*, volume XI, page 234, we find this information: Brother Compton and his party arrived the last of May from Great Salt Lake in forty-eight days from the start. They met the first company of California Gold seekers one hundred and thirty miles east of Fort Laramie. Captain Compton and his men had to leave the road for two hundred miles to give them a chance to pass. (See also the *Frontier Guardian*, May 30, 1849).

Excerpts from a letter of George A. Smith reveals this:

> Thye had to swim many of the streams that are generally fordable, and had to beat their way through mountain snows for 100 miles.

There are many other factors involved in the establishment of a mail service in Utah before 1850; but those things discussed thus far give an insight into the conditions which constituted Utah's first mail service.

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2 Ibid., April 14, 1849, p. 1.

One of the prime reasons for establishing a mail service overland was to serve the California gold rushers and those who settled in other areas of the West for farming. It was the demand of these people that moved the government to begin considering those beyond the Rockies.¹

¹Young, op. cit., p. 395.
CHAPTER II
THE OFFICIAL MAIL BEGINS

To begin the first official mail service to Utah, the Post Office Department granted a contract to Samuel H. Woodson of Independence, Missouri for $19,500 per annum. This was a monthly service, the first mail leaving July 1, 1850, by stage for a distance of 1,200 miles between Salt Lake City, Utah, and Independence, Missouri.

Frequently the mail could not be depended upon. In fact, at times Brigham Young had to send special carriers to the Missouri River to get the mail for the Utah people. In the summer of 1850, John Y. Green was sent to Council Bluffs. On the 15th of September, Orson Hyde arrived with a mail.

In July, 1851, Mr. Woodson made a contract with Feramorz Little to assist in the mail—to handle it between Salt Lake City and Fort Laramie. He agreed to do this for $8,000 per year. This contract was to last for

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2 Young, op. cit., p. 396.

3 Ibid.

4 Early Utah Records, op. cit., p. 130.
two years and eleven months, the remaining time of Woodson's contract. Two assistants were employed by Little—Ephraim K. Hanks and Charles F. Decker. The carriers were to meet Woodson's men at Fort Laramie on the fifteenth of each month.  

Mr. Little tells us that there was only one trading post between Salt Lake and Fort Laramie (a distance of 400 miles). This was Fort Bridger, 115 miles west of Salt Lake. However, a trading post was established at Devil's Gate later to further facilitate matters. According to the agreement between Woodson and Little the service was to begin August 1, 1851.

During the year Willard Richards became postmaster of Salt Lake City. When he was inaugurated, we are told, it was winter (first part of 1850) and the mail carriers had to travel through three feet of snow.

In December of 1850, Feramorz Little was chosen by the State Legislature to be one of the heads of a stage line in Utah (James A. Little and Company). The "heads" would "have the entire control, and management of the stage route, from Ogden City and the settlements north, through Great Salt Lake City, Provo City, and Manti, to the County Seat of Iron County; and as soon as practicable, continuously, to intersect a stage

1 Little, op. cit., p. 1.
2 Young, op. cit., pp. 396-397.
4 Ibid.
Fig. 3
EPHRAIM K. HANKS
route from Cahoon Pass [Cajon], and San Diego in South California."¹

This company, to begin as early as possible in the spring of 1851, would carry passengers and packages (and I would add that it probably carried some mail, for there were many members of the Church down in that area).

The Post Office Department made arrangements to establish post offices at all places on post roads that are authorized by law when residents of a community petition for one and clearly show that the establishment of a post office is essential for the convenience of the community and the public where a post office may be desired, and as the Postmaster General may deem expedient.

Rural service is established on a petition of the community desiring such service when it is shown to the satisfaction of the Department after investigation that the new service is warranted and that funds are available to meet the expense.²

The mail westward was not established until after that of the eastern division. In April of 1851, George Chorpenning and Absalom Woodward made a contract with the United States Post Office Department to carry the mails between Salt Lake City and Sacramento, California, for $14,000 per year.³ The distance on the route used by Chorpenning was about 910 miles.⁴ (See appendix for the contract)

¹Alter, op. cit., pp. 196-197.
²Forsgren, op. cit., p. 20.
⁴George Chorpenning, Statement and Appendix of Claim of George Chorpenning against the United States, 1889, (microfilm Brigham Young University), pp. 1-4; Hafen, op. cit., p. 63.
Chorpenning and his men left Sacramento May 1, 1851, with the first mail from that area to Salt Lake. It was not an easy task for them to travel because of the snow; it took them sixteen days to make their way to Carson Valley, "having had to beat down the snow with wooden mauls to open a trail for their animals over the Sierras."¹ They staked off a quarter section of land for a mail station, where the town of Genoa, Nevada was later established. From George Chorpenning's own statement we find this information: They left May 1, 1851, from Sacramento. On the third day they encountered snow drifts in the Sierra Nevadas, some fifteen miles above Placerville. It was on the 22nd that they reached Carson Valley (about 180 miles on the then traveled route). When they reached the snow line, they dismounted, put part of the mail from the mules on their own horses, and walked for about two weeks. They trampled and beat the snow for a trail for the animals—traveling two, six, to eight miles per day. For sixteen days they traveled and camped on deep snow. After reaching Carson Valley, the men proceeded to make a permanent settlement, staking off a section of land. At this time there were no white men in Nevada except Chorpenning's. During the summer some of the group remained in the valley and put up buildings and a stockade for the permanent mail section. It was this group of men who made the first discovery of gold on the slope of the mountains, near the famous Comstock Mines. This started settlers coming—the beginning of the state of Nevada, May 22, 1851. In November of that year the San Francisco postmaster established

¹Hafen, op. cit., p. 64.
a post office there.  

Chorpennning and those who went on reached Great Salt Lake City. "On the 5th [June] the California mail arrived in care of Mr. Chorpennning, with seven men. They left Sacramento May 3rd [1st], and were 14 days getting their mules over the Nevada Mountains."  

During the rest of the summer and throughout the mail career of Chorpennning, there was trouble with Indians, plundering and killing. Woodward left with four experienced mountain men November 1, 1851, for Salt Lake City. Another party left the Utah capital at the same time with the mail for Sacramento (reaching their destination nearly two months later). They said that they had met Woodward at Willow Springs and his men and brought a letter from him. This was the last letter from Woodward—the next word of him was that his remains had been found two hundred miles from Salt Lake. 

In December some more of Chorpennning's men left Sacramento. Ten days from this December 1st launch, they had to return because of the great snow of the Sierras. Chorpennning now became very discouraged for a number of reasons: he had heard nothing from or about Woodward (except the letter previously mentioned); his men could not get over

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1 Chorpennning, op. cit., pp. 3-4.
2 Early Utah Records, op. cit., p. 127.
3 Chorpennning, op. cit., p. 5.
4 Ibid., p. 5.
the mountains; the winter was not getting any easier to combat on the route; his men would return with the mail they started with. The mail contractor felt that his business enterprise was lapsing into a complete failure.

Chorpenning decided that the only thing to do would be one of two things: declare the enterprise a failure and quit, or find another route to Salt Lake. In order to protect himself at this trying time, he sent an affidavit to the postmaster at San Francisco to explain why there was such a delay in the mails. The California mail had not been heard from on the 13th of December in Salt Lake and this information was published in the Deseret News: the California mail for November had not arrived, neither had it been heard from; and letters destined for California were forwarded by New Orleans.  

It was expected that at the next session of Congress a mail route would be established to San Diego by way of Parowan. This would be of some advantage for service from California to Salt Lake, the mail to be taken down the coast by steamer to San Diego, then land to its destination.

On January 1, 1852, Chorpenning sent out another group of men, this time instructing them to go on a more direct route through Carson Valley; but they had to return. The February mail somehow got through to Salt Lake City. It took sixty days to make the trip. Permission was

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2 History of Brigham Young, MS Bancroft Library Collection, (microfilm Brigham Young University Library), 1851, p. 85.

3 Chorpenning, op. cit., p. 5.

obtained from the special agent in San Francisco to send the March mail down the coast to San Pedro and thence by the Cajon Pass and the Mormon trail to Salt Lake City.  

Chorpennning, himself, left with the mail in May. Upon reaching Carson Valley, he found to his great surprise the "April group" from Sacramento, who had just arrived one day earlier—having been in the mountains forty-six days. Continuing on for Salt Lake, he met Edson Cady (who had taken the mail on February 1st) coming back from Salt Lake. Here Chorpennning learned that this party had walked the last two hundred miles into Salt Lake—all their horses (eight in number) had been frozen to death in the Goose Creek Mountains—carrying the mail and their blankets on their backs. Brigham Young had sent out, at his own expense, means to get their saddles and equipment. This party sent by President Young was the one which found Absalom Woodward's body.

Mr. Chorpennning had much trouble in preparing for his return journey with the California mail from Salt Lake. It was a dramatic occasion. He was unable to find a single man in the area who would return with him; Brigham Young told him that it would be suicide to go out there in the wilderness without at least one partner. President Young almost went so far as to get a court order to prevent his going. Chorpennning's funds were completely gone. No one had ever made the trip in less than twenty-two days and he had only fifteen days in which to make his schedule. Defying

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1Ibid., Hafen, op. cit., p. 64.
2Chorpennning, op. cit., p. 9.
the people and the wilderness he bargained to get provisions and left, saying he would not only make the trip safely but within the scheduled time. Taking with him "one saddle and one pack mule, fifteen pounds of hard-bread, fourteen pounds of ham, seven pounds of crushed sugar, my blankets and the mail bag...", he made the trip in fifteen days, 1 1/2 hours— a remarkable feat of strength and determination.\(^1\) Chorpenning saved his contract and proved himself to be a man of strong will and ability.

After these trying experiences, Chorpenning submitted a plea for taking the mails to Los Angeles, from which place they could be forwarded to Salt Lake City. This permission was denied, at first. However, in the fall, when the snows came, permission was granted for him to take the mails by San Pedro.\(^2\) When success came to him through this new provision, the postmaster in Salt Lake began to burden him with the eastern mail. Chorpenning's division was more reliable than the eastern division of service; and the mail could be forwarded by steamboat back to New York. Brigham Young wrote to the Utah delegate in Congress, Dr. John Bernhisel:

> So little confidence have we in the present mail arrangements that we feel considerable dubiety of your receiving this or any other communication from us.\(^3\)

Thus, the Utah mail for the east was sent by Chorpenning. For the rest of the winter the mail went down by San Pedro. The post office at Carson Valley regularly supplied by carriers on snowshoes.

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1\(^\text{Ibid.}\)

2\(^\text{Ibid., p. 10.}\)

3\(^\text{Incidents in Utah History, MS Bancroft Library Collection, (microfilm Brigham Young University Library), p. 7.}\)
The first carriers were Fred Bishop and Dritt, followed by George Pierce and John A. Thompson. 1 "Snowshoe Thompson" made himself famous in this section by his feats on the snowshoes, which were ten feet long and of the Canadian pattern. "He often took one hundred pounds upon the journey between Placerville and Carson, and made the trip in three days to Placerville and the return journey in two days.2

For the eastern mail service let us turn to Feramorz Little. He, in this year of 1852, was still under contract with Samuel Woodson to carry the mail between Salt Lake and Fort Laramie. We find that he had some severe hardships during the winter in the latter part of the year. From Incidents in Utah History we read, for December:

The Eastern mail which left Independence Nov. 1st arrived at Laramie on the 30th of that month, the day it was due in Great Salt Lake City.

Mr. Feramorz Little 1 received the mail at Laramie Dec. 1st, and making his way partly through an unknown country, the snow being so deep at the South Pass he could not pursue the usual route, there being snow generally in his path from eighteen inches to four feet, in an unceasing storm of snow from the Platte river to Ft. Bridger, so that he could discern no mountains or beacons to direct his course, and so cold that sometimes he dare not close his eyes during the night, being lost for two days and during that time without fire, food, sleep...; finally he arrived at Fort Bridger and was informed he could go no further on account of the snow; but nothing daunted, Mr. Little procurred some of the best horses, known as the Flat-Head breed which are famous for good stock, and broke his way to the Weber, and although several gentlemen accompanied him, his flat-head horses had to break the track almost the entire distance, notwithstanding one or two other


2Hafen, loc. cit.
noble animals died, in consequence of a short attempt to lead. Leaving his horses at Weber, as any further attempt to get them through would be useless, Mr. Little commenced drawing the mail bags of one hundred and fifty pounds on the snow, in par flesh, but after a few miles hawling found it impossible, cached the news bag, and continuing with the little bag arrived on the 25th, having dragged the mail by hand nearly forty miles, over snow in the Wasatch, from ten to twenty feet in depth, in many places. We will add that Mr. Little broke his uncle [sic], about one week before he left Laramie, and when he started, and for some days after was so lame he could not put his foot in the stirrup, but was obliged to walk in the soft snow and broke the path much of the way, and that was quite a relief for him.1

In the annual message of the President of the United States we find a report by William McKinley to Congress concerning the mail service. A paragraph from this delivery reveals this:

The contractor on route between Salt Lake and Sacramento had never performed satisfactory service. A new contractor was appointed. The new contractor would not only agree to the past expectations but also would fortify a post or station at Carson's Valley. This would add to the security of mails and protect emigrant trains on the route.2

This report introduces us to an unfortunate state of affairs regarding George Chorpenning. In 1853 he received a stunning announcement which made him furious. He was notified about the latter part of January that his contract had been annulled by the Postmaster General. All correspondence (including the receipt of his salary) between the Post Office Department and him was done through a special agent in San Francisco.3 The correspondence and paper work done between Chorpenning and San Francisco had not

1Incidents in Utah History, op. cit., pp. 21-23.
3Chorpenning, op. cit., p. 12.
been forwarded to Washington as it should have been. The Postmaster General, therefore, was ignorant of the difficulties with which Chorpenning had been confronted; and, as a result of this ignorance, had annulled the contract. The fact that the contractor was just beginning to recover from his misfortunes made the situation doubly frustrating and unwelcomed. ¹

The Special Agent in San Francisco was "surprised and disgusted" because of the termination. That he was not notified was an added cause for his concern. Immediately they both went to Washington, on the same boat, the Special Agent taking with him all papers concerning Chorpenning's activities. The contractor writes:

After some weeks of negotiating during which time I was sent for and consulted by President Pierce in regard to the subject, it was finally agreed, verbally, with the Postmaster General, in the presence of Mr. James C. Vandyke, at that time United States District Attorney for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, that if I would resume service I should have $16,000 per annum additional compensation for the remainder of the contract term, thus making my pay $30,000 per annum, which was the sum I demanded.

Immediately following this agreement, the $50,000 contract with Mr. Blanchard was rescinded and my contract was restored. ²

The Postmaster General had made a contract with William L. Blanchard, November 18, 1852. The term of the contract paying $50,000 per annum, was to run from March 15, 1853, to June 30, 1856. His route was to be from Sacramento City, by Carson Valley, to Salt Lake. He was given the alternative to deliver by way of San Diego, if he desired, in times

¹Ibid., p. 11.
of snow. Whenever he would do so, however, he would have to prove his reason by affidavit. ¹

Mr. Blanchard's schedule was:

Leave Sacramento City the 15th day of each month.
Arrive at Salt Lake City the 14th day of each month.
Leave Salt Lake the 15th day of each month.
Arrive at Sacramento City the 14th day of each month. ²

After his contract was restored, Chorpenning submitted a plea to have his route changed to go by way of San Pedro, California, in winter because of the difficulties encountered with the snow: He writes:

Washington City, D. C.
November 14, 1853

Hon. Jas. Campbell,
P. M. General.

Dear Sir: Being contractor on route No., 5,066, from Sacramento to Salt Lake, and finding from two years' experience that the direct or regular traveled route by Carson's Valley is entirely impassable in the winter months, and for the more safe and regular conveyance of said mails would request that permission be given to me to transmit the same during these months by what is known as the South route. This will require me to run down the coast by steamer at least as far as San Pedro (some 500 miles) thence by Los Angeles and San Bernardino to Salt Lake.

In my former experience in traveling down the coast I have found it necessary at times to get the mail out of the Sacramento office four or five days previous to the first of the month, owing to the fact that the coasting steamers are not very regular in their starting; and even when going out in the first, the mail must

¹Ibid., (appendix), p. 8.
²Ibid., (appendix), p. 10.
leave Sacramento on the day previous.

To this I would invite your attention, and ask that you give your special agent the necessary instructions, as he will be present and know best when to order the mail out.

All of which I submit, and solicity your earliest attention and approbation.

Respectfully yours, etc.

George Chorpenning, Jr.¹

In answer to Mr. Chorpenning's letter we find:

Post Office Department
Contract Office
December 14, 1853

Gentlemen: As contractors for route 5,066 you are allowed in winter to take the Southern route via San Diego, San Bernardino, and Los Angeles. During such times the postmaster of Sacramento City will be allowed to let off the mail for the route in advance of schedule time, if the public do not complain and connections are maintained.

Respectfully, your obt. servt.,

W. H. Dundas
2d Asst. P., M. Gen.²

E. L. Barnard, carrier from Sacramento, wrote a letter to Albert Carrington, editor of the Deseret News, explaining some of the difficulties of mail travel and why the mails were late. We read:

G. S. L. City, April 18, 1853

The mail left Sacramento on the 15th of March for this place—was taken to Hangtown same day by stage; left next

¹Ibid., (appendix), pp. 33-34.

²Ibid., (appendix), p. 34.
morning on a pack animal, for the head of the South Fork. About 40 miles from Hangtown the snow became so deep that our mule had to be sent back, when it became necessary to put the bags on our backs from thence to Carson Valley, (70 miles distant) over the summit of the Sierra Nevada, through snow banks of 20 and 40 feet in depth. With untiring effort, and almost superhuman endurance, we reached our post in Carson on the 21st.

On the 23rd our party, (consisting of 8,) all well mounted and equipped, commenced our journey for this point.

At the Desert we met a band of Indians; bargained with two of them to accompany the mail: one came with this party, the other is to come with the next; also made arrangements with a whole family of Indians, (who were to leave the next day for our trading post) to live with us to herd our stock, and make themselves generally useful; we in return to feed and clothe them, and make presents to their friends.

We saw a great many Indians on the road, and had talks with them all. We bestowed small presents, and gave them food. They were mostly all naked.--We promised them presents on our return. They appeared much pleased and are anxious to be on good terms with the whites. At one time we were in a company of some 200 of those poor beings, all of whom appeared perfectly friendly. The upper tribes, when they found that we had an Indian with us, were overjoyed; we could never give them sufficient time to finish their talk. Nothing but a pacific course towards these Indians is necessary to secure their friendship. Such is to be our policy.

