Orson Hyde and the Carson Valley Mission, 1855-1857

Albert R. Page
Brigham Young University - Provo

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/etd
Part of the History Commons, and the Mormon Studies Commons

BYU ScholarsArchive Citation
https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/etd/5010
ORSON HYDE AND THE CARSON VALLEY MISSION, 1855-1857

A Thesis
Presented to the
Department of History
Brigham Young University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Albert R. Page
May 1970
This thesis, by Albert R. Page, is accepted in its present form by the Department of History of Brigham Young University as satisfying the thesis requirement for the degree of Master of Arts.

May 7, 1978
(Completion Date)

LeRoy R. Hafen
(LeRoy R. Hafen, Committee Chairman)

Eugene E. Campbell
(Eugene E. Campbell, Committee Member)

Delamar Jensen
(Delamar Jensen, Department Chairman)
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude for all those who have assisted in the completion of this work. Special recognition is extended to Dr. LeRoy R. Hafen who originally directed my attention to the Carson Valley settlement for his patience and helpful criticism during the preparation of this thesis. Also, an acknowledgment of appreciation is due to Dr. Eugene E. Campbell for his useful and constructive suggestions during the final draft of this study. A debt must likewise be expressed to Dr. Ralph B. Smith and Dr. Ted J. Warner for their helpful criticisms.

A special acknowledgment of indebtedness goes to the Church Historian's Office for providing a large part of the material for the work on Orson Hyde and the Carson Valley Mission. Appreciation is also due the staff of the Church Historian's Office who ably assisted me in the use of these documents.

Finally, the assistance of Mr. John F. Bluth in suggesting corrections in form and style is gratefully acknowledged.

Brigham Young University

May 1970

Albert R. Page
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. EARLY MORMON CONTACT WITH CARSON VALLEY</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. CARSON COUNTY 1855</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. MORMON SETTLEMENT IN THE BALANCE</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CARSON VALLEY MISSION IN 1856</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. ORSON HYDE’S SUCCESSOR: CHESTER LOVELAND</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. TERMINATION OF THE MORMON COLONY 1857</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Map of the Carson Valley</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

There are many areas of Mormon history which have not been researched and for that very reason remain to this day obscure in Mormon historiography. The Latter-day Saint settlement and mission commonly referred to as Carson Valley is one of these areas of which little is known. The truth of the matter is that Mormons were eventually settled in several valleys such as Washoe, Eagle, Carson, Jack and Truckee in Carson County. The usual reference to the total settlement was Carson Valley because that specific valley was settled first.

The purpose of this thesis is two fold: first, to write a narrative history which to date does not exist; second, to seek answers to many questions concerning the Mormon settlement of this area.

As one considers the written material on the subject it is evident much is lacking. The two earliest published works, Thomas H. Thompson and Albert A. West's History of Nevada published in 1881 and Hubert Howe Bancroft's History of Nevada, Colorado and Wyoming published in 1890,¹ deal only slightly with the Mormons in Nevada during this period. Even though the material contained in these books is not very lengthy, it is the best work published on the Carson Valley colony. Bancroft's work is ably footnoted whereas Thompson and West's is not.

¹Myron Angel (ed.), History of Nevada (Reprint of the 1881 Thompson and West edition. Berkeley: Howell-North, 1958). Hereafter this volume will be referred to as Thompson and West, Nevada. The other work referred to in the above text is: Hubert Howe Bancroft, History of Nevada, Colorado, and Wyoming (San Francisco: The History Company, 1890). This volume will hereafter be referred to as Bancroft, Nevada.
These two works are used as the basis for almost every article or chapter that has been written on the subject prior to 1936.

In that year, Effie Mona Mack finished her history titled *Nevada* which used the material on the Mormons in Carson Valley from Thompson and West and Bancroft liberally, but also took advantage of a multitude of other sources such as newspapers, personal letters and state records. Mack's work should be ranked with the preceding two important books which in part cover the Mormon colony in Carson County. Her book is a must for anyone interested in that state's history.²

Four years later, in 1940, Milton R. Hunter published his dissertation *Brigham Young the Colonizer* which dealt with the Western Utah colony in one short chapter. Hunter added some new information to the subject by using material held by the Mormon Church Historian's Office in Salt Lake City, Utah.³

Dale L. Morgan, while using some very good new sources in *The Humboldt* in 1943, did not include all extent documents. Morgan did use the very valuable "Reminiscences of Abner Blackburn," the "Autobiography of Peter W. Conover," and the "Diary of Oliver B. Huntinton," which added substantially to the known facts of the Mormon settlement.⁴