The waters of the Humbolt were never higher; all the tributaries are swimming. The Indians' horses have mostly all perished in the snows. All the mountains are covered with snow; consequently, the waters will keep up for a long time. We not only had to swim every stream, but wade through extensive bottoms for miles up to our knees, and often our armpits in mud and water.

Mr. Ferguson and myself left our party on Goose Creek, to hasten in with the mail. We found but little snow on the mountains. Teams can go as far as Goose Creek now, but no farther for a month to come. Grass good all the way.

It is the determination of the mail contractors to spare no pains, trouble or expense, in forwarding the United States mail to and from California. They have made such arrangements and adopted such measures, that success is inevitable.
31

On my return to Carson Valley, we shall start out a company to explore a new route, whereby 300 miles travel can be saved, which will so shorten the distance that a failure of this mail cannot happen.

Respectfully yours,

E. L. Barnard

For local mail service in Utah Territory there were a few post offices established in the year 1853. Announced in the newspaper were the following: 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lehi City</th>
<th>David Evans, P.M.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carson Valley</td>
<td>E. T. Barnard, P.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleasant Grove</td>
<td>Wm. G. Sterrett, P.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fillmore City</td>
<td>Anson Call, P.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(changed from Corn Creek)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palmyra</td>
<td>Charles A. Davis, P.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tooele City</td>
<td>John Rowberry, P.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box Elder (now Willard)</td>
<td>Charles Hubbard, P.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parowan</td>
<td>J. C. L. Smith, P.M.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For ordering stamps, these postmasters were advised that those wishing one cent or three cent stamps should forward their cash and orders to the Great Salt Lake City post office—Willard Richards, postmaster. 3

The amount of postage collected in Utah Territory in 1853 was as follows:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Letter Postage</td>
<td>$ 715.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper Postage</td>
<td>41.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stamps Sold</td>
<td>199.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Postage Collected</td>
<td>955.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>3,269.704</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Deseret News, op. cit., April 30, 1853.
2 Ibid., May 4, 1853.
3 Ibid.
CHAPTER III

THE MIDDLE FIFTIES

At the beginning of 1854 it was nearly time to renew contracts or to invite new bids. Contracts from the Post Office Department in Washington, D.C., were usually issued every four years. For Utah Territory the issuance started in 1850, and now in 1854, it was time for those to be changed or renewed. The system used by the government was to publish advertisements in the newspapers. In the month of January there was an advertisement issued by the Post Office Department asking for bids for new contracts. It stated:

Proposals for carrying the Mails of the United States, from the 1st of July, 1854, to the 1st of July, 1858, in the Territory of Utah, will be received at the Contract Office of the Post Office Department, in the city of Washington, until 9 A.M. of the 3rd of April, 1854, (to be decided by the 23rd of April, 1854,) on the routes and in the times herein specified, . . . ¹

The routes which were listed under this heading are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Route Number</th>
<th>Miles</th>
<th>Route and Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12523</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>Sacramento City, Carson Valley, Box Elder, Salt Lake City.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Leave Sacramento at 6 A.M. on the first of each month.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Route Number</th>
<th>Miles</th>
<th>Route and Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 12707        | 800   | **Destination:** Dallas (Washington), Fort Boise, Fort Hall, Salt Lake City.  
               |       | Leave Dallas at 9 A.M. on the first day of every month. 
               |       | Arrive at Salt Lake in four weeks.  
               |       | Leave Salt Lake at 6 A.M. on the first of each month. 
               |       | Arrive at Sacramento City in four weeks. |
| 12801        | 1000  | Salt Lake, American Fork, Provo City, Springville, Payson, Summit Creek, Nephi City, Fillmore City, Red Creek, Parowan, Johnson's Springs, Coal Creek, Santa Clara, San Bernardino, San Diego.  
               |       | Leave Salt Lake on the 20th of each month. 
               |       | Arrive at San Diego by the 18th of the next month. 
               |       | Leave San Diego on the 20th of each month. 
               |       | Arrive at Salt Lake by the 18th of each month. |
| 12802        | 133   | Salt Lake, Draperville, Lehi City, American Fork, Pleasant Grove, Provo City, Springville, Palmyra, Payson, Salt Creek (Nephi), Manti.  
               |       | Leave Salt Lake City every Monday at 6 A.M. 
               |       | Arrive at Manti by 8 P.M. Tuesday. 
               |       | Leave Manti every Thursday. 
               |       | Arrive at Salt Lake by 8 P.M. Friday. |
| 12803        | 1000  | Salt Lake, Fort Laramie, Council Bluffs (Iowa).  
               |       | Leave Salt Lake on the 10th of each month. 
               |       | Arrive at Council Bluffs by the 8th of the next month. |
In the same advertisement let us look at the form for a bid, the form of a guaranty, and the form of a certificate:

Form for a Bid: Where no change from advertisement is contemplated by bidder.

I (or we, as the case may be) [here write the name or names in full] of [here state the residence or residences] hereby propose to carry the mail on route No. __ from __ to __ as often as the Postmaster General's advertisement for proposals for the same, dated October 13, 1853, requires, in the time stated in the schedules contained in said advertisement, and by the following mode of conveyance to wit: [Here state how it is to be conveyed] for the annual sum of [here write out the sum in words at full length].

Dated [Signed]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Route Number</th>
<th>Miles</th>
<th>Route and Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12804</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Salt Lake City, Miller's Creek, Brownsville (Ogden).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Leave Salt Lake Mondays and Thursdays at 5 A.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Arrive at Brownsville Tuesdays and Fridays at 5 A.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Arrive at Salt Lake by 8 P.M. same days.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12805</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Salt Lake, Tooele City.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Leave Salt Lake every Monday at 6 A.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Arrive at Tooele by 8 P.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Leave Tooele City every Tuesday at 6 A.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Arrive at Salt Lake by 8 P.M.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Form of a Guaranty:

The undersigned undertake that if the foregoing bid for carrying the mail on route No.____ be accepted by the Postmaster General, the bidder shall, prior to the 1st day of July next enter into the required obligation to perform the service proposed, with good and sufficient sureties.

Dated [Signed by two guarantors]

Form of a Certificate:

The undersigned (Postmaster, Judge, or a Clerk of a Court of record, as the case may be) certified that he is well acquainted with the above guarantors and the property, and that they are men of property and able to make good their guaranty.

Dated [Signed]

George Chorpenning, mail contractor to California from Salt Lake, renewed his contract in 1854. The advertised route, as has been noted in the schedule, was from Salt Lake City to San Diego, instead of Sacramento. Chorpenning accepted the offer. There had been some talk of extending the mail between Missouri and California to a weekly service. Already Chorpenning had stocked the route from Southern California to Salt Lake with stations and equipment—because of his having to make the trips by this way during the winter months. Thus, anticipating a weekly service and desiring to be a part of the newly proposed idea, he purposely made the very low bid of $12,500. His plan was successful for he got the contract. He knew that with improved service and a weekly mail his pay would be increased.¹

The new route number was 12, 801. It extended from Salt Lake City, through American Fork, Provo City, Springville, Payson, Summit Creek, Nephi City, Fillmore City, Red Creek, Parowan, Johnson's Springs, Cold Creek, Santa Clara (California), and San Bernardino to San Diego—there and back once a month. The contract was to begin July 1st and run through June 30, 1858. The schedule was: to leave Salt Lake City on the first of every month; arrive at San Pedro\(^1\) by the 28th of the same month; leave San Pedro on the 1st of each month; arrive at Salt Lake by the 28th of the same month.\(^2\)

According to the policy of the Post Office Department, contractors were paid quarterly. Before January 1, 1854, they could draw any amount of their pay, not exceeding their quarterly sum, any number of times during the period. This created frustration in the government offices; therefore, after January 1st, only one draft for the pay on each route would be honored—the draft containing the full pay for the quarter.\(^3\)

The following advertisements appeared in the *Deseret News* several times during the month of January, 1854:\(^4\)

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\(^1\)On November 13th, there was a change. San Diego was cut out—going through San Bernardino, Monte, San Gabriel, and Los Angeles to San Pedro.

\(^2\)Chorpenning, *op. cit.*, p. 4.


\(^4\)*Ibid.*, Jan. 5, 12, 19, 1854.
ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE OF THE U.S. MAIL FROM AND TO G. S. L. CITY, POST OFFICE

The Eastern Mail leaves for Independence, Mo., the 1st of each month, at 6 A.M.
Arrives the last day of each month at 6 P.M.
The Western Mail leaves for Sacramento City, Calif.,
the 1st day of each month, at 6 A.M.
Arrives the 30th day at 6 P.M.
The Oregon Mail leaves for the Dallas, the 1st of Dec., Feb., April, June, Aug., and Oct., at 6 A.M.
Arrives the last day of Nov., Jan., March, May, July, and Sept., at 6 P.M.
The above mails will be closed at 5 o'clock P.M.
precisely, the last day of each month.
The Brownsville[Ogden] and Miller's Creek mail leaves every Monday and Thursday at 6 A.M.
Arrives every Tuesday and Friday, at 6 P.M.
The Southern Mail leaves every Monday at 6 A.M., for American Fork, Provo, Springville, Payson, Salt Creek, Nephi, and Manti Post offices, and returns every Saturday at 6 P.M.

No regular mail service to Fillmore City, or Parowan.
When will the mail close? How late can I get a letter in the mail? Please read the above, and not trouble the Post-master to answer such questions.

MAIL COACH

To American Fork, Provo, Springville, Palmyra, Payson, Summit Creek, Nephi and Manti City, every Monday at 6 A.M., from the Post Office, Great Salt Lake City, and will return, leaving Manti City every Thursday at 6 A.M., arriving at Great Salt Lake City, every Saturday at 6 P.M.

Passengers for any of the above places will leave their names at the Post Office.

Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From G. S. L. City</th>
<th>Provo</th>
<th>Nephi</th>
<th>Manti</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$2</td>
<td>$4</td>
<td>$6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To be paid at the time of starting, in Cash or on the Tithing Office.

Lorenzo Johnson

1Ibid.
On March 11, 1854, Willard Richards, second postmaster at Salt Lake, died. "He was . . . Postmaster for Great Salt Lake City up to the time of his death, and enjoyed the full confidence of the Postmaster General, who respected his judgement touching postal arrangements throughout the mountain Territories." Upon the death of Willard Richards, Joseph Cain became Acting Postmaster, shortly after which a new postmaster, Elias Smith was appointed.

There seems to have been an improvement in the mails during the middle of 1854. In August Joseph Cain wrote a letter to the editor of the Deseret News in which he said:

Permit me thro' your columns, in behalf of the citizens of Utah Territory, to return our sincere thanks to W. F. Deweber, Esq., Post Master of Independence, Mo., for his indefatigable exertions in assisting to ferret out the mail delinquency between his office and this city.

With the assistance of Mr. Deweber, it is my belief that the U. S. Mail will be carried more regular than hitherto, and that ox teams will not have to be freighted and carry the back mails at the end of the contract.

I also wish to express my thanks (in behalf of the citizens) to F. Little, Esq., sub-contractor from this city to Fort Laramie for his exertions in carrying the mail to and from this city; and to the best of my knowledge he has always brought the whole of the mail which arrived at Fort Laramie for this Territory with the exception of one trip, when he was obliged to leave one sack in consequence of the impossibility of transporting it over the mountain torrents, which are occasioned by the melting of the snow in the spring.

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1 Ibid., Mar. 16, 1854.

2 Ibid., July 6, 1854.

3 Orson Ferguson Whitney, History of Utah, (Salt Lake City: Cannon and Sons, 1892), I, p. 531.

Fig. 4
WILLARD RICHARDS
Frequently it was necessary to publish lists of letters which had accumulated in the post office at Salt Lake and other communities.¹ Accompanying the list was usually a notation that the letters would be placed in the Dead Letter Office by a certain date, if they were not called for.

The mail contract between Salt Lake City and Independence in 1854 was secured by William M. F. McGraw and J. M. Hockaday.² The salary per annum was $14,440. This was raised for a temporary period until Aug. 7, 1855 to $36,000 per annum because of Indian troubles.³

On July 31, 1854, McGraw (sometimes spelled "Magraw") entered Salt Lake City with his first mail and six passengers.⁴ Upon arrival he informed the citizens of a disheartening experience. The postmaster at Fort Laramie, as he observed, was not as responsible as he might be. While Mr. McGraw was waiting at Laramie from 10 A.M. to 6 P.M., not one letter of the numerous ones from the emigrant trains, and others en route, was delivered into his hands for him to carry on to Salt Lake. However, the Deseret News editor expressed great optimism in the

¹Ibid., April 13, July 6, Oct. 5, 1854.

²Hafen, op. cit., pp. 60-61; Whitney, op. cit., p. 576; James Vincent Frederick, Ben Holladay, the Stagecoach King, (Glendale, Calif.: The Arthur H. Clark Co.), p. 47.


improvement of service through the energy and faithfulness of McGraw and the postmaster at Independence.  

One of the improvements already was that the postmaster at Independence had secured brass locks for the mail sacks.  

In demonstration of mail delinquency during this period, two quotations from the Deseret News in 1854, may be beneficial:

Thirteen sacks of old newspapers, books, wrapping paper, letters written and mailed in 1852, etc., were brought to the Post Office in this city on the 12th inst., and on the 14th, three more sacks filled with matter of the same character. And it is rumored there are still more on the way. [More mail arrived on the sixteenth of August. This made thirty-eight sacks carried by these ox teams]  

The sacks contained this time mostly Congressional Documents which may have been valuable if received at their seasonable date. Practically all of the newspapers were damp and rubbed together, damaging the print. Some dated back to April of '52.  

Though the proceedings of McGraw were very encouraging at the outset, we shall see later a marked change in his attitude and service.

In December, 1854, a few new mail routes and post offices were advertised. They were (in December) not yet in operation, but soon would be.

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1Ibid., Aug. 17, 1854.
2Ibid., Aug. 8, 17, 1854.
3Ibid., Aug. 17, 1854.
4Ibid., Aug. 24, 1854.
5Ibid., Dec. 21, 1854.
Mail Routes

Great Salt Lake, Home (Harker's Settlement), Gardner's Mill, Fort Herriman to Cedar Valley.

Great Salt Lake, Sugar Works, Neff's Mill, Mill Creek, Holladay's Settlement, Union. to Mountainville (Taylorsville).

Tooele to Grantsville.

Post Offices (with their postmasters)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Postmaster</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home (Harker's Settlement, West Jordan)</td>
<td>Samuel Bennion, P.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylorsville</td>
<td>Isaac Houston, P.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centerville</td>
<td>A. B. Cherry, P.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stoker</td>
<td>David Sessions, P.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union (Little Cottonwood)</td>
<td>Silas Richards, P.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draperville (South Willow Creek)</td>
<td>Ebenezer Brown, P.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canal Creek (San Pete County)</td>
<td>James Allred, P.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tooele City</td>
<td>John Rowberry, P.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cedar City</td>
<td>Isaac C. Haight, P.M.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The eastern mail for 1855 did not seem to start out too well. John Y. Green and his party left Salt Lake the 1st of January and returned on the 18th with the same mail. They had been stopped at Greenriver by Wash-e-keep, one of the heads of the Snakes, and told that it would be dangerous to go any further. Rumors were that the Ogalallah Sioux, the Cheyennes and the Arrappahoes were on the route and threatening that no one should pass. It was suggested that the mail eastward was sent by way of California and Panama. Chorpenning, as well as the Adams and Company's Express, was performing good service in that direction. This suggestion made by the post office at Salt Lake was, of course, for a temporary period only, until a settlement could be reached with the Indians.¹

¹Ibid., Jan. 25, 1855.
The Adams and Company's Great Salt Lake City Express had a monthly schedule between Utah and California. With all shipments insured, it provided service to California, the Sandwich Islands, Australia, the Atlantic States, and Europe. An added feature of this firm was that it would serve its patrons by making purchases for them in other parts of the country, as well as sell or trade for them. The company was large and reliable; Felix Tracy, Jr. was the agent for it in Salt Lake City.¹

In the early part of 1855 Mr. McGraw applied for a claim of remuneration, for the trouble with the Indians had become critical. In addition to losing property and equipment, he had to hire strong guards to protect the mails. Recorded in the Statutes at Large we find this:

For compensation to William M. F. McGraw, for carrying the mail on route number eight thousand nine hundred and eleven from Independence, Missouri, to Great Salt Lake City, Utah Territory, monthly, each way, according to the contract under which said service is now being performed, the sum of thirty-six thousand dollars per annum, commencing with the eighteenth day of August, eighteen hundred and fifty-four, and continuing until one year, and in lieu of the compensation therein stipulated: Provided, That the Postmaster-General, with the assent of the contractors, be, and he is authorized to annul said contract.²

There was an explanation given for this salary increase to William McGraw in the official records of the United States Government, as follows:

¹ Ibid., Feb. 1, 1855.
²U. S. Statutes at Large, X, p. 684.
An amendment to an appropriation Bill:

For compensation to William M. F. McGraw for carrying the mail on route 8911, from Independence, Missouri, to Great Salt Lake, Utah Territory, monthly each way according to the contract under which said service is now being performed, the sum of $36,000 per annum, commencing with the contract aforesaid, and in lieu of the compensation therein stipulated.

I will explain that amendment. This contract for supplying the mail from Independence to Salt Lake City, was taken by Mr. McGraw, at the sum of $14,000. The Indian difficulties which have occurred there, have subjected him to great losses. All his papers are before the committee on the Post Office and Post Roads. My own opinion is that, although this is a pretty considerable allowance for the mail service, it is absolutely necessary if the mail is to be carried there at all. He will be compelled to employ pretty strong guards. He has lost many of his mules and some of his drivers; and upon that route, in the present state of the country, he will have to employ a very strong guard. Under such circumstances I think it nothing but proper and right that the compensation should be allowed.  

The McGraw company had a passenger coach service along with the mail. Its coaches left Harwilin's Hotel in Salt Lake City and the Noland House in Independence, Missouri, on the first day of each month at 8 A. M. The coaches stopped for a short time at each of these way stations: Fort Bridger, Greenriver, Devil's Gate, Fort Laramie, Ash Hollow, Fort Kearney, and Big Blue. The agents situated at Salt Lake and Independence were J. M. Hockaday and Isaac Hockaday, respectively.  

One of the carriers for the company was Mr. Hudspeth, of whom Albert Carrington, editor of the Deseret News, once said: He is an "indefatigable and energetic conductor" of the mails between Independence and Salt Lake

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1 U. S. Congressional Globe, loc. cit., (quoting Thomas J. Rusk)

Carrington also said of the postmaster at Independence, P. McClanahan: "He is prompt, accommodating and gentlemanly."¹

Such kind words could not be spoken for postal employees at the Fort Laramie station, however; for it was shown that in many instances they proved to be unreliable. Albert Carrington had this to say concerning this station:

There is little known about mail service between Independence and Laramie—but in Laramie:

A responsible employee, who left here with the April mail for the East, says, that on arriving at Laramie the Postmaster overhauled the "way" mail sacks ["way" mail is that mail which is left at the stations between the two ends of the route] which contained, as it always does, all matter for offices on the route, and then expressed great anxiety to ransack the balance, with which he had no business, . . .

But, many thanks to our friend McClanahan there for the brass locks prevented his rumaging, to use no severer term, and we trust that the Postmaster General will perceive the necessity of the case, and at once cause proper bags to be furnished to the Postmaster at Independence sufficient to contain all mail matter for Utah, with brass locks for each, and no keys for these locks, except at Independence and G. S. L. City.

This mode, and this alone, will prevent the wholesale rummaging, which Utah has so long endured.²

And again Mr. Carrington said:

When the conductor arrived at Laramie, he enquired for all mail matter for Utah, and this specimen Postmaster handed out a very small amount; the conductor asked again if that was all, and the reply was again, yes; when at the same time there was a large number of mail sacks in plain

¹Ibid., May 16, 1855.
²Ibid.
sight behind the door, and one of the hands said, "I know these are for Salt Lake, and you had better not ask again, or we shall have them all to carry." However, for some reason not yet found out, those sacks were afterwards forwarded to the conductor.¹

The latter quotation portrays the notion that postmasters were not always to blame—transporters of the mail were sometimes irresponsible.

In April of 1855, information pertaining to the cost of sending mail matter was published. We find that letters sent under 3,000 miles were three cents; those over 3,000 miles were ten cents. They were charged for by weight, as well. A single letter did not exceed one half ounce; it was sent for three cents. A double letter did not exceed one ounce and was sent for six cents. Each time a half ounce was added the amount of the original price was added. All letters and parcels had to be sent prepaid except those concerned with government business. Letters which were merely delivered, probably within communities, and not transmitted through the mails, cost one cent.²

Toward the latter part of the year Erastus Snow made a trip with the mail coach coming from Independence. The mail party had two new vehicles, which he called "Concord mongrels" because they were "neither carriages, coaches, nor wagons." One was named "Brigham Young" and the other, "Jack Jemison," each drawn by six mules. Besides the driver there was one side rider, with each team to "whip up" the mules. He says that "they were heavily laden, but by feeding on

¹Ibid.
²Ibid.
buckskin, profusely mixed with oaths and curses, dealt out with damnation, they succeeded in reaching Big Blue at the usual time; at which station they found part enough animals for a change, and those in poor condition."

In pushing on towards Kearney they met on the Big Blue River the eastbound mail, which had waited for twelve days at Devil's Gate for an escort of soldiers. The military guard not coming, they had moved on, meeting the military at Deer Creek. The mail parties exchanged mules—the westbound group receiving the better ones—after which they went on to Kearney. Here they secured more mules which the other mail train had left for them and continued on towards Laramie. The general practice was for the men to wait at Kearney until the escort reached them and be accompanied from there. They did not wait, however; E. Snow said they probably made better time without the soldiers. They met Captain Ketchum with the down-coming escort near Chimney Rock on the morning of August 16, 1855. The next day, twenty miles east of Laramie, they met the next eastbound mail, desperately trying to catch the escort which had started two days ahead of them. "On reaching Laramie, Mr. Gilky, conductor of our party, was informed that he would have to wait for the return of Captain Ketchum's escort." Erastus Snow, instead of waiting, went on to Salt Lake.

In September Carrington wrote another editorial on the poor mail service. He said:

1Ibid., Sept. 5, 1855.
Utah is only allowed a Monthly mail from the east, and that at the best is not required to arrive until the end of the month and must leave early on the 1st of the next month, thus, when it even arrives by the allotted time, (which it has not done for nearly a year) compelling correspondents and businessmen to omit all, or nearly all, of their answers until another month, it is virtually a mail once in TWO MONTHS in good weather, and twice, within the past nine months, once in THREE MONTHS.¹

The following table shows the mail arrivals for a fourteen month period in 1854 and 1855:

**TABLE 1**
SCHEDULED ARRIVALS AND ACTUAL²
ARRIVALS OF THE EASTERN MAILS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Date Due</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Date of Arrival</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>Last Day</td>
<td>1854</td>
<td>August</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1854</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August*</td>
<td>Last Day</td>
<td>1854</td>
<td>August</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1854</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September*</td>
<td>Last Day</td>
<td>1854</td>
<td>September</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1854</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October*</td>
<td>Last Day</td>
<td>1854</td>
<td>October</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1854</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Last Day</td>
<td>1854</td>
<td>December</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1854</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>Last Day</td>
<td>1854</td>
<td>February</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1855</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>Last Day</td>
<td>1855</td>
<td>February</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1855</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>Last Day</td>
<td>1855</td>
<td>March</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1855</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>Last Day</td>
<td>1855</td>
<td>May</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1855</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>Last Day</td>
<td>1855</td>
<td>May</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1855</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>Last Day</td>
<td>1855</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1855</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>Last Day</td>
<td>1855</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1855</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>Last Day</td>
<td>1855</td>
<td>August</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1855</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>Last Day</td>
<td>1855</td>
<td>September</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1855</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These are the only mails which arrived within the scheduled time.

¹Ibid., Sept. 12, 1855
²Ibid.
CHAPTER IV

THE TRANSITION PERIOD

The years beginning with 1856 are some of the most exciting ones in the history of the Utah mail. They consist of a great transition period of the mail from its rough beginning to a more stable condition. Between 1856 and 1858 most of the transportation was handled by the Mormons themselves. The division west of Salt Lake City remained in the hands of George Chorpenning until May, 1860. Soon after that the mail service from the banks of the Missouri River to California was as a single route. It was during this time that the service changed from monthly to weekly--then came the famous daily mail from east to west.

It was at the first session of Congress (1856) that Chorpenning's claims for losses incurred by Indian hostilities and extra service performed in the transportation of the mails began. His petition was, for him, favorably handled; for it was during this year that he received an adjustment for his claims. He got not only a $16,000 increase in salary but also his full pay from the temporary trouble during his first contract pertaining to the unfair annulment. One of the things which had encouraged Chorpenning in his struggle to survive his misfortunes and to

1Chorpenning, op. cit., p. 18; U. S. Statutes at Large, XI, p. 521
be successful in his claims, was that the other three big mail contractors had been having similar troubles and claims.\(^1\) Jacob Hall, Independence to Santa Fe; George H. Giddings, Santa Fe to San Antonio; and W. M. F. Magraw were the men who made it easier for Chorpenning to explain his own troubles.

On Saturday, June 14th, there was a public assembly held in Salt Lake City—a protest meeting to correct the deplorable situation with regard to McGraw's service.\(^2\) The people were asked to "express their indignation" so that something might be done to get a more reliable mail service. At this time it was felt that McGraw was soon to lose his contract; but they were unaware that on May 29th, a law was passed which terminated it. The act was as follows:

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That in consideration of Indian disturbances, and the consequent increased expenses and difficulties of carrying the mails along the route number eight thousand nine hundred and eleven, from Independence to Salt Lake, the Postmaster General is hereby authorized and required to pay to William M. F. Magraw, contractor for the mail service aforesaid, the sum of thirty-six thousand dollars, for the year ending on the eighteenth day of August, eighteen hundred and fifty-six; which said allowance shall be in lieu of the present contract price for said service, and shall be paid out of the treasury.

Sec. 2. And be it further enacted, That the Secretary of the Treasury be directed to pay out of the treasure, to the said William M. F. Magraw, seventeen thousand seven hundred and fifty dollars, as full indemnity for his claim.

\(^1\) U. S. Statutes at Large, X, p. 648; X, pp. 95, 448.

for property stolen and destroyed by the Indians, as included in his account filed with the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

Sec. 3. And be it further enacted, that the contract heretofore entered into by said William M. F. Magraw, for the transportation of the mails on said route, be, and the same is, with the assent of said Magraw, annulled from and after the eighteenth day of August, eighteen hundred and fifty-six; and that the Postmaster-General be, and he is hereby, authorized and required to let said contractor for the term of four years from said day, and to advertise for proposals therefore.

Approved, May 29, 1856. 1

The year 1857 begins with a complaint about the plundering of the mails between Salt Lake and its western terminal. The Deseret News relates:

Were the California special mail agent worth a tow string, it would seem to be an easy matter for him to ferret out the plunderers, for it is not presumable that the packages are rifled in the San Francisco post office where papers and periodicals are so cheap and plenty, nor on the mail steamers; this reasonable presumption narrows down the plundering to some place or places between leaving the steamers and San Bernardino, a very short line for the mail agent to overhaul. Will he do it? Yes, if he regards the rights of others and the duties of his office, as much as he does his ease and salary. 2

In February of 1857 the people of Utah Territory had not as yet received official word that the McGraw contract had fallen; however, they did learn through The Mormon (a Church publication in New York City) that it had been annulled. 3 Mr. McGraw merely let his services die out;

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1 U. S. Statutes at Large, XI, p. 448.
he did not officially notify the people that he was through. The ex-contractor was very angry over the circumstances surrounding his relationship with the Mormons. He admitted having personal grievances with them, one of which was Hiram Kimball's underbidding him in his attempt to renew his contract. A. L. Neff has said: "McGraw's 'personal annoyances' against the Mormons consisted first, in Kimball's outbidding him for the mail contract, secondly, in the seizure of his mules for private debt, and thirdly, in the scathing denunciations by Editor Carrington, in the Church organ, the Deseret News, for failure to observe mail schedules."¹

McGraw wrote a letter to the President of the United States² to inform the officials at Washington of the "lawlessness" of the Mormons in Utah. He used almost every conceivable description to cause those citizens to lose favor in the eyes of the government. Drummond, a judge in Utah Territory, aided McGraw in his efforts. Feramorz Little wrote a stinging letter telling of the falsity of the character of the judge and how the people in the States were kindled against the Mormons because of his false "creations!"³ Judge Drummond's wife wrote a letter describing some of the activities of her children, which were in distinct contrast with the scandalistic movements of their father.⁴

² Ibid.
⁴ Ibid., Jan. 20, 1865.
So now the mail is in the hands of the Mormons. They managed it well, but in 1857 they lost it when they got into trouble with the Federal Government--mostly because of the subversive activities of McGraw and Drummond.

John Bernhisel, on October 23, 1856, wrote a letter to John Taylor, informing him that Hiram Kimball had been awarded the mail contract. 1 Brigham Young in a letter to Orson Pratt said:

The contract for carrying the mail from this [Salt Lake] to Independence, United States, has fallen to Hiram Kimball and others, of this City, at $23,000 per annum, for four years; and these gentlemen have so arranged this matter, that it is expected it will be subject to our direction. On the 8th of last month [February] we sent out the first mail eastward, in charge of eight men, W. A. Hickman, conductor; they had much snow to pass over, but we doubt not they have overcome these difficulties, and are now near the states. 2

When an advertisement had been issued in 1856 by the Post Office Department around June, Hiram Kimball of Salt Lake City had made a reply. McGraw had not properly closed his contract; and because of the late mails, Kimball was not aware of the acceptance of his offer. Consequently, he was late in preparing his facilities. Actually, he did not have his first outgoing mail until February 8, 1857. According to the Congressional records, he had performed his services from the 7th of February until the 30th of June. 3

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Fig. 5
HIRAM KIMBALL
Because of the uncertainty of the McGraw contract and a new contractor, the postmaster at Salt Lake in the meantime employed Ferarorz Little and Ephraim K. Hanks to carry a special mail to Independence for $1,500. They were experienced in the mail service, as has been noted earlier; and they knew the mountains in winter. These two men had recently been in the rescue party for the famous snowbound hand-cart company.

They left Salt Lake December 10th with pack and saddle animals and arrived at Devil's Gate the 24th. Here they just learned that James Buchanan had been elected President of the United States. December 31st found them at Fort Laramie. Here, Colonel Hoffman, post commander, gave them permission to replenish their supplies before continuing their journey. On January 2nd they left and traveled fifty miles the first day to Scott's Bluffs. From here on they had a great deal of trouble because of the ice and snow, being unable to make more than eight or ten miles a day. There was something in their favor, however; they found plenty of buffaloes. The wolves would eat whatever they left. They reached Ash Hollow twelve days after leaving Fort Laramie; and on the 31st of January, they arrived at Fort Kearney, where they enjoyed the kind hospitality of Captain Wharton the next day. The following day they headed for Big Blue, which they reached in sixteen days. Messrs. Little

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1Ibid.; Little, op. cit.

and Hanks were in a pitiful state of cold and hunger when they reached Big Blue. They arrived in Independence on the 27th of February, twenty-six days from Fort Kearney, seventy-eight from Salt Lake.\(^1\) This was one of the toughest trips these two men ever made together.

After delivering the mail at Independence, Little went on to Washington to collect their pay. When he arrived there, he discovered the terrible hostilities which were building up against the Mormons in Utah--mainly from Judge Drummond's report. He sent word to the New York \textit{Herald} saying that the accusations against the Mormons were false. After learning of the beginning operations of the B. Y. Express (to be discussed later) under Kimball's contract and that the mail was coming to Independence, he immediately went to Independence. There he met John R. Murdock, who had left Salt Lake early in March with the latest mail. Several tons of mail were waiting to be carried back. Murdock, with two wagon loads, started westward about May 1st; Little, after assembling some equipment, took another load about a month later.\(^2\)

The B. Y. X. Company,\(^3\) the name by which the express firm begun by Brigham Young was commonly called, began in the fall of 1856. Its purpose was to carry across the plains and mountains mail, passengers, and freight. The McGraw and Hockaday contract had expired in

\(^1\)\textit{Little, op. cit.}\n
\(^2\)\textit{Whitney, op. cit., pp. 595-599.}\n
\(^3\)For the story of the B. Y. X. Company see: \textit{Journal History, op. cit.} Mar. 1, p. 93; April 21 and 29; May 1, p. 3; May 29; July 21, pp. 6-14; July 24, pp. 6-8, 1857; \textit{Whitney op. cit., pp. 574-576.}\n
Fig. 6
BRIGHAM YOUNG
the fall and Hiram Kimball had been awarded the new contract for the
mail between Salt Lake City and Independence—not because of any
favoritism, but simply because Kimball underbid all competitors, as
well as previous contractors. The enraged McGraw claimed that there
was not a vestige of law and order in the Territory, no protection of life
and property. Accompanying his letter to the President of the United
States was one from Judge Drummond, whose immoral conduct rendered
him obnoxious to the citizens of the area; both men sought revenge. Their
malicious acts in addition to those of others caused troops to be sent to
Utah in the fall of 1857. This put an end to the B. Y. Express Company.

When Hiram Kimball officially learned of his contract, he
immediately went to Brigham Young, who had organized the express
company. The Kimball contract was to operate in connection with the
B. Y. X. Sites were selected on the route for the location of stations.
Fresh mules were to be placed at these stations along with other facilities
to insure good, responsible service—to be made in twenty days, monthly.
These stations would also serve for emigration companies to the West.
Brigham Young, at the outset, had said that he would stock 300 miles of
the route himself. ¹

At a Conference held in April of 1857, a number of missionaries
were chosen and set apart to assist in the establishment of these stations,
one of which had already been started under the direction of Nathaniel V.
Jones and Orrin Porter Rockwell.

¹Deseret News, op. cit., Feb., 1856.
Mr. Hickman started east with the first mail of the Mormon express company February 8, 1857.  

On March 3rd Mr. Thomas dispatched the second mail for the east; Porter Rockwell carried it to Laramie; from there Nicholas Groesbeck took it to Independence. With him were a Mr. Eldridge (a member of the company), two passengers, eleven employees and thirty-two animals. In Independence, N. Groesbeck was to be in charge of the business of the B. Y. X.

In April there were nineteen missionaries called to serve with the B. Y. X. Company. It was the custom in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to call men, women, and even families for duties pertaining to the Church or the community (which was really the Church). These men called for special work on the new company's project were set apart as any other missionary for the Church. The list is as follows, including those who set them apart:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Missionary</th>
<th>Set Apart By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John D. Park</td>
<td>Wilford Woodruff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander H. Hill</td>
<td>A. P. Rockwell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Dimond</td>
<td>Orson Hyde</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James B. Park</td>
<td>Wilford Woodruff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ira N. Hinkley</td>
<td>A. P. Rockwell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Vance, Jr.</td>
<td>Orson Hyde</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Steward</td>
<td>John Taylor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Missionary

Henry M. McArthur
John S. Houtz
Samuel Green
George A. Williams
William Showel
Llewellyn Hursey
Henry W. Wilson
Orrin S. Lee
Alonzo Clark Merrill
Reuben Gates
George Davidson
John P. Wimmer

Set Apart By

F. D. Richards
John Taylor
O. Hyde
O. Hyde
Joseph Young
O. Hyde
John Taylor
F. D. Richards
A. P. Rockwell
F. D. Richards
A. P. Rockwell
F. D. Richards

These men left Salt Lake on April 21, Tuesday.1 Wilford Woodruff wrote in a letter:

A great many have been called to go on the road between here and the States; some to make settlements, others to engage in the service of the Express and Carrying Co.2

In July, John Taylor wrote a letter, describing a few of the operations of the B. Y. Express:

Deer Creek Station, July 24, 1857

Dear Bro. Appleby,

Dear Sir:

I addressed you a long letter a few days ago which I sent to [the] Laramie P. O., but as there is no certainty of the mail, I embrace an opportunity of sending this by a packer, whom I consider more reliable than the mail on this route, particularly at the present. We are informed here that there is a change of mail, and that it is taken from Mr. Hiram Kimball, under what pretext it is difficult

1Ibid., p. 1.

2Journal History, op. cit., May 1, 1857, p. 3.
for me to determine, for the last mail but one was carried in twenty-three days, and the last mail in eighteen; in much less time than it has ever been done in before. In fact the express company from whom he has obtained assistance are in better position to carry mail, or anything else, than any arrangement that Uncle Sam has ever had, or is ever likely to have for some time to come. They have laid out an immense amount of means and have stations all along the route between Horse Shoe Creek and the valley amply furnished with men, provisions, and animals. There is from eight to ten tons of flour at this station, fifty tons more are expected soon, besides oats and other necessities for the route. There are seventy-six horses and mules belonging to the company, and 123 cattle are employed in building purposes. They have been here about three weeks; they have fenced, broken, and planted 15 acres, made a drain and taken out the water for irrigation, completed a carroll 150 feet square made of logs 12-1/2 feet long, with their ends in the ground and dovetailed together near the top, and a stockyard adjoining of the same dimensions nearly completed. They have also commenced a fort which will also be enclosed with a stockade enclosing 42 houses, the timber for one third of the houses already cut and nearly one third on the ground. The size of the fort is 320 feet square. A portion of the hands are engaged in putting up hay for the winter. The whole plan is admirably laid out, and some of the best workmen engaged in its execution.