In 1946 Kate B. Carter in Volume Seven of the *Heart Throbs of the West* published her "Mormons in Nevada" which also used some exciting

new sources such as the "Autobiography of Richard Bentley" and the "Short History of Abraham Hunsaker."\(^5\)

In the years following 1940 many diaries of the original pioneers who went to Carson Valley were made available in typescript copies such as the works of William Branch, Peter W. Conover, Chapman Ducan, Joseph L. Heywood, Oliver B. Huntington, Christopher Layton and Christopher Merkley. Copies of these diaries are in the Brigham Young University Library. Some works that received financial backing were published, such as the diary of Abraham Hunsaker, Christopher Layton and Christopher Merkley.\(^6\) In recent times historians have attempted to publish additional material in the possession of the Latter-day Saint Church Historian's Office. This is true in the case of Juanita Brooks. In her "Mormons in Carson County, Utah Territory," published in Volume Eight of the *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* she uses to good advantage the "Journal History of the Church," and the "Church Business Letters Books."\(^7\)

With the exception of one or two of the above writers all have tended to repeat the opinions that exist in the first two books mentioned. None of the previous works do justice to the Mormon settlement in

---


6Noel R. Barton and Myron W. McIntyre (eds.), *Christopher Layton* (Salt Lake City: Christopher Layton Family Organization, 1966); Gwen Hunsaker Haws and Q. Maurice Hunsaker (eds.), *History of Abraham Hunsaker and His Family* (Salt Lake City: Hunsaker Family Organization, 1957); and Christopher Merkley, *Biography of Christopher Merkley* (Salt Lake City: J. H. Parry and Company, 1887).

Carson Valley.

In order to justify additional work in this area the author had to locate new sources of information. Research was hampered because apparently no daily journals were kept by any members of this Mormon colony. Even Orson Hyde did not keep a record of his mission to Carson County, but it was discovered that he had written numerous letters to Brigham Young concerning his assignment which are on file in the Church Historian's Office. In all there are thirty-one letters written by Hyde from Carson County. Brigham Young answered only about half of Hyde's letters. His fifteen letters are also in the Church Historian's Office.

Many other letters of those associated with the settlement are included in this thesis. Chester Loveland, Madison D. Hambleton and Dr. Washington F. Anderson's letters are found in the Church Historian's Office. The Jane and Sylvester Phippen letters are held by the Utah Historical Society in Salt Lake City.

The writer also found newspapers of the time very helpful. The California Star, Daily Alta California, Deseret News, Millenial Star, Pony Express, Sacramento Daily Union and the Western Standard provided over 150 articles dealing with the Mormons in Carson County.

When the writer read the available secondary sources on the colony at Carson Valley he became increasingly aware of many conflicts of opinion concerning the settlement. The historians who had previously dealt with the Carson Valley settlement concluded that initial entrance into the valley had been part of a more general and organized Mormon colonization program. Supposedly Carson Valley was entered with intention of establishing a key sential on the fringe of the Great Basin
empire. By establishing such a post the travel from Salt Lake City to California would also have been controlled. The writer is convinced that this is not the case. Official Mormon involvement in this colony came several years after 1850-1851 and for different reasons than those previously asserted. Orson Hyde carried out what could be termed a preliminary excursion in the name of the Church into the area in June, 1855, with about twenty missionaries, but almost all except Hyde returned to Salt Lake City by November, 1855. Colonization did not take place until June, 1856, and at that time it was more for the purpose of extending control over that portion of the Great Basin than for economic reasons. The gradual influx of non-Mormons from California after 1851 into the Carson Valley resulted in a reinforcement of the anti-Mormon feelings which Salt Lake City reacted to by increasing legislative action over that area in order to hold it securely in the grasp of the Territory of Utah. Originally in 1849 the Mormons had included the Carson Valley within the boundaries of the State of Deseret. Four years later in 1854 this area was created into a separate county and officials were appointed to it early in 1855. During the summer of 1855 a boundary survey was carried out to negate once and for all the claims of Californians that Carson really was west of the Utah Territory. As a solution to the problem of holding on to a commercially valuable valley and to prevent further drift of the area into hands of Californians, a colony of settlers was sent in 1856. Brigham Young also found secondary reasons for establishing the Carson Mission but his actions never indicated that he was prepared to subsidize it as a strategic part of a system of empire.
Chapter 1

EARLY MORMON CONTACT WITH CARSON VALLEY

When Brigham Young and the Mormons arrived in the Salt Lake Valley during July of 1847, they had found their home of refuge. Here in the Great Basin they would have to work hard for a good living, but at the same time this could be done in the absence of religious persecution which had to some degree retarded the Church programs back East.