The first station that we came to was Horseshoe. There is one commenced at La bonte; there is also one at Devil's Gate, and one at the head of Sweetwater, as well as at Fort Bridger, all having a corresponding amount of animals, etc., with this station; with two or three more stations on the other side of Laramie, of which Genoa will probably be one.

When the above are completed, and even now, we need ask no odds of Uncle Sam in our mail affairs; we can carry all our mails by express, and have them arrive at their destination in from ten to fifteen days less time than the mails can do it under other arrangements. We have been bamboozled long enough with a lot of nincompoops; there has been an eternal cry; but very little wool; it is high time that we attended to our own affairs, and this express will most effectually do it in mail matters, small parcels, and light merchandise. Nathaniel V. Jones is captain of this station. I would here remark that these stations have been got up under the direction of Hyrum [Hiram] Kimball, as mail
contractor, under special act of Congress, for which he was to have certain mail facilities.

Bro. Snow, myself, and two other brethren, left Laramie on horseback in advance of our teams to the Horseshoe Station, where we were kindly received. We were then generously forwarded in a coach and four to this station, where we have been for two days.

A rumor has reached here that Indians occupying forty lodges off the Cheyennes have been killed by Col. Sumner's command; I feel, however, inclined to doubt it. The health of the brethren is good, and we pursue our journey in the morning. The Indians through this district of country are summoned to Rawhide Indian Agency to receive their annuities, and have a talk.

A large body of Indians of the Arraphoe (sic) tribe were encamped here on our arrival, who seem to be very friendly; they are a fine boyd of men; a great many of them are upwards of six feet high, and straight as an arrow. I had a short interview and talk with Black Bear, one of their chiefs. Little Owl, their principal chief, is not here at present. Our company obtained here four fresh animals. Adieu.

As ever, yours, etc.

John Taylor

P. S.--I gave you full particulars of our moving camps in my last. I need not say how advantageous these posts will be to them, as well as to other emigrating parties. With these posts our handcarts from henceforth can move from place to place without any difficulty—stop awhile, or over the season—obtain supplies, and move as circumstances and convenience may dictate. ¹

On May 29th, the first B. Y. Express mail from the East arrived in Salt Lake; this was the first mail to arrive since November 13, 1856. ²

Probably the reason for the delay (the mail carriers had first left Salt Lake in February and theoretically should have returned before the end

¹Ibid., July 24, 1857, p. 6.
²Ibid., p. 7.
of May) was that the postmaster at Independence (M. P. McClanahan) had not yet received word of Kimball's contract and would not release the mail. When the carriers of the Express arrived at Independence in June, the mail was refused to them. After learning that troops had already been sent towards Utah, the carriers immediately started back, gathering on the way some of the property of their express company. The station at Deer Creek was abandoned and the work on the other stations was stopped.¹ There was still some mail activity up to about September 1st, but the company's business was almost a complete loss to its promoters.

July 24, 1857, ten years to the day since the Saints arrived in the Salt Lake Valley, was an unforgettable day for many of the Mormons who had gathered together for their annual celebration. It was on this day that they learned that the United States military troops were coming to Utah--Johnston's Army. They also learned that Brigham Young was being replaced as governor. The following is an excerpt from the Atlantic Monthly:

At Washington, movements of equal importance were taking place. The Postmaster General, in June, annulled the contract held by certain Mormons for the transportation of the monthly mail to Utah, ostensibly on account of non-performance of the service within the stipulated time, but really because he was satisfied that the mails were violated, either en route or after arrival at Salt Lake City. The office of the governor of the Territory was offered by the President to various persons, and finally accepted by Alfred Cumming, a brother of the Cumming of Georgia who fought multitudinous duals with McDuffie of South Carolina, all of which both parties survived. . . .

¹Ibid., pp. 6-8.
The news of the stoppage of the mail reached Salt Lake Valley July 24, an eventful anniversary in the history of Mormonism. It was on the 24th of July 1847, that Brigham Young entered the Valley from the East, and the day had always afterwards been as a holiday of the Church. On this occasion, [1857] the celebration was held in Cottonwood Canon, one of the wildest and grandest gorges among the Wasatch Mountains, opening at the foot of the Twin Peaks, about twenty miles south from Salt Lake City. Tither more than twenty-five thousand people had flocked from the city on the previous day, and prepared to hold their festival under bowers built of fragrant pines and cedars around a little lake far up among the mountains. During the afternoon of the 24th, while they were engaged in music, dancing, and every manner of lively sport, two dusty messengers rode up the canon; bringing from the States the news of the stoppage of the mail and of the approaching march of troops. This mode of announcement was probable preconcerted with Brigham Young, who was undoubtedly aware of the facts on the preceding day. A scene of the maddest confusion ensued, which was heightened by the inflammatory speeches of the Mormon leaders. Young reminded the fanatical throng, that, ten years ago that very day, he had said. "Give us ten years of peace and we will ask no odds of the United States;" and he added, that the ten years had passed, and now they ask no odds—that they constituted henceforth a free and independent state, to be known no longer as Utah, but by their own Mormon name of Deseret. Kimball, the second in authority in the Church, called on the people to adhere to Brigham, as their "prophet, seer, and revelator, priest, governor, and king." The sun set on the first overt act in the rebellion. The fanatics, wending their way back to the city, across the broad plain, in the moonlight, were ready to follow where ever Brigham Young might choose to lead.  

In May of 1859, Brigham Young sent a letter to "Elder Horace S. Eldredge," who had been one of the members of the B. Y. X. Company, containing maps of the mail stations along the route; these maps, which were made for Hiram Little by Deputy Surveyor Thomas D. Brown, were  

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to be placed in the hands of officials at the General Land Office in Washington. The stations included in this group were: Horse Shoe Creek, Nebraska Territory; La Bonte, Nebraska Territory; Deer Creek, Nebraska Territory; Station on the Sweetwater and Devil's Gate. These drawings are to scale and have recorded on them the latitudinal and longitudinal locations.  

Randolph D. Marcy says in The Prairie Traveler about the mail route to Utah: "The track is broad, well worn, and cannot be mistaken. It has received the major part of the Mormon emigration, and was traversed by the army in its march to Utah in 1857."

After the Mormon express company stopped its service, there was, virtually, no more mail service to Utah from the East. The Government's interfering with their peaceful commonwealth and the stoppage of the mails caused great discontent among the people of the Great Basin. Evidently there was much misunderstanding on both sides; Buchanan said later that he had misunderstood the actual situation in the Territory of Utah. After hearing more facts concerning the state of affairs, he wrote a letter of proclamation, pardoning the Mormons. In his proclamation, and in his message to Congress in January, 1859, we find an excellent summary of the President's interpretation of the situation in Utah; he gives reasons for the military actions which took place. Apparently he was under the impression, from reports (such as Magraw's

1 Journal History, loc. cit.
and Drummond's), that there was a great rebellion taking place in the
Far West. However humble he may have been in some of his confessions,
he still was quite firm in his stand that Utah Territory was still United
States property, bought with Treasury money, and that it was under the
direction of the United States. He told Brigham Young that he recognized
the bravery of the western people in standing up against the Government,
but that the United States could wipe out the whole lot in the West if they
would not submit themselves to law and order.¹

Albert Carrington was still editor of the Deseret News in 1858.
He wrote this forceful article, expressing his and many of the people's
feeling concerning the stoppage of the mails:

Suppose that in a time of peace, and against a portion
of American citizens who have committed no crime in law,
the U. S. mail on the main route should be stopped; what
would and should be done to the offender, by the powers
that be? Oh, that depends altogether upon whether Col.
Johnston stops it, or a "Mormon." Should a "Mormon"
commit such a crime, all hell, in the United States, Eng-
land and France, would boil for his extermination, without
hearing or investigation, after the mode adopted by Pres.
Buchanan. Democratic, very, "over the left."²

It was in the summer of 1858 that the troops entered the valley.

They remained there for some time to insure a suppression; at the same
time, Buchanan issued his pardon. This whole affair cost the Federal

¹Deseret News, op. cit., June 16, 1858; Jan. 19, 1859.
²Ibid., April 7, 1858.
Government $15,000,000--called "Buchanan's Blunder." 1 Russell, Majors, and Waddell was the company which supplied the army. The Federal Government had hired this firm to take supplies from Fort Leavenworth to Salt Lake. The trail used is given to us by William Cody (Buffalo Bill). It ran through Kansas northwesternly, crossing the Big Blue River, then along the Little Blue River for sixty miles. Going across some sand-hills to the Platte River, ten miles below old Fort Kearney, the trail ran for eighteen miles to the North Platte River, to the mouth of the Blue Water. This was where General Harney had his great battle in 1855 with the Sioux and Cheyenne Indians. From this point the North Platte was followed, passing Court House Rock, Chimney Rock and Scott's Bluffs, then on to Fort Laramie, crossing the Laramie River. From there the trail led northwesternly to cross the North Platte again, passing Red Buttes. Then it led by Independence Rock, Devil's Gate and up to the Three Crossings of the Sweet Water; thence past Cold Springs, where, three feet under the sod, on the hottest day of the summer, ice can be found. Then to Rocky Ridge, through the Rocky Mountains, and Echo Canyon to the Great Salt Lake Valley it ended. 2 This was essentially the same route used for the mail service from the Missouri River to the Valley.


CHAPTER V
RESUMPTION OF THE MAIL

With the passing of the B. Y. Express and Carrying Company went Utah's reliable mail service. A contract was made with S. B. Miles to carry the mails eastward from Salt Lake from April 1, 1857 to June 30, 1858:

Contract was made with S. B. Miles, at $32,000 per annum, in four-mule coaches, from April 1 to December 1, the remainder of the year on pack mules: to take effect October 1, 1857, to expire June 30, 1858.¹

Though the contract was made, there was a restriction on service to Utah. Even after many differences were settled, the quality of mail carriage was in a degenerate state. There was little regard for the regularity or the promptness of the mail delivery—letters and papers being often lost, mail bags wetted, thrown carelessly to the ground, and sometimes purposely destroyed. As for magazines and newspapers, the Saints felt fortunate if they received them four months after their dates.²

J. M. Hockaday and Company had the contract for the eastern mail from May 1, 1858, to November 1, 1860, at $190,000 per annum.³

¹See footnote 3, p. 53.
³U. S. Senate, Reports, 36th Cong., 1st Sess., No. 259, p. 1. 68
The mail was to be carried in four-horse coaches through each way in eighteen days. Hockaday had his route divided into three main divisions:

(1) St. Joseph to Julesburg, under Charles W. Wiley;

(2) Julesburg to South Pass, under Joseph A. Slade;

(3) South Pass to Salt Lake City, under James E. Bromley.

The business pertaining to John M. Hockaday and Co. will be discussed later.

In this year of 1858, George Chorpenning's contract was still in effect from the agreement made in 1854. In preparing for his third contract with the Post Office Department, he found that it would be more advantageous for him to go to Washington and talk with influential men. In addition to Congressmen and others he talked with President Buchanan, himself.

The last trip made by Chorpenning's company was in June, arriving in Salt Lake the 26th. A new contract had not been advertised for and probably some people wondered about the situation. However, as had been mentioned, Chorpenning had personally been making arrangements in Washington. In hid bid he proposed to run a line from Salt Lake City

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1 Deseret News, op. cit., June 2, 1858.

2 Settle, op. cit., p. 44.

3 Chorpenning, op. cit., p. 23.

4 Deseret News, op. cit., July 7, 1858.
to Placerville by coaches or spring wagons—a weekly service—going through in twelve days at $200,000 per annum. His bid was accepted, but personal requests were made by President Buchanan and Postmaster-General Brown to start off simpler and work up to $190,000 per annum on a weekly basis—twelve day service. In other words a sliding scale program could expand as the need and facilities would rise. Chorpenning said to this:

In accordance with this request and agreement, as will be seen by the proofs, the contract provided for:

First, a semimonthly service each way, through in twenty days, Salt Lake to Placerville in four horse coaches, at $34,400 per annum; through in sixteen days for $30.600 per annum additional; through in fourteen days at $45,000 per annum additional; and through in twelve days for $60,000 per annum additional, which doubled for a weekly service makes the $190,000 agreed upon for the work.¹

In accordance with the proposed agreement the contract started out at $34,400, to commence July 1, 1858 and run to June 30, 1862.² The route chosen was north of the Great Salt Lake, the same as in 1851. The beginning schedule was to leave Salt Lake City on the 5th and 20th of each month and arrive in Placerville, California, in twenty days. The mail would leave Placerville on the 5th and 20th and arrive in Salt Lake in twenty days. For the expedited service the agreement proposed that the mail should leave Salt Lake on the 4th and 19th of each month and arrive in Placerville in sixteen days. The schedule would be the same leaving Placerville.³

²Ibid., p. 58. (appendix)
³Ibid., p. 61. (appendix)
In order to have a satisfactory service, Mr. Chorpenning went to New Hampshire, and stocked his company with the famous Concord Coaches.  

In the fall of 1858, Chorpenning established a pony express which carried over his route President Buchanan's Second Message to Congress. He claims his to be the first pony express rather than the one of 1860-1861.

The San Francisco Bulletin contained several articles commenting on the slow service between Salt Lake and Placerville, one of which states:

It appears that Chorpenning intends to run over the route at a snail's speed until the Department will make him another allowance for shortening the time, when the four hundred mile section now being run with one jaded train, will perhaps, be properly stocked with the great Central route made to compete with the circuitous route from San Francisco through Fort Yuma and El Paso to Memphis.  

That fall, Chorpenning set out to find a route south of the Great Salt Lake, one which would be a more direct route to California. Howard Egan from Utah had found such a route three years earlier; Chorpenning tried this and found it successful. In December the Sacramento Union stated that the contractor was moving his stock and coaches to a new road.

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1Ibid., p. 164. (appendix)  
2Ibid., p. 29.  
4Hafen, op. cit., p. 112.
As has been shown, John M. Hockaday held a contract for the mails between Salt Lake and St. Joseph—a weekly service to be performed in twenty-one days. The original contract paid $190,000 per annum; but it was reduced by the Postmaster General to $130,000, effective July 1, 1895. Russell, Majors, and Waddell bought the company on May 11, 1859—at the price of $50,000.¹ With all the equipment, including: farming utensils, corrals, mules, coaches, wagons, etc., the sale was totaled at $144,000.²

On the 30th of January, 1859, two mail contracts were issued to local Utah bidders—J. M. Bollwinkle and S. M. Blair.³ Mr. Bollwinkle's contract provided for service from Salt Lake to Fillmore. He advertised his service in the Deseret News thus:

**UNITED STATES MAIL COACH**
**For the Capital**

A **Semi-Weekly Line,**
**Between Salt Lake City and Fillmore,**
The Stages Conveying the United States Mails

We will leave Salt Lake City and Fillmore Post Offices every Monday and Thursday, at 7 A.M. and make the trip through in three days.


Those desirous of travelling with safety and speed, to and from the Southern part of the Territory, will do well to avail themselves of this opportunity.

Fare--From Salt Lake City to Provo $3.00
Salt Lake City to Salt Creek $6.00
Salt Lake City to Fillmore City $12.00

Fare to be paid or arranged for at the time of starting.

All baggages or parcels, taken by passengers, charged extra.

John M. Bollwinkel
Contractor

The contract awarded to S. M. Blair provided service between Salt Lake and Alpine City. As Bollwinkel's, his was from February 1, 1959, to June 30, 1862.

Up until the time of the awarding of these two contracts, Utah Territory had been without mail facilities for seven months. Concerning this the Deseret News says:

Notwithstanding the shortness of the time allowed for putting on service, owing to some delay in the transmission of the contracts, we are informed that prompt measures have been taken to commence service on each route at the required time.

Having been without mail facilities in this Territory for the past seven months, except on the route from St. Joseph, Missouri, to Placerville, Cal., our citizens will be pleased with the mail accommodations extended to them in common with other citizens of the Union. Postmaster General A. V. Brown has proved himself more impartial than we had anticipated, and we hasten to make the amende honorable and hereby award full credit to the Postmaster General.²

¹Ibid., Dec. 7, 1859.
²Ibid., Feb. 2, 1859.
A. V. Brown died on March 8, 1859 (9:30 A. M.), and Mr. Holt succeeded him as Postmaster General. This event severely affected Chorpennning in his third and last contract, as we shall later see.

Before concluding the year 1859, there are three essential topics to cover: matters concerning Utah's internal mail service, Horace Greeley's reports on the mail from Missouri to Placerville, and Chorpennning's mail service.

Post offices were established in the following towns in southern Utah Territory:

- Pine Valley (Iron County) - Elisha H. Groves, P. M.
- Harmony (Washington County) - John M. McFarlane, P. M.
- Toquerville (Washington County) - Harrison Pearce, P. M.
- Heberville (Washington County) - George Pectol, P. M.
- Santa Clara (Washington County) - William Crosby, P. M.

As the year 1859 progresses, we find that there is an improvement in the Utah Mail service. More routes are being revived; and by the establishment of more post offices, we can see that more people have access to better communication. For some of the mail schedules within Utah during this period the following will be mentioned—Salt Lake being the starting point:

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1Ibid., April 13, 1859; Aug. 3, 1859.

2Ibid., April 13, 1859.
The Manti Mail—leaves every Thursday at 6 A. M., and arrives at Manti on Saturday by 8 P. M. Returning, leaves Manti on Mondays at 6 A. M. and arrives at Salt Lake City Wednesday by 8 P. M. The Alpine Mail—leaves each Thursday at 6 A. M. and arrives at Alpine City next day. Returning, leaves Alpine City on Fridays at 6 A. M. and arrives at Salt Lake City next day in the evening. The Cedar Valley Mail—leaves every Thursday at 6 A. M., and arrives at Cedar Valley next day by 12 noon. Returning, leaves Cedar Valley on Friday at 2 P. M., and arrives at Salt Lake City next day by 6 P. M. The Southern Mail—leaves Salt Lake City and Fillmore City every Monday and Thursday at 7 A. M. and arrives each Wednesday and Saturday evening. The Northern Mail—leaves each Monday and Thursday at 6 A. M. and arrives at Brigham City the next day by 12 noon. Returning, leaves Brigham City each Tuesday and Friday at 2 P. M., and arrives at Salt Lake City next day by 6 P. M.