Because of the great number of Latter-day Saints expected to come into the valley in 1847 and the succeeding years, Brigham Young made a plan to explore for possible settlement sites. Young's concept of Mormon control in the West was staggering. He made it clear that he planned to have all the surrounding area from the Great Salt Lake Valley to San Francisco known to the Mormons for settlement if the necessity arose.¹

That same year parties were sent out to search for areas which

¹"Journal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," July 28, 1847, Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah. Hereafter this source will be referred to as the "JHC." Milton R. Hunter helps to identify what Brigham Young had in mind in the above statement:

The fact that Brigham Young and his assistants had sent five hundred colonists to San Bernardino, California, had founded Genoa in Carson Valley, Nevada, and Lemhi on the Salmon River in Idaho, had built Forts Bridger and Supply at the east entrance of the Basin, and had small but flourishing communities in most of the fertile valleys of the Great Basin within eight years after the arrival of the pioneers is evidence that they intended to colonize as expansive a country as human resources and safety would permit. (Hunter, Brigham Young, p. 15.)
had adequate resources to accommodate settlements.\textsuperscript{2} The return reports confirmed the fact to Brigham Young's satisfaction that the Salt Lake Valley was the best location for the original Mormon settlement.\textsuperscript{3}

It was during these early months of the arrival and settlement in the Great Basin by the Saints that contact was made with the Carson Valley. Originally the first Mormon through this valley, which is nestled in the shadow of the Sierra-Nevada\textsuperscript{4} range, was Samuel Brannan with three men and eleven pack mules.\textsuperscript{5} He had left Sutter's Fort on April 26, 1847, traveled over the summit of the mountains, passed the site of the recent Donner-Reed disaster and arrived at Fort Hall on the ninth of June. He left the fort on the nineteenth of the same month and came upon the Pioneer Company June 30 while they were camped on the Green River.\textsuperscript{6} Brannan remained with the company about a month and a half. When he did not succeed in convincing Brigham Young to go on to the beautiful valleys of California he acted as a guide for Captain James Brown and company who were instructed to collect the mustering-out pay of the Mormon Battalion in California.\textsuperscript{7}

\textsuperscript{2}Ibid., September 8, 1847.
\textsuperscript{3}Ibid., July 28, 1847.
\textsuperscript{4}The Carson Valley is located on the thirty-ninth parallel in what is now western Nevada (see map, p. 8). This valley was commonly referred to during the Mormon period in addition to Carson Valley as Western Utah and Carson County.
\textsuperscript{5}Samuel Brannan, "S. Brannan's Letter," Millennial Star (Liverpool), October 15, 1847, pp. 305-306.
\textsuperscript{7}Ibid., pp. 286, 342.
Figure 1. MAP OF THE CARSON VALLEY.
The second group, which came across the Sierra-Nevadas shortly after Brannan's crossing was that of General Stephen Watts Kearny returning from his engagements in the Mexican War. Along with this military detachment were twelve men from the Mormon Battalion who had been chosen to serve with the General until they reached Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. After leaving Fort Hall the men encountered the westward migrating Saints who were camped on the Platte River July 29. As the soldiers proceeded eastward they met additional Mormons bound for their new home in the West.

The third company involving Mormons who had crossed the Sierra-Nevadas and passed through the Carson Valley on their way east to meet the westward bound Mormons was a group of Mormon Battalion men. This group, under the leadership of Captain Jefferson Hunt, after being discharged in San Diego on July 16, 1847, came into the Salt Lake Valley on October 16 of the same year.

The first Mormons to make the round trip and return to the Salt Lake Valley was the before-mentioned company of Captain James Brown. He, Abner Blackburn and eight others left Brigham Young and the Saints

---

8U.S., Congress, House, Report of the Quartermaster General, H. Doc. L, 30th Cong., 2nd sess., 1848, Message from the President of the United States to the Two House of Congress, pp. 226-236. In this document Major Thomas Swords reported on October 8, 1847, to the Quartermaster General of the United States, Major General T. S. Jesup, concerning the general description of the country transversed by General Stephen W. Kearny and troops while on their march from Fort Leavenworth to New Mexico and California, and then back to Fort Leavenworth.

9Sergeant Daniel Tyler, A Concise History of the Mormon Battalion in the Mexican War (Salt Lake City: The Author, 1881), p. 303.