The mail to the East and the West, outside of the Territory:

The Eastern Mail—leaves Salt Lake City and St. Joseph, Mo., every Saturday at 8 A. M. and makes the trip each way (or should) in 22 days. The California Mail—leaves Salt Lake City every Monday and Placerville every Saturday at 8 A. M. and always makes the trip within scheduled time, 16 days.1

Horace Greeley, editor of the New York Tribune, made a trip with the mails during the summer of 1859. As he would make his stops, he would write letters back to the paper in New York and describe the things which he observed. From Camp Floyd, southeast of Salt Lake City, he wrote:

1Ibid., April 6, 1859.
The mail from Missouri to Salt Lake has hitherto been carried weekly in good six-mule wagons; the contract time being twenty-two days. The importance of frequent and regular communication with head-quarters, at least so long as a large army is retained here at a heavy extra cost, and because of some presumed public necessity is evident. Yet the new Postmaster-General has cut down the mail service on this important central route from weekly to semi-monthly. But the contractors, who are obliged to run their stages weekly because of their passenger business and because they have to keep their stock and pay their men, whether they work or play, find that they cannot carry the mail every other week so cheaply as they can every week. For instance, as mail from the states now often consists of twelve to sixteen heavy sacks (most of them filled with franked documents), weighing as many hundred pounds. Double this, and no six-mule team would draw it at the requisite pace, and no mail-wagon stand the jerks and jolts of an unmade road. So they say, "please let us carry the mail weekly, though you only pay us for carrying it semi-monthly." But no! this is strictly forbidden! The postmaster at Salt Lake has express written orders to refuse it, and of course he at St. Joseph also. And thus all this central region, embracing at least a dozen important military posts, and countless Indian agencies, is reduced to a semi-monthly mail-service, though the contractor would gladly make it weekly at the same price! 1

Mr. Greeley has mentioned one of the very serious problems in the postal service, which has affected all the contractors on the central overland route. Because the Post Office Department would not let George Chorpenning run the weekly service, he almost became bankrupt.

In his travel, Mr. Greeley vividly described the mail route from Missouri to California. He went over Chorpenning's new mail route, south of the

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Great Salt Lake. This route was chosen for a faster service. There is not space here to go into the descriptions. They may be read in his An Overland Journey from New York to San Francisco in the Summer of 1859.  

Before leaving the year 1859, a discussion of George Chorpenning's activities as a mail contractor is in order. As has been said before, he had his contract renewed in 1858. Before his contract actually began (July 1st), the service was ordered to be on a weekly basis, raising his per annum salary from $34,400 (semi-monthly basis) to $130,000. The new schedule of the weekly sixteen day run continued until about April of 1859. At that time the service was reduced to a semi-monthly service. The following is a letter written to Chorpenning concerning the matter:

Post Office Department  
Contract Office, 8th April 1859.

Sir: Owing to the financial pressure upon this Department, resulting from the failure on the part of Congress at its late session to pass the Post Office appropriation bills, it becomes necessary, in the opinion of the Postmaster General, to curtail service. He orders that the trips on route 12,801, Salt Lake City to Placerville, be reduced to semi-monthly from the 1st of July next.

Be pleased to suggest a schedule for the reduced service.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

William H. Dundas  
Second Assis. P. M. Gen'l.  

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1Ibid., pp. 258-259.

2Chorpenning, op. cit., p. 31.
This angered Chorpenning tremendously. He had spent out of his own business funds about $200,000 for improvements on the route.\(^1\) The Concord Coaches, which he had bought in 1858, when his service was put on a weekly basis, would practically go to waste on the curtailed service; and he was nearly bankrupt.

A short time before Postmaster General Brown died, he had agreed with Chorpenning to let the mail run on a twelve day schedule.\(^2\) This would have given him his $190,000 per annum. He had set up his business to operate on such a schedule, putting up a tremendous sum of money. When he got the letter from the Department advising him to cut his services to semi-monthly, there could be no words to describe his anxiety.

On occasions during the latter part of 1859, there were frequent delays in the mails. These were mostly due to trouble from the Indians. At this time the route was the short one through Camp Floyd (south of the Lake) and Carson Valley to Placerville. An explanation as to why there had been delays in the mail was received by the *Deseret News* from one of Chorpenning's agents. It reads:

> Dear Sir:—You have doubtless, ere this, been informed of the attachment which has been placed, by certain parties, upon the property of [the] western division of this line, and by virtue of which they took all the stock from that end of the road, severely crippling the business of the route for a short time. Captain Egan, however, with his usual energy and

\(^1\)Ibid., p. 28.

\(^2\)Ibid., p. 30.
promptitude, so soon as he learned of it, hastened to make his arrangements for the transportation of the mail the whole distance from Salt Lake City to Placerville, which he now has completed and is prepared to carry the mails each way with the usual regularity and dispatch for which this line has been noted.

The mail is now carried on the new route, which avoids the Humbolt altogether and Mr. E. has just taken out the first coach upon it, going as far as the last station on this division of the route, making over half the distance from Salt Lake City to Placerville within five days. He has sent an agent to Placerville, who will call for the mail regularly, and if it is not delivered in Salt Lake City as punctually as heretofore, it will be owing its non-deliverance to Geo. Chorpennings's authorized agent, or to the malicious and unlawful interference of certain parties at that end of the route.

The whole business connected with this attachment has been conducted very strangely and mysteriously and, although it is not my province to indulge in personalities, yet, from all the information I can gather, I cannot but come to the conclusion that the whole affair was hatched up by the enemies of the present contractor, in order to get the contract out of his hands. I have been informed by responsible parties, that there has been sufficient means forwarded to that end of the road to liquidate the whole of the debts on the entire route, had it been judiciously and correctly appropriated.

A similar attempt was made some years ago, when the contract was only monthly and, I am informed by some of the same parties concerned in this after carrying two mails, however, the contract was restored to Geo. Chorpennings, together with some sixty thousand dollars damages.

I presume everything will go on smoothly after this, and the mails will arrive and depart with their general regularity.

Mr. Robert Clift, one of the Sub-agents on this route, has been missing for some three or four weeks. Fears are entertained that foul play has been used with regard to him. We are intituting (sic) a search for him, though the prospect of finding him is extremely slight.

Sirius

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In a follow-up letter there was an explanation concerning "Mr. Clift," mentioned in the November letter. Robert Clift was a sub-agent carrying the mail to Salt Lake. He was one evening very hungry and stopped at an Indian camp to ask for food. He was refused anything to eat but was allowed to sleep there. During the night he was stabbed and his throat was slit from ear to ear. This story was got from an investigation with the Piute and Shoshone Indians. Each charged the other with guilt of the misdeed. 1

In February, 1860, it was announced that the bi-weekly mail service from St. Joseph to California was changed to a weekly schedule. It was an "act of service to the people" without a raise in compensation to the contractors. Since July of 1859, it had been a weekly service. 2 To Placerville by way of Salt Lake City, Camp Floyd, Carson City, Genoa, and Cary's Mill was the best route thus far in the mail service mainly because of the distance involved. Previously, the route north of the Great Salt Lake was preferred by travelers because of the plenitude of grass and water; and there were only two short tracts of desert land to deal with. 3 But now since it could be traversed in such a short time (twelve days), it was more practical to use the central route.

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1Ibid., Dec. 21, 1859.
2Ibid., Feb. 22, 1860.
By May the mail service was somewhat unreliable. There was an air of disgust expressed in the *Deseret News* of May 2nd, as it stated that because the government was not catering to the needs of the people not being strict with the contractors, the service was rapidly getting poorer. It was at this time (May 11, 1860) that Chorpenning's contract was annulled by the Postmaster General.¹

The contract was awarded to the C. O. C. & P. P. Express Company² This company now had a monopoly on the entire central overland mail.³

Thus, we find that as the year 1860 turns into 1861, this setup exists with the mails from Missouri to California (which of course provided service to Utah): Russell, Majors, and Waddell's company has the contract for the distance of the whole central overland route from the Missouri River to California.

¹Chorpenning, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-34.

²The official name of the company was the abbreviated form given above. The full name of the company before the abbreviation was adopted was the Central Overland California and Pike's Peak Express Company. Usually the short, official title will be used throughout this thesis. See Hungerford, *op. cit.*, p. 76 and Frederick, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

Fig. 7
CHORPENNING'S MAIL ROUTES
CHAPTER VI

THE PONY EXPRESS AND TELEGRAPH

The Pony Express has come to be one of the great romances in the history of the West. One of the strange features regarding this romance is that even though it is so very prominent in history, it lasted only about a year and a half. The thrilling stories of the Express riders will long remain in the minds of Americans. Though there is much romance and adventure attached to this episode in the history of the mail service, the riders went through experiences which were threatening to their lives. We read from Charles Mabey's book, The Pony Express:

Two thirds of the route was infested by roving bands of Indians, who repeatedly attacked and destroyed the posts and murdered the keepers. These, because they had to remain on the spot assigned to them, were in far greater peril than the messengers themselves. Bad as were conditions over most of Wyoming and the country immediately east, the dangers in Nevada and western Utah were still more hazardous. At one time between seven and eight thousand Pah-Utes under Chief Winnemucca were on the war path. These made life on the trail a continuous hell. Added to this the route lay over a region of sage brush, juniper, shade scale and deserts, leprous with alkali, or dotted with shifting sand dunes, home of the lizard, the rattlesnake and the little brown rat. It will thus be seen that the real trials of the expressman began after he left Salt Lake City. ¹

¹Charles R. Mabey, The Pony Express, (Salt Lake City: The Beverly Craftsmen, 1940), p. 11.
It was in 1860 that the superior ponies began their historic runs from St. Joseph, Missouri, to Sacramento, California—a distance of about 1966 miles. In the Missouri Republican, issue of March 20, 1860, is found this article:

To San Francisco in Eight Days, By the Central Overland California and Pike's Peak Express Co.

The first courier of the Pony Express will leave the Missouri River on Tuesday, April 3, at 5 o'clock p.m. and will run regularly weekly thereafter, carrying a letter mail only. The point of departure on the Missouri River will be in telegraphic connection with the East and will be announced in due time.

Telegraphic messages from all parts of the United States and Canada in connection with the point of departure will be received up to 5 o'clock p.m. of the day leaving, and transmitted over the Placerville and St. Joseph telegraph wire to San Francisco and intermediate points, by the connecting express in eight days.

The letter mail will be delivered in San Francisco in ten days from the departure of the express. The express passes through Forts Kearney, Laramie, and Bridger, Great Salt Lake City, Camp Floyd, Carson City, the Washoe Silver Mines, Placerville, and Sacramento.

Letters from Oregon, Washington Territory, British Columbia, the Pacific Mexican ports, Russian Possessions, Sandwich Islands, China, Japan, and India will be mailed in San Francisco.

Special messengers, bearers of letters to connect with the express of the 3rd of April, will receive communications for the courier of that day at No. 481 Tenth Street, Washington City, up to 2:45 p.m. on Friday, March 30, and in New York at the office of J. B. Simpson, Room No. 8, Continental Bank Building, Nassau Street, up to 6:30 a.m. of March 31.

Full particulars can be obtained on application at the above place and agents of the company.

W. H. Russell, President
The Deseret News had an interesting and informative article regarding the Pony Express' coming through Salt Lake—in addition to comments of other features of the first run:

The Pony Express

The first Pony Express from the West left Sacramento City, Cal., at 12 p.m., on the night of the 3d inst., and arrived in this city at 11:45 p.m. of the 7th, inside of prospectus time. The roads were heavy and the weather stormy. The last 75 miles was made in 5 hours, 15 minutes, in a heavy rain.

The Express from the East left St. Joseph, Missouri, at 6:30 p.m. on the evening of the 3d and arrived in this city at 6:25 p.m. on the evening of the 9th. The difference in time between St. Joseph and this city is something near 1 hr. and 15 minutes, bringing us within 6 days communication with the frontier, and 7 days from Washington—a result which we Utonians, accustomed to receive news three months after date, can well appreciate.

Much credit is due the enterprising and persevering originators of this enterprise and, although a telegraph is very desirable, we feel well satisfied with this achievement for the present.

The weather has been disagreeable and stormy for the past week and in every way calculated to retard the operations of the company, and we are informed the express eastward from this place was five hours in going to Snyder's Mill, a distance of twenty-five miles.

We are indebted to Mr. W. H. Russell for a copy of the St. Joseph Daily Gazette, printed expressly for Utah and California, with dates from Washington and New York to the evening of the 2d, and from St. Joseph to 6 p.m. of the 3d instant.

The probability is, the express will be a little behind time in reaching Sacramento this trip, but when the weather becomes settled, and the roads good, we have no doubt they will be able to make the trip in less than 10 days.¹

¹Deseret News, op. cit., April 11, 1860.
The first mail from the East consisted of eighty-five pieces of mail; included in this run was a special message of congratulations from President Buchanan, telegraphed from Washington to St. Joseph. The riders from the West carried seventy-five pieces of mail. Along this course there were only four military posts.1

The combined weight of the bridle, saddle, and bags did not exceed 14 pounds. Seldom did the mail exceed about 15 pounds and was never to exceed 20 pounds. The average weight of the riders was 125 pounds, never weighing more than 135 pounds. They carried for protection two revolvers and a sheath knife. The horses were about "14 hands high" and weighed around 900 pounds.

The station keepers had the duties of watching for incoming riders and having the horses saddled and ready to go one half hour before schedule time. In the daytime the keeper would be warned of the approach by clouds of dust; at night, a series of whoops proved sufficient.

The ponies (really horses) were far superior to Indian ponies and could outdistance them comparatively easily; for self-preservation, the riders had to continuously ride fast. The Indians, of course, had little or no interest in the mail; for they wanted the good horses.

The patrons of the Pony Express were mainly the government, business men, newspaper companies, etc.2

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1 Kate Carter, Riders of the Pony Express, (3rd printing; Salt Lake City: Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, 1952), p. 8.

2 Ibid., pp. 8-9.
The company (Russell, Majors, and Waddell) bought 500 of the best horses that it could find and employed over 200 men, 80 of the lightest ones for riders.\(^1\) These men, on their half-breed California horses, were allowed only two minutes at each station for changing mails and horses.\(^2\)

A **mochilla** was a leather covering which went over the saddle.

Upon arriving at stations the rider grabbed off the mochilla, in the pockets of which was the locked mail, and threw it over the saddle of the fresh horse waiting for him. The mochilla fitted over the horn and cantle of the saddle and he sat on it. The mochilla, and a five cylinder, colt revolver, with 3-1/2 or 4-inch barrel, or cap and ball design, were the only extra weight he carried. J. M. Standish, critic of old guns, says the boys usually had an extra cylinder or two in their pockets with a coating of paraffin on the percussion caps, and bullets to prevent water-wetting in case of a river ducking, or rain storm. All side arms were on the rider, and never attached to the mochilla as some artists have pictured them. If a horse was shot from under the rider by Indians or otherwise, he lost his horse, side arms fastened to the mochilla would do him no good.\(^3\)

The mochilla had four **cantinas** or pockets. Three of them were locked and only opened at military posts or Salt Lake City. The fourth


\(^2\)Alexander Majors, Seventy Years on the Frontier, (Denver: The Western Miner and Financier, 1893), p. 175.

\(^3\)Herb S. Hamlin, ed., The Pony Express, (Placerville, California), XI, No. 1, June, 1944, p. 10.
contained "way mail" and a time slip, recording the arrivals and de-
partures of each rider. For this fourth cantina there was a key at every
station.¹

In demonstration of the practicability of the mochilla, here is an
interesting experience:

"The prophecy of the Salt Lake City editor that the
Pony Express would fall behind schedule on its first trip
seemed to be justified by the weather conditions that pre-
vailed in California and across the Great Salt Lake Basin
to Salt Lake City and beyond. But, after the east-bound
mail had crossed South Pass, conditions became better.
Across Wyoming the riders made better than schedule
time, in compensation for the precious minutes lost in
the heavy weather between Salt Lake City and Fort Bridger.

Down the Sweetwater, toward the valley of the Platte,
the riders raced, with time still to be made up when Fort
Laramie was reached. At Julesburg there was a narrow
escape from disaster. The waters of the Platte were high
at the crossing which had trapped many a California bound
emigrant. The rider, whose name is not known, spurred
his horse into the stream. The animal was swept off its
feet, and horse and rider drifted downstream into some
quicksands. Seizing the mochila, with the mail, the rider
swam and crawled to safety. Leaving his horse to be
rescued by the onlookers who had gathered to speed the
mail, the rider commandeered a mount and rode to the
relay station, where the mochila was passed on to the
next courier."²

For sending a letter by Pony Express, it cost at first $5.00 for
each half ounce; later the government reduced it to $1.00. Each letter
was on tissue paper and pencil-rolled for economy of weight and space.³

¹Hungerford, op. cit., p. 80.
1932), p. 133.
³Carter, op. cit., p. 9; Majors, op. cit., p. 175.
Levi Edgar Young said in his book, *Founding of Utah*, that some letters have been known to cost $27.50—sent from St. Joseph to San Francisco. Riders were paid on the average of $100 to $150 a month. Station men and their assistants received from $50 to $100 a month.¹

Mail from the East for the Pony Express was sent to St. Joseph by the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad Company (later the Burlington Railroad).²

This rail service has a most interesting story attached to it. At the beginning of the Pony Express era, the government had made no contract with any railroad to transport the mail to St. Joseph. Until 1860 the mail had always gone up the Missouri River. When it was time for the Pony Express to begin, the management of the new Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad had to prove their ability to handle this mail. The coming event of the feat of the railroad was well known around the area and people observed its beginning with great anticipation. All trains were ordered off the line to make way for the special one. The engine, a woodburner, was named the Missouri. Its description is: "There was scroll-work about the headlight, bell and drivers, and all the steel and brass parts were polished till they resembled a looking glass." (quoted from the New York Sun. A daring engineer was selected to make the run

¹Ibid.

²Hamlin, *op. cit.*, p. 11.
to St. Joseph from Hannibal; it was necessary to run the train fast and without accident, such as blowing up. Thousands of people were waiting for the train and as it came in, loud cheers rang out. From then on there were two principle sources of mail to St. Joseph to go over the Pony Express: the telegraph and the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad Company.

Alexander Majors had a definite policy of conduct for his employees. He forbade his drivers and other employees to gamble, drink, or to travel on Sundays. He desired that they should puruse the Bible and he distributed copies of it gratis. His efforts seemed to have been somewhat in vain, however; for Mr. Burton said in his City of the Saints that "I scarcely saw a sober driver; profanity was extremely heavy; many owned up to murder. . .".

The code of obligation to which each employee was required to swear was:

I, __________, do hereby solemnly swear, before the great and Living God, that during my engagement, and while I am in the employ of Russell, Majors and Waddell, that I will under no circumstances use profane language; that I will drink no intoxicating liquors of any kind; that I will not quarrel or fight with any other employee of the firm and that in every respect I will conduct myself honestly, be faithful to my duties, and so direct all my acts as will win the confidence and esteem of my employers, so help me God.