10Ibid., pp. 303-304.

11Ibid., p. 298.
in the valley on August 9 and within thirteen weeks they completed their assignment and returned to Salt Lake City with the $5,000 mustering-out pay of the Battalion men.12

It is evident from the above facts that as early as November 16, 1847, the Mormons had enough information and experience to have sent a colony to the fertile Carson Valley had they felt the need.13 However, President Young was more concerned at the time with the settlement of the immediate area14 than he was with this remote valley over 500 miles away.15

Throughout 1847, Brigham Young continued to deal with the problems of the new settlement. As large numbers of emigrants began to arrive in the Salt Lake Valley, other areas were designated as sites for settlements. During this period of earnest concentration on colonization by the Mormons, gold was discovered in California by James Marshall, and was recorded by Henry W. Bigler, one of the Mormon Battalion men, on January 24, 1848.16 This strike had a profound effect on the Mormon settlements in the Great Basin after the message of the gold discovery was conveyed to President Young by returning Battalion men. A Church

12"JHC," August 9 and November 20, 1847, March 6, 1848.

13Tyler, Mormon Battalion, pp. 317-320. See also Brooks, Mormons in Carson County, p. 7.

14Hubert Howe Bancroft, History of Utah: 1540-1886 (San Francisco: The History Company, 1889), p. 304, citing "History of Brigham Young," manuscript, December 7, 1848, from the Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah. Hereafter this source will be referred to as the "HBY."


chronicler expressed it this way:

The gold fever first broke out in June, 1848, news of the discovery being brought by a party of Battalion men that arrived from California in that month. 17

Those Mormons already involved in mining in California were not favorably impressed so many of them deserted the rich gold fields of California and returned to their Church and loved ones in the Salt Lake area during the summer and fall of 1848. 18 Nearly all of the men came by the Carson Valley 19 and in so doing they not only brought gold dust 20 but information about the western edge of the Great Basin that could and would be useful to the colonizer, Brigham Young. There were also civilians such as the mail carriers employed by Samuel Brannan who traveled this Carson Valley route at least once in late April and added to the available knowledge. 21 This very valuable geographic knowledge was used when the Mormons decided to organize themselves politically in the Great Basin. A convention to organize a state government met on March 5, 1849, in Salt Lake City. It was decided to call their

17 Bancroft, Utah, p. 304, citing "Utah Early Records," manuscript, p. 31, from the Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley. Hereafter this manuscript will be referred to as "UER."


19 Tyler, Mormon Battalion, p. 339.

20 John Pulsipher, "Diary of John Pulsipher," pp. 50-51. A typed copy of this diary is located in the Brigham Young University Library, Provo, Utah. The original, as of 1936, was in the possession of J. D. Pulsipher of Mesquite, Nevada. See also Andrew Neff, History of Utah, Leland H. Creer, (ed.) (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Perss, 1940), pp. 127-128.

21 Tyler, Mormon Battalion, p. 341.
territory the "State of Deseret,"\(^{22}\) the boundaries of which extended over most of the Great Basin including the Carson Valley. A constitution was written and officers were elected to form the state government.

In spite of the turmoil of politics and the 1849 gold rush, President Young persisted in his colonizing efforts. After careful consideration he sent groups into other valleys around Salt Lake area. But during this time the influence of the gold in California had its effects on the Church leaders. Two private gold missions were sanctioned by the leaders on behalf of the poor economic conditions of a number of the older brethren. They left Salt Lake City on October 8 and November 12 in different groups for the gold fields along the American River near Sacramento, California.\(^{23}\)

Despite the favorable consent given these two companies of men Brigham Young emphatically discouraged the general Church population from abandoning their new homes and settlements for the gold fields in California.\(^{24}\) He was successful in halting the threatened Mormon migration to California. However, a few disregarded President Young's advice and packed their few belongings and left for the gold fields. Abner Blackburn and his brother, Thomas, were among these numbers.\(^{25}\)


\(^{24}\)Bancroft, Utah, pp. 303-304, citing "HBY," pp. 100-102, 123.

\(^{25}\)Morgan, Humboldt, p. 197, citing "Abner Blackburn Reminiscences," manuscript. Hereafter this source will be referred to as "ABR."
These particular men left Salt Lake City early in 1849 and returned to the valley in the fall. They traveled the Carson route in the spring on their trip to California and again as they returned in the autumn of the same year.26

As the year closed the Mormons had been in the valley of the Great Salt Lake for over twenty-nine months. During this time quite a number of their members, for one reason or another, had traveled the Humboldt, Truckee and Carson Valley route to and from California many times. This area in the State of Deseret was well known by the Mormon.