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1 Chapman, op. cit., pp. 102-104.


Buffalo Bill said of the oath: "This oath was the creation of Mr. Majors, who was a very pious and rigid disciplinarian; he tried hard to enforce it, but how great was his failure it is needless to say. It would have been equally profitable had the old gentleman read the riot act to a herd of stampeded buffaloes. And he believes it himself now."¹

One of the most noted and daring of the Pony Express Riders was William F. Cody, who later became known as "Buffalo Bill." His route was east of Salt Lake City between Red Buttes and Three Crossings—a distance of 116 miles. It was long, dangerous, and lonely. His trail crossed the North Platte River where it was one half mile wide, generally shallow, but in some places twelve feet deep. According to his schedule he had to travel at the rate of fifteen miles per hour—including meals, detours for safety, and changes of horses. He was forced through unfortunate circumstances to make a single ride of 384 miles on one occasion, one of the longest and best ridden express journeys ever made.²

Between Fort Bridger and Salt Lake and through all Utah and part of Nevada the riders were nearly all Mormon boys. One of them, Thomas Owen King, started from Fort Bridger and ended his route at Echo Canyon. On his first trip his horse stumbled, throwing rider and mochilla to the ground. The mochilla went over a cliff before he could

¹Ibid.
²Majors, op. cit., pp. 176-177.
reach it; he finally recovered it and made his trip in schedule time. 1

Many times the riders would go to sleep in the saddle. Of this
"Tom" King said:

"Many a time I went to sleep in the saddle, and the pony would keep up his pace. Other riders would sleep, also. I remember once I came into Bear River after a night ride of eighty miles from Salt Lake, and reported to the station keeper that I had not passed Henry Worley, who was riding in the opposite direction. Worley had reported the same thing about me at the other station. We had both been so sound asleep in our saddles that we did not know when we passed each other. The ponies, when they learned what was expected of them, would keep up the pace from one end of a run to the other."

William F. Fisher (known as "Billy" on the Pony Express) was another of the riders in the Utah Territory. He was married to "Linny" by President Brigham Young in the old Endowment House in Salt Lake in January, 1861--the temple had not yet been built. 2 Here is a letter which he wrote to his girl about 6 months before they were married:

Ruby Valley, June 17, '60

My dear Linny, --

It is with unspeakable pleasure that I sit down for a few minutes, to pen a few lines, to one I love best on earth. I received your kind and welcome letter dated June 4th/60 and was very glad to hear that I left you well, as this leaves me quite well at the present and I hope it will find you in good health and spirits. Dear Linny you speak of being very lonesome and sad while I am out here, as you say, exposed to so many dangers which is so, but believe Dear Girl I will try and take care of myself if it is only for your

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1 Chapman, op. cit., p. 235.

2 Hamlin, op. cit., No. 5, Oct., 1944, p. 3.
MORMON RIDER
WILLIAM F. (BILLY) FISHER

Rider of the Pony Express from April to July, 1860, from Ruby Valley, Nevada, east to Egan Canyon, Nevada. He then was transferred to the run from Salt Lake City west to Faust Station in Rush Valley, Utah. The first mail that had left San Francisco on the afternoon of April 3rd, 1860, arrived at Ruby Valley Station, Nevada, early on the morning of the 6th when "Billy" Fisher received it and bounded east. In July 1860, during the Goshute Indian uprising, 20-year-old "Billy" rode 300 miles, from Ruby Valley to Salt Lake, constituting one of the longest rides made in the history of the Pony Express. $75.00 per month was his salary for this dangerous work. His brother, John Fisher, also rode on the Pony Express, as well as his two brothers-in-law, "Rast" Egan and Howard Egan, Jr. All four of them were known as "THE HARD RIDING MORMONS," and surely old Zion should be proud of their records. After the Pony Express days were done "Billy" worked on a freight line between Salt Lake and Carson City. He cooked supper for Horace Greeley when the New York Tribune editor was on his western trek.

Fig. 8
"BILLY" FISHER
sake, so cheer up Linny I expect to be with you before many months, but how long I shall stay, (it will all be owing to circumstances) I do not know, but if you will love me then, I can tell better. I expect you think I am talking nonsense, Lin, well, Perhaps I am. I received a letter from Ras Egan last night, and he told me you were well. When you write to me Lin give your letters to Ras and he will send them to me by express. Howard is at Rush Valley now. I got a letter from his last night and he said the letter I wrote to you by the last mail enclosed in his he did not get, so I do not know where it went to. I am very sorry you did not get it. The Indians are raising the devil out here but I think they will soon stop as the troops have come out to our assistance. Well Linny I think I have written enough for the present, as I am very tired and sleepy, for I came in here at sunrise this morning after riding with the express all night. I can't think of any news of importance to tell you, so goodbye for the present.

I remain ever,
Your Devoted
William

To Miss M. Van Etten
G. S. L. City U. T.

P. S. Dear Linny, will you ever send me out your likeness in miniature. I think if you knew how much I wanted it you would send it to me.¹

This touching letter demonstrates several things of importance.

Evidently riders must have helped each other in certain matters, such as the one in this case: "Ras" carried a private letter for Billy Fisher.

Probably many times we have the idea that these riders were rough men, dependable and without heart. But we can see a certain warm feeling in this letter—the love of a young fellow (twenty-one years old) for his girl, desiring to be home.

¹Ibid.
Another rider tells us of some hardships encountered during his affiliation with the Express. He relates an experience which he says that he would never want to repeat again. He was one of the first, because we find that he aided in setting up stations for the route. Jay G. Kelley says:

Yes, I was a pony express rider in 1860, and went out with Bol Roberts (one of the best men that ever lived), and I tell you it was no picnic. No amount of money could tempt me to repeat my experience of those days. To begin with, we had to build willow roads (corduroy fashion) across many places along the Carson River, carrying bundles of willows two and three hundred yards in our arms, while the mosquitoes were so thick it was difficult to discern whether a man was white or black, so thickly were they piled on his neck, face, and hands.

Arriving at the Sink of the Carson River, we began the erection of a fort to protect us from the Indians. As there were no rocks or logs in that vicinity, the fort was built of adobes, made from the mud on the shores of the lake. To mix this mud and get it the proper consistency to mold into adobes (dried brick), we tramped all day in it in our bare feet. This we did for a week or more, and the mud being strongly impregnated with alkali (carbonate of soda), you can imagine the condition of our feet. They were much swollen, and resembled hams. Before that time I wore No. 6 boots, but ever since then No. 9's fit me snugly. ¹

Kelley then weighed around one hundred pounds. Thirty years later he weighed 230 pounds.

Another rider, Robert H. "Pony Bob" Haslam, as stated by Alexander Majors in his *Seventy Years on the Frontier*, tells of a very interesting observation prominent among the Express riders. He said

¹Majors, *op. cit.*, pp. 188-189.
that as he would ride along, he would watch his horse's ears. They were
signals for danger in an Indian country.¹

One of the very prominent riders of the famed Pony Express from
the Territory of Utah was Major Howard Egan. However, he was an
officer of the Pony Express line west of Salt Lake, and probably not one
of the regular riders. His first ride, as recorded by his son, Howard
R., is told thus:

When all was supposed to be ready and the time figured out when the first Express should arrive in Salt
Lake City from the east, they thought that, on account of the level country to run over, that they would be able
to make better time on the eastern division than the western from Salt Lake to California. Therefore, the
two riders that were to run between Salt Lake and Rush Valley were kept at the city.

Father alone of all the officers of the line thought his boys would make as good a record as the best and, if
they did, there would be no rider at Rush Valley to carry the Express on to the city. So to be on the safe side Father
went himself to Rush Valley. And sure enough his boys delivered the goods as he expected, and he started on his
first ride. It was a stormy afternoon, but all went well till on the "home stretch."

The pony on this run was a very swift, fiery and fractious animal. The night was so dark that it was im-
possible to see the road, and there was a strong wind blowing from the north, carrying a sleet that cut the face
while trying to look ahead. But as long as he could hear the pony's feet pounding the road, he sent him ahead at
full speed.

All went well, but when he got to Mill Creek, that was covered by a plank bridge, he heard the pony's feet
strike the bridge and the next instant pony and rider landed in the creek, which wet Father above the knees,
but the next instant, with one spring, the little brute was out and pounding the road again and very soon put the

¹Ibid., p. 179.
surprise on the knowing ones. And here let me say, it was a very long time before the regular riders came up to the time made on this first trip, if they ever did.¹

Major Egan was not only connected with the Pony Express but he was also an associate with George Chorpenning. It was he who was one of the "trail blazers" over the central route for Chorpenning's mail coach line between Salt Lake and Sacramento in the middle 1850's. He worked for Ben Holladay on the western division when Chorpenning left the service in 1860.² In fact, he was superintendent on the Overland Mail Line until May 10, 1869--the day that the last spike was driven on the transcontinental railroad.³ Apparently Egan was a very faithful and dependable employee to all of the mail contractors through the years.

He was devoted to the Latter-day Saints Church; one of his sons, Richard Erastus Egan, another Pony Express rider, filled a mission in England and was president of the Birmingham Conference there. Later he became a Bishop in Bountiful, Utah.⁴ On one ride his horse stepped in a hole and fell, breaking its neck. He stripped off the mochilla and trotted five miles to Camp Floyd.⁵

¹Egan, op. cit., pp. 198-200.
²Ibid., p. 213.
³Ibid., p. 201.
⁴Ibid., p. 214-215.
⁵Chapman, loc. cit.
William Streeper, it is said, survived all the other Utah Pony
Express riders—passing away in October, 1930, at Centerville, Utah.
His daughter, Erma, still lives there.¹

From Salt Lake City to the present western border of Utah there
were seventeen Express stations. They were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Miles</th>
<th>Station</th>
<th>Miles</th>
<th>Station</th>
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<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Salt Lake City</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>River Bed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Traveler's Rest</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Dug Way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Rockwell's</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Black Rock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Dug out, Joe's</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Fish Springs</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Fort Crittenden</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Boyd's</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Pass (East Rush Valley)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Willow Springs</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Rush Valley (5 mile F')</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Canyon Station</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Faust</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Point Lookout</td>
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These stations followed the Egan Trail or the Overland Mail Line as
finally selected.

The stations east of Salt Lake were fewer in number if we con-
sider only those in Utah Territory. In going from Salt Lake to Fort
Laramie, we find these:

Salt Lake City  Castle Rock
Mountain Dell  Fort Bridger
Bauchmann's  South Pass
Dixie Creek  Rocky Mountains
Weber Station  Fort Laramie³

(Mouth of Echo Canyon)
Brimville Emergency Station

¹Carter, _op. cit._, p. 27

²Ibid., p. 37; Egan, _op. cit._, p. 197.

³Carter, _op. cit._, p. 37.
In March of 1861 (took over in May), Wells Fargo and Company purchased the Pony Express. Russell, Majors, and Waddell's firm, the Central Overland California and Pike's Peak Express Company, was busy with the regular stage coach mails; the Pony Express was not paying well; in fact, the business was losing money for its owners. The losses on this enterprise for the sixteen months operation are recorded as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditures</th>
<th>$700,000</th>
<th>Outgo</th>
<th>Equipment</th>
<th>$100,000</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Receipts</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>480,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deficit</td>
<td>200,000</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(per month 30,000)</td>
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<td>75,000</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Sunury Items</td>
<td>45,000</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

On October 24, 1861, the wires of the east and west telegraphs were connected at Salt Lake City. This officially put an end to the Pony Express; however, it did continue for a short time after this date.

Of the Utah riders of the P. Express we read:

It is hard to tell where the Utah riders were that solemn day that a single strand of wire was connected in Salt Lake City. It is safe to say they were not in celebration. They were probably "holed in" at the stations petting their horses, giving them a last fond hug around the front quarters, or currying down their manes, before wandering off in search of the solitude in new jobs. Amongst them were Billy Fisher, and his brother John Fisher; Howard Egan, and his brother Ross Egan; Tom King, and Henry Worley; Nick Wilson and Joe Wintle; Monty Maze and G. G. Sangiovani, and George Leonard and Mike Whelan.

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1 Neff, op. cit., p. 728; Chapman, op. cit., pp. 268, 288.
2 Hafen and Rister, op. cit., 464; Writers' Program, op. cit., p.128.
3 Hamlin, op. cit., p. 8.
Fig. 9
PONY EXPRESS ROUTE
The first message which went over the telegraph was from Brigham Young. It was dated October 18, 1861. The Eastern line's reaching Salt Lake City before the other accounted for its being sent before the final connection was made. It read: "Utah has not seceded, but is firm for the Constitution and laws of our once happy country."¹

During the first few months of the telegraph, it cost $7.40 for a ten-word message to New York.²

Of Brigham Young and the Telegraph we read:

Modern Moses of the 19th Century who led his followers out of Navou [Nauvoo], Illinois, to Winter Quarters, Nebraska, (3 miles N. of Omaha) 1845, leaving in the Spring of 1847 for the promised land, -- a new land of Canaan, known as Zion, where they arrived on July 24th of that year. This man, whom no one can deny as a great leader, was born at Whitingham, Vermont, June 1st, 1801, and died suddenly on August 29, 1877 in Salt Lake City.

In 1861 he was present at 63 So. Main Street when Telegraphic communication was made across the continent October 24th. Six days before, on the 18th, Brigham Young sent the first message from Salt Lake City to Jeptha Wade at Cleveland, Ohio, pledging loyalty of his church members to the Union. The energetic leader furnished Mormon help under contract to cut telegraph poles, and also arranged to connect his Deseret Telegraph Co. lines, yet to be built, with the main line. No state in the West progressed faster with the telegraph than did Utah under Brigham Young.³

In 1865 there was a special meeting held in Salt Lake. It was on April 10th that the decision was made to erect a telegraph line through

¹Young, op. cit., p. 406.
²Ibid.
³Hamlin, op. cit., p. 4.
the southern settlements of Utah Territory. A letter from Samuel W. Richards (December 3, 1865) to a friend in England states:

Public Enterprise in Utah is active. There is now being surveyed, and the poles and materials being delivered upon the line, for a telegraph line through the entire route of settlements in this territory, from north to south, a distance of about 500 miles. Its advantages are obvious, and only in keeping with the general progress of the day in this country.

The material and cost was supplied by the people of Utah Territory. Naturally, Utah men were sought after for the operation of this new enterprise and there was advertised for men from each community to come to Salt Lake City for the purpose of going to a telegraph school. Levi Edgar Young records the advertisement:

Where there is a Telegraph station established along the line, there will be one or two operators needed, and every settlement that wishes to have a station, should select one or two of its most suitable young men, and send them to this city this winter with sufficient means, to go to school to learn the art of telegraphy.

In January 1867, the line was opened to St. George. During the same year it was extended into Idaho.

On January 13, 1869, there was a report concerning a recommendation by the Postmaster General. He suggested that the postal and

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1 Ibid.
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid., p. 407.
4 Ibid., Writers' Program, loc. cit.
the telegraph systems unite. The rates of telegraph messages could be reduced so that it would be profitable and available for common use; and it could become an excellent source of revenue for the United States Government. ¹

CHAPTER VII

A SINGLE ROUTE THROUGH UTAH

This year 1861 was one of momentous note, for it was then that Congress passed a bill to appropriate $1,000,000 for a mail service to run from somewhere on the Missouri River to some point in California, on a single route. This was to be a six-day per week affair, which pleased those people in the West; for with this gigantic expression of the government’s interest in the mail service came dreams of a reliable, regular, and frequent means of correspondence for them.

This was planned for well in advance. In the thirty-sixth Congress, second session (1861) an act\(^1\) was agreed upon allowing the Post Office Department to advertise for this new central route contract, to begin July 1, 1861. The statute of March, 1861, says:

Sec. 9. And be it further enacted, That in lieu of the daily service on the central route provided by the act entitled "An act for the establishment of post route" approved February 27, 1861, the Postmaster General is hereby directed to discontinue the mail service on route number 12578, from St. Louis and Memphis to San Francisco, California, and to modify the contract on said route subject to the same terms and conditions only as hereinafter provided, said discontinuance to take effect on or before July 1, 1861. The contractors on said route shall be required to transport the entire letter mail six times a week on the Central route, said letter mail to be

\(^1\) U. S. Statutes at Large, XII, p. 169.
carried through in twenty day's time, eight months in the year, and in twenty three days the remaining four months of the year, from some point on the Missouri River connected with the East, to Placerville, California, and also to deliver the entire mails tri-weekly to Denver City, and Great Salt Lake City; said contractors shall be required to carry the residue of all the mail matter in a period not exceeding thirty-five days, with the privilege of sending the latter semi-monthly from New York to San Francisco in twenty-five days by sea, and the public documents in thirty-five days. They shall also be required, during the continuance of their contract, or until the completion of the overland telegraph, to run a pony express semi-weekly at a schedule time of ten days eight months and twelve days four months, carrying for the Government free of charge, five pounds of mail matter with the liberty of charging the public for transportation of letters by said express not exceeding one dollar per half ounce. For the above service said contractors shall receive the sum of one million dollars per annum; the contract for such service to be thus modified before the 25th day of March next, and expire July 1, 1864.1

The act called for the termination of Butterfield's southern mail route, by July 1, 1861. Actually he had begun to move much of his equipment up onto the central route in the fall of 1860. He was given $100,000 aid in this transfer and was ordered by the government to take over Chorpenning's stations.2

According to the act, John Butterfield was supposed to take over the whole route between the extreme ends. The Central Overland California and Pike's Peak Express Company was not left out, however. It still carried the mail on the route east of Salt Lake.3 Thus, the

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1Ibid., XII, pp. 205-206.
2Ibid., XII, pp. 206-207.
3Frederick, op. cit., p. 62.
contract was in the hands of the Overland Mail Company (William B. Dinsmore had replaced John Butterfield as President)\textsuperscript{1} with sub-contracts to Russell, Majors, and Waddell Company and the Pioneer Line, Louis McLane, owner and operator. The C. O. C. & P. P. Express Company would handle the mails between St. Joseph and Salt Lake City; the Overland Mail Company, from Salt Lake City to Carson; and the Pioneer Line, from Carson to Folsom City, California.\textsuperscript{2}

As time passed, the company belonging to Russell, Majors, and Waddell began to get into debt. The year passed, however, with the contract remaining as it was.

In the spring of 1862, the company was more surely getting into trouble. Ben Holladay had advanced it a great deal of money. Consequently the company became so involved that its officials decided to sell. It was placed up for sale on March 21, 1862, at which time Holladay stepped in and bought it for $100,000. The C. O. C. & P. P. Express Company at that time owed Mr. Holladay about $208,000.\textsuperscript{3}

As of late the mail service had been unstable; it was in this degenerate state when Holladay took over his new company. In fact there were publishers in California and Nevada who said they were going to

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{1}Hungerford, op. cit., p. 86.
\textsuperscript{2}Ibid., Frederick, op. cit., p. 65.
\textsuperscript{3}Frederick, op. cit., pp. 63-64; Hafen, op. cit., p. 227; Neff, op. cit., p. 734.
\end{flushleft}
Fig. 21.-Floor plan of the Beehive House, first floor.
Fig. 221.—Floor plan of the Beehive House, second floor.
In 1862 the Indians gave much trouble to the Overland mail as well as the telegraph. Nearly every station between Fort Bridger and North Platte was destroyed; they burned mail coaches and bags, ran off with the stock and killed the drivers.

Acting-Governor Fuller, Chief Justice Kinney, and six other gentlemen connected with the mail and telegraph lines joined in recommending to Secretary Stanton to authorize the Superintendent of Indian affairs, James Duane Doty, to raise and put in service immediately, "a regiment of mounted rangers from the inhabitants of the territory, with officers to be appointed by him."

These men over-rated their own power in Utah. Before they could get any action, Brigham Young telegraphed the Utah delegate in Washington and informed him that the Utah State Militia was prepared at any time to protect the mails. Answers were not even waited for; Brigham Young; Lieutenant-General Daniel H. Wells, Commander of the Nauvoo Legion of Utah Territory; and the militia were immediately prepared. Many communications among officials of the Territory and Federal Government followed to bring about adequate protection of the mails. President Abraham Lincoln sent a dispatch to Brigham Young personally (although he was no longer governor) asking for aid in this situation. Also, Ben Holladay sent a special thanks to Brigham Young.

With the overland mail under a joint service, it was generally improved over what it had been in the past. With a kind of "partnership."

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1 Edward W. Tullidge, Tullidge's Histories: History of Salt Lake City, I, (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor, 1889), p. 252.

2 Ibid., pp. 252-259.
among the three companies the activities of the mail from East to West were much better co-ordinated than before. They were running a schedule of twenty days in the summer and twenty-three days in the four winter months.

In July of 1863, five men on the Overland Mail route were killed--at Kanyon (or Canyon) Station near Deep Creek (161 miles west from Salt Lake). A letter to Major Egan, a supervising agent on the western division, informs us:

The Indians on making the attack, first shot Riley, who ran about fifty yards and dropped dead. The fiends dragged his body back to the station, placed it on a pile of wood and burned it. There were, from the showing, four soldiers there in the stable at the time, but it is not known whether or not they fired upon the Indians. It is represented that three of the four men were wounded in the barn before they made an attempt to escape. They then took out some horses, mounted them and fled; two of them ran about two hundred and one of them three hundred yards before they were shot dead. The fourth man had his horse killed and was himself mortally wounded, but escaped to Willow station about fifteen miles east] by the aid of some emigrants who came along, where he soon after died. The station was completely destroyed by fire. Five horses were burned in the barn, one was killed and two were supposed to have been driven off by the Indians.

The station water-hawler and three soldiers escaped death, as stated by the breaking down of a wagon. It happens that they were off somewhere for water and by some accident were detained a short time, and while at some considerable distance from the station they saw it in flames and retreated to Deep Creek [twelve miles] for safety.¹

Later some volunteer troops were sent to the area to scour the plains.

¹Deseret News, op. cit., July 14, 1863.
Stations which were set up by the Overland Mail occupied public lands. The government of the United States let the land free of charge—however, there could not be more than one station for every ten miles of route.

And be it further enacted, That the Overland Mail Company now engaged in carrying the United States mail from Saint Joseph, Missouri, to Placerville, California, shall have the privilege of occupying the public lands where their stations are fixed at the rate of not more than one for every ten miles of the route on which said company carry the said mail, and shall have preemption right thereon of any land, not mineral, and not disposed of or reserved, or to which a preemption or homestead claim has not attached when the same shall be brought into market to the extent of one hundred and sixty acres, to be selected contiguous to and to include their improvements.¹

Even though the mail had not missed one single scheduled time for the past twelve months (before September 26, 1863), traveling a distance of 1,874 miles,² there was an explanation given for some irregularity through the Salt Lake station. Salt Lake was considered, technically, a "way station," the schedule being mainly concerned with Placerville and Atchison. If any trouble occurred in either division, the carriers would endeavor to "make up the time" in the division ahead. Therefore, sometimes Salt Lake, being in the middle, would have a varying schedule.³

In Utah Territory itself there had been reported some irregularities in the mail service. As a result, the Postmaster General sent a

¹U. S. Statutes at Large, XII, p. 664.
³Ibid., Nov. 25, 1863.
special agent, Mr. Stenhouse, to investigate some of the causes. In writing a notice to the people, he said:

Post Office, Salt Lake City
July 21st, 1863

The many just complaints that have been made of the irregularities of public mail service in this Territory of late have led to the appointment of a Special Mail Agent, with specific instructions to investigate all matters of complaint and to take such steps as will insure efficient public service.

The general duties of this agency are to see that contractors carry the mails within schedule time, with safety and regularity; to see that the business of every Post Office in the Territory is conducted in accordance with the general laws and instructions of the Post Office Department, and to take a general supervision of all mail business.

There are no wholesale changes and great reformations promised or contemplated, but Contractors and Postmasters will be looked to for the proper discharge of their obligations, and where instructions or aid can be rendered them to more efficiently discharge their duties, it will be cheerfully rendered. In the meantime all Postmasters are invited to furnish me a statement of the regularity or irregularity of the delivery of mails at their offices.

Contractors are aware that there is a specified hour at which they receive and deliver the mails at the ends of routes, and must be reported in case of failure there; but some do not seem to comprehend that "regularity" is required of them at intermediate Post Offices. The intermediate Post Offices are as much entitled to regular mails as the offices at the beginning or end of a route, and only in cases of accident, or unfavorable weather, will irregularity hereafter be passed by without report. Postmasters are, therefore, required to confer with Contractors and learn the probable regular time of arrival of the mails at their offices, selecting such a time for closing mails as will give the public and best facilities for correspondence, and so announce it.

Information of failures or irregularities of service, incompetency, delinquencies, mail robberies, or any other business properly belonging to the mail service, should be addressed to the undersigned, with all the evidences of reliability, and with the public weal in view.
As all information furnished a mail agent is strictly private for his use in the discharge of his duties, all communications on Post Office or Mail Service shall be addressed.

T. B. H. Stenhouse,
Special Mail Agent, Salt Lake City.¹

In August of 1863, Postmaster General Blair advertised for two mail routes concerned with the Territory of Utah. These routes ran from two places in Utah up into Montana. They were: from Salt Lake City, by Ogden, Cache Valley, Snake River Ferry, and Bannack City to Fort Benton; and from Fort Bridger by Bannack City to Fort Benton. Either of these, upon acceptance, would automatically omit the other. Also in the advertisement was found that if the bidders chose, they could have the routes end at Bannack City, omitting Fort Benton. From Salt Lake City to Fort Benton was 723 miles—400 miles less distant if just to Bannack City. From Fort Bridger to Fort Benton was 673 miles—350 miles less distant if just to Bannack City.²

At the time of this announcement for soliciting bids, Messrs. Oliver and Company had the contract to Bannock (or Bannack) City. Also there was a pony express from Fort Bridger to Bannock City, which carried through letters in seven days for fifty cents each.³

¹Ibid., July 22, 1863.
²Ibid., Aug. 5, 1863.
³Hafen, op. cit., p. 279.
CHAPTER VIII

THE CONCLUDING YEARS

The year 1864 marks the beginning of the last big stretch of UTAH’S MAIL SERVICE BEFORE THE COMING OF THE RAILROAD in 1869. The Overland Mail contract remained as it was until September 30th. The contract under the act of March 2, 1861, stated that it would be effective only until June 30, 1864. However, arrangements were made with the same parties to continue the service until September 30th, after which a new contract would go into effect. Concerning this, we read:

The contract for service on the route from Missouri river, via Salt Lake, to Placerville, California, under act of March 2, 1861, expiring on the 30th June last, an arrangement was made with the same parties for continuing the service on the same terms to September 30, 1864.¹

When it came time for the contract to be let again, the Post Office Department accepted bids for the route. Ben Holladay's was the one finally chosen. A letter was written to Holladay advising him that his bid had been accepted; this was his reply:

Office of Ben Holladay
No. 84 Broadway, New York, August 16, 1864

Sir: Your favor of yesterday, in which you request immediate execution of the contract for conveying the overland mail, is at hand.

¹ Postmaster General's Report, 1864, p. 782.
In reply, I am glad to be able to inform you that I have concluded an arrangement with the Overland Mail Company to carry the mail from Salt Lake City, Utah, to Folsom, California upon the schedule time proposed by the Post Office Department.

I should be glad to have one contract drawn, from Atchison to Salt Lake City, in my name, for a compensation of three hundred and sixty-five thousand dollars ($365,000) per annum, and one in the name of W. B. Dinsmore, president of the Overland Mail Company, from Salt Lake City to Folsom, for the annual compensation of three hundred and eighty-five thousand dollars, ($385,000.) It would be a great convenience to us if these contracts, ready for signature, could be sent on to the postmaster of this city to be executed here; and, if possible, I beg this may be done.

Respectfully yours,

Ben Holladay

Hon. George W. McLellan
Second Assistant Postmaster General

There is recorded in the Postmaster General's report of 1864 the essential points of Holladay's contract for the mail between that year and 1866. An excerpt tells us that,

under the advertisement dated March 2, 1864, inviting proposals for service from Atchison, Kansas, or St. Joseph, Missouri, to Folsom City, California, John H. Heistand, of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, was the lowest bidder, at $750,000 per annum; but his bid having been subsequently withdrawn, contracts have been made with Ben Holladay, of New York, for the service between Atchison or St. Joseph and Salt Lake City, at $365,000, and with Wm. B. Dinsmore, president of the Overland Mail Company, also of New York, from Salt Lake City to Folsom City, at $385,000, making an aggregate of $750,000 per annum. These parties are believed to be able to fulfill their obligations. The contracts are from October 1, 1864, to September 30, 1868; the trips to be made in

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sixteen days eight months in the year, and in twenty days the remaining four months; to convey through letter mails only, mail matter prepaid at letter rates, and all local or way mails.

Paper and document mails for the Pacific coast are to be carried by sea, via New York and Panama, temporary arrangements having been made for their conveyance, within the sum named in the law of March 25, 1864, viz: $160,000 per annum, making the whole expense of territorial and Pacific mails not over $910,000 per annum, or $90,000 less than under the former contract.

Owing to the Indian depredations, the overland service was much interrupted during the months of August and September last, and for a period of four or five weeks the whole mail for the Pacific coast and the Territories was necessarily sent by sea from New York. 1

Thus, we find that for the new contract two companies were involved in the carriage of letter mail between Atchison and Folsom.

According to his letter, which has been quoted, Holladay made the arrangements for the whole service—either sub-letting it to the Overland Mail or being closely connected with the company of Mr. Dinsmore.

Under this joint system, as was the case in the contract of 1861, the business of the mails was much more reliable and simple to handle.

Along with his important overland mail contract, Ben Holladay conducted two branch lines for the benefit of the people of Utah Territory. One line was to The Dallas Oregon, the other being to Walla Walla, Washington—both starting from Salt Lake City. For the run to The Dallas, the contractor was paid at the rate of $156,000 per annum—that is, for the period from July 1st to September 30, 1864. This agreement

1 Postmaster General's Report, 1864, p. 782.
was renewed for a period from October 1st of that year to June 30, 1866. The per annum rate for this was raised to $186,000. For the route to Walla Walla, which lasted only until September 30th, he was compensated at the rate of $156,000 per annum.\(^1\)

He also had a mail and passenger coach running from Salt Lake City to the mines in Montana. This was to begin in July but did not get started until August.\(^2\)

Many times the mails were delayed for reasons other than those directly connected with the coach lines, themselves. On one occasion in the early part of 1864 the mail did not reach the "dropping off place" for the mail coaches to pick it up. Snow had delayed the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad.\(^3\)

One of the most common ways of informing the public about postal information was through the newspaper. Of this convenient method we find in a March, 1864, Salt Lake City publication just such an example:\(^4\)

**DEPARTURES**

**East**

All places east of Salt Lake City closes at 8 a. m. each day.

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\(^1\)Frederick, *op. cit.*, pp. 146-147.


\(^3\)Ibid., p. 274.

West
Closes 6 p. m. each day.

North
For Bannock City, East Idaho, Mondays 7:30 a. m.
All settlements in Northern Utah and Soda Springs, Ida.,
Mondays and Thursdays 7:30 a. m.

South
For all settlements in Southern Utah including the
Cotton Country; all settlements in Sanpete Co.; for Alpine
City and Cedar Valley, Thurs. 6:30 a. m.

ARRIVALS

East
Arrive each day p. m.

West
Arrive each day p. m.

North
From Bannock City, East Idaho, Saturday 4 p. m.
From all settlements in Northern Utah, and Soda
Springs, Idaho Territory, Wednesday and Saturday, 4 p. m.

South
From all settlements in Southern Utah including the
Cotton Country, and all settlements in Sanpete County, on
Wednesdays 5 p. m.
From Fillmore City, and all settlements between
Fillmore City and Salt Lake City on Wednesdays and
Saturdays at 5 p. m.
From Alpine City and Cedar Valley, on Fridays 5 p. m.

In 1864 there were seventy-four post offices within Utah Territory.
Nine hundred and forty-four miles of route served them, costing the
United States Government $30,637 for the transportation of the mail. ¹

In 1865 the Overland Mail Company secured the right to construct
a road in Tooele County. The right was granted with a few stipulations,

¹Postmaster General's Report, 1864, p. 829.
however. The graded road was to be constructed across the Dugway
Mountain, situated near the mail station of that name--105 miles west of
Salt Lake City. A toll gate was erected near the eastern foot of the
mountain and was to be used to collect toll for ten years to help meet the
expenses of building the road. The rate was to be determined by Tooele
County officials. The Mail Company was required to make an annual
report to the Legislative Assembly of all receipts and expenditures and
pay five per cent of all tolls collected for the benefit of the "Common
Schools" of the Territory of Utah. The road was to be kept in good
repair at all times. The company gave bonds to the people of the
Territory, in the penal sum of five thousand dollars, to insure faithful
compliance with the provisions of the charter granted to them, and "to
secure all persons for any damage that may accrue through their neglect,
which bonds shall be accepted by and filed with the Probate Court of
Tooele County." This action was approved by the Legislature of Utah
Territory and the County of Tooele January 20, 1865.¹

About the same time that the construction of this road was
commenced, the company of the overland mail in the eastern division
was having serious trouble with the Indians. They would destroy
property and stations and mercilessly kill their keepers and soldiers.²

¹Journal History, op. cit., Jan. 20, 1865, p. 11.
²Ibid., Jan. 7, 1865, p. 2.
In September twenty-six mail routes were advertised within the Territory of Utah. The table below gives us these.\(^1\)

### TABLE 2

**MAIL ROUTES ESTABLISHED IN UTAH TERRITORY IN 1865**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From</th>
<th>To</th>
<th>Miles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salt Lake City</td>
<td>Fillmore City</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt Lake City</td>
<td>Shambip</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt Lake City</td>
<td>Herriman</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Bridger</td>
<td>Fort Denton</td>
<td>673</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Hell Gate</td>
<td>510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Bridger</td>
<td>Walla Walla</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Franklin</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ogden</td>
<td>Provo</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
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<td>North Ogden</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
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<td>Huntsville</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Plain City</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
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<td>Wellsville</td>
<td>Mendon</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alpine City</td>
<td>American Fork</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Fairfield</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
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<td>460</td>
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<tr>
<td>Toquerville</td>
<td>Springdale</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia City</td>
<td>Fort Benton</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Full routes and schedules are in the appendix.

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\(^1\) *Deseret News, op. cit., Sept. 27, 1865.*
The year 1866 was momentous; a great climax was taking place. The railroad was progressing, affecting greatly the mail service. This became quite a factor in the issuance of contracts; for provisions had to be made for the advancement of the rails, which were creeping inwardly towards Utah from the East and from the West.

The Postmaster General's annual report makes mention of this important factor:

By recent order of the department, the overland mail route to California, of which Atchison, Kansas, had been the initial point, has been changed so as to have two points of departure--one from Junction City, Kansas, on the Union Pacific railroad route, (eastern division,) running from Wyandotte, Kansas; and the other from Fort Kearney, Nebraska, on the Union Pacific Railroad route, running from Omaha City, Nebraska. The lines from these two points meet at Denver City, in Colorado Territory.¹

Thus, we see a change in Holladay's route, but there had been no announcement of the change in the service of the Overland Mail Company operating on the western division (West of Salt Lake City.)

In the late fall there came a great change. November 1, 1866, was marked as the beginning of a consolidation which was to envelope the major stagecoach lines of the entire overland mail route. On this date Wells Fargo and Company, represented by Louis McLane, purchased Ben Holladay's Overland Mail and Express Company, as the firm had been named since early 1866. Shortly after this transaction two other companies were absorbed into the consolidation. The companies in this

¹Postmaster General's Report, 1866, p. 4.
transformation were: (1) Ben Holladay's Overland Mail and Express Company, (2) Wells Fargo and Company, (3) the Overland Mail Company of W. B. Dinsmore, and (4) the Pioneer Line, owned by Louis McLane. Officials from these comprised the board. Mr. Henry Wells, because of illness, was not made a member of the new board of directors. This merger was called Wells Fargo and Company.  

Mail service from Salt Lake City to Dallas, Washington, continued on during 1867. Evidently, this also operated under the directorship of Wells Fargo and Company. The service prior to this year had been on a tri-weekly basis; now it was on a weekly run.  

Some of the worst troubles by Indians on the mail routes occurred in 1867. They would seem to go wild—burning, killing, and otherwise destroying.  

In 1864, contracts were made to carry the mail east and west through Salt Lake City—for the service into as well as within the Territory. Now in 1868 these contracts expired. This was the time that they either were renewed or cancelled; however, most of the routes in and around Utah Territory, itself, were continued. The main line from East to West was renewed, also; but there was some difficulty in getting the service into proper operation. The contracts which had been awarded  

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1 Hafen, op. cit., p. 319; Hungerford, op. cit., p. 92.

2 Postmaster General's Report, 1867, p. 6.

3 Ibid., p. 7.
to Holladay and Dinsmore in 1864 were not renewed by these men—as individual investors.

The Post Office Department, in attempting to set up a system of efficient service into the Territory decided to award contracts to three separate bidders.

Route number 16, 635 was to extend from Cheyenne to Virginia City, Nevada—nine days each way in the summer and twelve days each way in the winter. The distance was 1,095 miles. Service was to be curtailed as each fifty miles of railroad was completed. Route 14, 167 was to extend from Coyote, Kansas, to Denver—a distance of 265 miles. The trip was to be performed in seventy-two hours, each way, and to be curtailed as the railroad progressed. The third route, number 17, 035, was to extend from Cheyenne to Denver. The one hundred and two miles distance was to be traversed in twenty-four hours. All of these routes were a daily service.

Bids were accepted on these routes by: Carlton Spaid (number 16, 635) at the rate of $335,000 per annum; W. B. Hawks (number 14, 167), $24,600 per annum; and L. H. Johnston (number 17, 035) at the annual rate of $9,970.50.

All of the bidders subsequently did not perform their duties. The route between Coyote and Denver was rescinded because of Indian raids and "unimportance" of the service. Carlton Spaid backed out because

1 Postmaster General's Report, 1868, p. 5
of differences with the department concerning the carrying of papers and
documents in addition to letters. On the remaining route (Cheyenne to
Denver) the service was so poor that the contract was also rescinded by
the Department.

In September (1868) Wells Fargo and Company took over the
routes—each as it failed to perform its service. 1

In the end, Wells Fargo and Company was the sole contractor for
the mail. The Post Office Department had tried to get several parties
to step in after the first contractors had failed. Brigham Young and
associates had almost taken over part of the responsibility, but before
much could be done the problem was settled otherwise. 2 Wells Fargo
and Company, again, had full control over the entire mails between the
termini of the Central Pacific Railroad and the Union Pacific Railroad.
As time passed the company reduced its route by jumps of fifty miles
each as the tracks were laid. The annual rate of compensation was
$1,750,000, subject to reduction as the railroad progressed. 3

A temporary arrangement was made with Wells Fargo and Com-
pany October, 1868, to carry the mail on the Coyote—Denver line until
July 1, 1869. On the route from Denver to Cheyenne, the company
agreed to handle the daily service from October 1, 1868 for one year for
$9,970.50. 4 After all of these arrangements were made, the mail was

1Ibid., p. 7.
2Ibid., p. 6.
3Ibid., p. 7.
4Ibid.
MAIL COACH FOR WELLS FARGO AND COMPANY
in regular service. However, it is likely that through these last few months of the mail before the coming of the transcontinental railroad, there must have been a period of uncertainty and irregularity.

In explanation of the mail routes for the past year, a comment is in order as to why there were three routes instead of only one. There were two railroads working westward: the Union Pacific and the Kansas Pacific. The Union Pacific Company was building on the approximate route of the Pony Express or the route commonly used through the years for emigration and mail. The Kansas Pacific Railroad went through the state of Kansas towards Denver. Coyote, Kansas, the starting off place for the Coyote-Denver mail route, 265 miles east of Denver, was the end of the Kansas Railroad at the time of the contract. Cheyenne was near the end point of the Union Pacific Railroad at the time of the contract. With all of this in consideration, the mail went east from Coyote to Denver, from Denver to Cheyenne, and from Cheyenne through Utah Territory to Virginia City, Nevada; or the mail could go on the railroad to Cheyenne, the dropping off place. This was one reason why the Coyote-Denver route was thought "unimportant"—Denver could have been served from Cheyenne.

The official end of the mail contracts by coach under Wells Fargo and Company was May 10, 1869—the day that the Union Pacific and Central Pacific railroads met at Promontory Point, Utah (53 miles northwest of Ogden, 690 miles east of Sacramento, and 1085 miles west
of Omaha, Nebraska).

The last tie was made of California laurel, highly polished, and mounted with silver at the ends, and the last spike was made of gold, weighing 8 oz., and ornamented with appropriate designs and inscriptions. The rail was laid upon the laurel tie and the golden spike was driven home, and the great work was pronounced finished amid the plaudits of an assembled multitude.1

1Neff, op. cit., pp. 750-751.
APPENDIX

I. George Chorpenning's first mail contract.

II. The mail routes in Utah Territory in 1865, including all stations between the start and destination. (accompanying maps).

III. Post routes established in Utah Territory at various times between 1850 and 1868. These include the post offices along the routes as well as the start and destination.

IV. Graph-chart of the major mail contractors.
I.

FIRST MAIL CONTRACT OF

GEORGE CHORPENNING

1851

No. 5066--$14,000 per annum.

This Article of Contract, made the 11th day of April, in the year one thousand eight hundred and fifty-one, between the United States and Absalom Woodward, George Chorpenning, George C. Wright, Samuel T. Clymer, John R. Johnson, and A. D. Rightmire.

Witnesseth, That whereas Absalom Woodward and George Chorpenning, of the City of Sacramento and State of California, have been accepted according to law, as Contractors for transporting the mail on Route No. 5066, from Sacramento City, in the state aforesaid, to the City of Salt Lake, in the Territory of Utah, and back once a month, with "certainty, celerity, and security," at fourteen thousand dollars per year for, and during the term commencing the tenth day of May, in the year one thousand eight hundred and fifty-one, and ending with the thirtieth day of June, in the year one thousand eight hundred and fifty-four.

Now, therefore, the said Absalom Woodward and George Chorpenning, Contractors, and George C. Wright, Samuel T. Clymer, John R. Johnson, and A. D. Rightmire, their sureties, do jointly and severally undertake, covenant, and agree with the United States, and do bind themselves--

1st. To carry said mail within the times fixed in the annexed schedule of departures and arrivals, except that when more than seven minutes are taken for opening and closing the mails at any (2) office, the surplus time so taken is to be allowed in addition to what is given in the schedule; and so carry until said schedule is altered by the authority of the Postmaster General of the United States, as hereinafter provided, and then to carry according to said altered schedule: 2nd. To carry said mail in a safe and secure manner, free from other wet or injury,

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1See Chorpenning, op. cit., appendix.
under a sufficient oil cloth or bear skin. 3d. To take the mail and every part of it from, and deliver it and every part of it at, each post office on the Route, or that may hereafter be established on the Route, and into the post office at each end of the route, and into the post office at the place at which the carrier stops at night, if one is there kept; and if no office is there kept, to lock it up in some secure place at the risk of the Contractors.

They also undertake, covenant, and agree with the United States, and do bind themselves, jointly and severally as aforesaid, to be answerable for the person to whom the said Contractors shall commit the care and transportation of the mail, and accountable to the United States for any damages which may be sustained by the United States through his unfaithfulness or want of care; and that the said Contractors will discharge any carrier of said mail, whenever required to do so by the Postmaster General; also that they will not transmit by themselves or their agent, or be concerned in transmitting commercial intelligence more rapidly than by mail, and that they will not carry, out of the mail, letters or newspapers which should go by the post; and further, post office blanks, mail bags, and the special agents of the Department, on exhibition of their credentials.

They further undertake, covenant, and agree with the United States, that the said Contractors will collect quarterly, if required by the Postmaster General, of Postmasters on said Route, the balances due from them to the General Post Office, and faithfully render an account thereof to the Postmaster General, in the settlement of quarterly accounts, and will pay over to the General Post Office all balances remaining in their hands.

For which services, when performed, the said Absalom Woodward and George Chorpenning, Contractors, are to be paid by the said United States the sum of Fourteen Thousand Dollars a year, to wit: (3) Quarterly in the months of May, August, November, and February, through the postmasters on the Route, or otherwise, at the option of the Postmaster General of the United States; said pay to be subject, however, to be reduced or discontinued by the Postmaster General, as hereinafter stipulated, or to be suspended in case of delinquency.

It is, hereby stipulated and agreed, by the said Contractors and their sureties, that the Postmaster General may alter the contract, and alter the schedule, he allowing a pro rata increase of compensation within the restrictions imposed by law for the additional service required, or for the increased speed, if the employment of additional stock or carriers is rendered necessary; but the Contractors may, in the case of increased expedition, relinquish the contract, on timely notice, if they
prefer it to the change; also that the Postmaster General may discontinue
or curtail the service, he allowing one month's extra pay on the amount
dispensed with, in order to place on the route a greater degree of
service (first offering it to the Contractors at the price at which it can
be obtained) or whenever the public interests require such discontinuance
or curtailment for any other cause.

It is hereby also stipulated and agreed, by the said Contractors
and their sureties, that in all cases there is to be a forfeiture of the pay
of a trip when the trip is not run; a forfeiture of at least one fourth part
of it when the running is so far behind time as to lose connection with a
depending mail; and that these forfeitures may be increased into penal-
ties of higher amount, according to the nature or frequency of the failure,
and the importance of the mail; also, that fines may be imposed upon the
Contractors unless the delinquency be satisfactorily explained to the
Postmaster General in due time, for failing to take from or deliver at
a post office a mail, or any part of it; for suffering it to be wet, injured,
lost, or destroyed; for carrying it in a place or manner that exposes it
to depredation, loss or injury, by being wet or otherwise; or for not
arriving at the time set in the schedule. And for setting up or running
an express to transmit letters or commercial intelligence in advance of
the mail, a penalty may be exacted of the Contractors equal to a quarter's
pay; but in all other cases no fine shall exceed three times the price of
the trip.

(4) And it is hereby further stipulated and agreed, by the said
Contractors and their sureties, that the Postmaster General may annul the
contract for repeated failures; for violating the Post Office laws; for dis-
obeying the instructions of the Department; for refusing to discharge a
carrier when required by the Department; for assigning the contract
without the consent of the Postmaster General; for setting up or running
an express as aforesaid; or whenever the Contractors, or either of them,
shall become a Postmaster, Assistant Postmaster, or Members of Con-
gress; and this contract shall, in all its parts, be subject to the terms
and requisitions of an act of Congress passed on the twenty-first day of
April, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eight,
extitled "An act concerning public contracts."

In witness whereof, the said Contractors and their sureties,
have hereunto set their hands and seals, the day and year set opposite
their names respectively.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Seal</th>
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<tr>
<td>April 25, 1851</td>
<td>A. Woodward</td>
<td>(Seal)</td>
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<td>G. Chorpenning</td>
<td>(Seal)</td>
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<td>April 25, 1851</td>
<td>George G. Wright</td>
<td>(Seal)</td>
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<td>April 25, 1851</td>
<td>S. T. Clymer</td>
<td>(Seal)</td>
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<td>April 25, 1851</td>
<td>J. R. Johnston, Jr.</td>
<td>(Seal)</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 25, 1851</td>
<td>A. D. Rightmire</td>
<td>(Seal)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Signed, and sealed, and delivered in the presence of
R. H. Woodward,
Henry A. Benjamin.

I hereby certify that George G. Wright and S. T. Clymer, J. R. Johnston and A. D. Rightmire are good and sufficient sureties, for the amount in the foregoing Contract and Bond.

Richard A. Edes
Postmaster
II.
MAIL ROUTES IN UTAH TERRITORY, 1856

1. Salt Lake City, Union Draper, Lehi, American Fork, Pleasant Grove, Provo, Springville, Spring Lake Villa, Payson, Santaquin, Mona, Salt Creek, Chicken Creek, Round Valley, and Fillmore.

2. Salt Lake City, E. T. City, Grantsville, Tooele, Stockton, Shambip.


4. Fort Bridger, Soda Springs, Bannock City, Fort Benton.

5. Fort Bridger, Richville, Soda Springs, Upper Crossing, Virginia City, Hell Gate.


9. Ogden, Huntsville.

10. Ogden, North Ogden.

11. Ogden, Plain City.

12. Wellsville, Menton.

13. Franklin, Soda Springs.


15. Cedar Valley, Fairfield.


17. Salt Creek, Fountain Green, Moroni, Ephraim, Manti.

19. Fillmore, Meadow Creek, Petersburgh, Cove Creek, Beaver, Paragonah, Parowan, Summit, Cedar City.

20. Fillmore City, Deseret.


23. Cedar City, Pinto, Pine Valley, Alger, Barney, Diamond, St. George.


25. Toquerville, Virgin City, Grafton, Rockville, Springdale.

III.

UTAH POST ROUTES SET UP BY THE UNITED STATES
POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT

1850  
Great Salt Lake City, Sanpete via Utah Lake.  
Great Salt Lake City, Brownsville (Ogden).  
Great Salt Lake City, Utah Lake, San Pitch.  
(U. S. Statutes at Large, IX, p. 496.)

1852  
Great Salt Lake City, American Fork, Provo City, Springfield  
(Springville), Payson, Summit Creek, Nephi City, Fillmore  
City, Red Creek, Parowan, Johnson's Springs, Cold Creek,  
Santa Clara, San Bernardino, San Diego.  
Great Salt Lake City, Tooele.  
(U. S. Statutes at Large, X, p. 139.)

1854  
Salt Lake City, American Fork, Provo City, Springfield, Payson,  
Summit Creek, Nephi City, Fillmore City, Red Creek,  
Parowan, Johnson's Springs, Cold Creek, Santa Clara, San  
Bernardino, San Diego.  
Salt Lake City, Union, Draper, Palmyra, Lehi City, American  
Fork, Pleasant Grove, Provo City, Payson, Springville,  
Summit, Nephi City, Corn Creek, Fillmore City, Salt Creek,  
Canal Creek, Manti.  
Salt Lake City, Fort Laramie, Council Bluffs, Iowa.  
Salt Lake City, Stoker, Farmington, Kaysville, Ogden City.  
Salt Lake City, Nuff's Mill, Mill Creek, Holliday's Settlement,  
Little Cottonwood, Drapersville, Mountainville.  
Salt Lake City, Taylorsville, West Jordon, Gardner's Mill,  
Bingham's Kanyon, Cedar Valley.  
Tooele City, Grantsville.  
Salt Lake City, Utah Lake, Sand Pitch Valley.  
(U. S. Statutes at Large, X, p. 546.)

1856  
Cedar City, Harmony, Vine Valley, Santa Clara.  
(U. S. Statutes at Large, XI, p. 137.)

1861  
Breckenridge, Great Salt Lake City.  
Manti, San Pete County, Ephraim, Limbir, Mount Pleasant,  
North Bend.  
Genoa, Carson Valley, Walker River Diggings, Monoville.
Brigham City, Mendon, Cache County, Wellsville, Providence, Logan City, Smithfield, Richmond, Franklin City.
(U. S. Statutes at Large, XII, p. 165.)

1862 Springville, Fairview, Mount Pleasant, Springtown.
Tocquerville, Pocketville, Gafton, Adventure.
Virgin City, Grafton, Rockville.
Denver City (Colorado Territory), Provo (Utah Territory).
(U. S. Statutes at Large, XII, p. 421.)

1863 Beaver, Greenville, Fort Adams, Minersville.
Payson, Goshen.
(U. S. Statutes at Large, XII, p. 663.)

1864 Fort Bridger, Richville, Soda Springs, Upper Crossings of the Snake River, Virginia City, Hell Gate (Idaho).
Fort Bridger, Boise City, Grand Ronde Valley (Oregon), Walla Walla (Washington Territory).
Salt Lake City, Fillmore City, St. George, Los Angeles.
Salt Lake City, E. T. City, Grantsville, Tooele, Shambiss (Shambip), Cedar Fort, Fairfield, Goshen, Payson.
Salt Lake City, Provo City, Salt Creek, Fillmore City, Beaver, Parowan, Cedar City, St. George.
Brigham City, Mendon, Wellsville, Hyrum, Millville, Providence,
Logan, Hyde Park, Smithfield, Richmond, Franklin.

Hyrum, Paradise.
Ogden City, Plain City.
Ogden City, Huntsville.
Great Salt Lake City, Jordon, Herriman.
Rockville, Springdale.
Salt Creek, Poule, Rounds, Holden, Fillmore, Springville,
Spanish Fork, Cannon Fairview, Mount Pleasant, Springtown,
Ephraim, Manti, Gunnison.

Mount Pleasant, Moroni.
Fountain (Green), Wales.
Cedar City, Pinto, Pine Valley, Alger, Banney, Diamond,
St. George.
Beaver, Minersville.
Fillmore City, Deseret.
Gunnison, Chicken Creek.
Great Salt Lake City, Mountain, Weber, Morgan Porter, Croydon,
Hennefer, Coalville, Hoytville, Wanship, Peoa, Kamas, Heber,
Mound, Midway, Charleston, Provo.
(U. S. Statutes at Large, XIII, p. 322.)
1866  Logan, Dexton.
      Huntsville, Bennington.
      Logan, Oxford.
      Nephi, St. George, Sevier Valley, Fort Gunnison.
      (U. S. Statutes at Large, XIV, p. 287.)

1868  Eagle Valley, Panacca
      Pinto, Hamblin, Palsifer, Panacca
      (U. S. Statutes at Large, XV, p. 193.)
Fig. 14

POST OFFICES IN UTAH--1865
(See next page for key)
# UTAH POST OFFICES - 1865

(Key to illustration of post offices in Utah - 1865)

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STARTING POINTS AND DESTINATIONS OF THE POSTAL ROUTES IN UTAH--1865
Fig. 16
MAJOR MAIL CONTRACTORS
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UTAH MAIL SERVICE
BEFORE THE COMING OF THE
RAILROAD, 1869

AN ABSTRACT OF A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY OF BRIGHAM
YOUNG UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS.
ABSTRACT

After making a study of the pre-railroad Utah mail service, I have found it appropriate to categorize certain broad elements. This thesis is divided into eight parts, each part following in chronological order except for the one dealing with the Pony Express and the telegraph, which covers approximately the same period of time as the chapter entitled "Resumption of the Mail." Though there was a most definite overlapping of time for these two historical phases, it would seem that there was adequate justification for making two chapters.

The initial chapter in this thesis pertains to the unofficial mail, beginning in 1847. There was certain communication through and within the area of Utah before this, however; but there was no significant purpose to me in making a study of it at this time. My main objective deals with Utah from the beginning of its permanent settlements.

The study deals with the following categories: (1) the unofficial mail between 1847 and 1850; (2) the beginning of the official mail in 1850; (3) the mail service during the middle of the 1850's; (4) the transition period between the early mail years and a more reliable service; (5) the resumption of the mail after certain significant difficulties; (6) the Pony Express and telegraph service; (7) the improvement in the transcontinental mail service through Utah as the routes from East to West were
and finally, the concluding years up to the driving of the last spike of the first transcontinental railroad on May 10, 1869.

The chief sources of information were government documents, contemporary newspapers, and miscellaneous materials from the archives of the Historian's Office of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Salt Lake City, Utah. Much general and specific information was also obtained from reliable historians, past and present.

There are maps, charts, tables, and portraits included in this thesis for added information and interest.