It is evident from these facts that neither the Carson Valley nor any valley equally distant was attractive enough to induce the Mormon leaders to colonize the area at this time. The need for a colony in Carson Valley was not pressing nor practical by the end of 1849.27 There is no evidence that it was even considered as a possible site at this early date.

During these years Salt Lake City was not only the destination for emigrating Mormons, but also a recuperating point for thousands of argonauts heading for the west coast. In anticipation of thousands of California bound emigrants in 1850 the Mormons prepared their wheat, vegetables and other goods for trade with the travelers who would pass through the valley that season. As prices were sure to be high, they expected an advantageous year.28 It was not surprising that also some of the Saints during this season caught the gold fever as others had

---
26 Ibid., pp. 197-198, citing "ABR."
27 Bancroft, Nevada, p. 68.
28 Bancroft, Utah, pp. 300-301.
done during the two preceding years.

This is precisely what happened to fifteen Mormons early in the year of 1850. On April 18, eighty men, among whom were these Mormons, organized for the purpose of going to the gold fields in California.29 The fifteen Mormons, however, intended to stay only for the season. Probably the most important outcome of the venture for later history was the record of the group's activities reported some years thereafter in two separate reports by Hampton S. Beatie30 and Abner Blackburn.31

The group left Salt Lake City late in April under the directions of Captain Joseph DeMont and guide Abner Blackburn.32 Hampton S. Beatie acted as the secretary of this largely non-Mormon party. The cargo of the outfit consisted mostly of supplies as a protection against any unexpected problems. Of the Mormons who accompanied DeMont, it is more than likely none of them were very stalwart members, certainly not the


30 Ibid., pp. 168-171. Thanks must be extended to Dale L. Morgan, Kate B. Carter and Juanita Brooks, at least, for their work in bringing to the interested public the information that Hampton S. Beatie made his excursion into Nevada, not in 1849 as his reminiscences, "The First in Nevada," states, but in 1850. His record was made from memory in 1884 well over thirty years after the experience. Beatie indicated he came into the Salt Lake Valley with the E. T. Benton Company on the twenty-sixth of October, 1848. However, Morgan found out that the Benton company did not arrive in the city until late 1849. Kate Carter, in 1849, published the list of people who came in the Benton group in 1849, a list containing the name of Hampton S. Beatie. This information is published under the title of "Pioneers of 1849," in the Heart Throbs of the West, Vol. X, p. 444. Juanita Brooks has called attention to the matter again by her publication "The Mormons in Carson County, Utah Territory."

31 Morgan, Humboldt, p. 356, citing "ABR."

likes of Abner Blackburn.\footnote{Morgan, Humboldt, pp. 197-201, citing "ABR." There is some question concerning the membership of Abner Blackburn in the Mormon Church. His parents were converted to the religion back in Richland County, Ohio in 1837 (Herbert S. Hamlin, "The Blackburn Diary," The Pony Express, July 1949, p. 5). At this time Blackburn was only ten years old. However, the custom of the Church was such that any child past the age of eight could, by custom, be baptized. Whether Blackburn was baptized or not is questionable. Herbert S. Hamlin of The Pony Express feels he was not a member (Herbert S. Hamlin, "Introduction," The Pony Express, July, 1948, p. 3).} Beatie recorded that he was under the impression that those Mormons who went along did so without the permission of, and in fact, in opposition to Brigham Young's counsel.\footnote{Beatie, "First In Nevada," p. 168.}

The party arrived in Carson Valley by way of Fort Hall and the Humboldt in the early part of June.\footnote{Ibid., p. 169.} They were informed by the emigrants that many others would soon pass that way.\footnote{Morgan, Humboldt, p. 199, citing "ABR." See also Beatie, "First In Nevada," p. 169.} Seven of the eighty men decided to stay in the valley and develop a trade with the emigrants. Those who remained behind were Joseph DeMont, Abner and Thomas Blackburn, Hampton S. Beatie, a Mr. Carter and a Mr. Kimball, and one unidentified individual.\footnote{Beatie, "First In Nevada," pp. 169-170. See also Herbert S. Hamblin, "Introduction," The Pony Express, July, 1949, pp. 3-4; Brooks, "Mormons in Carson County," pp. 10-11.} The others crossed the mountains and continued their trip.

Abner Blackburn, being the best acquainted with the area, took the group to where the city of Genoa, Nevada, is now located. This area was the best location on the Carson River. It was a choice site for a business because of the adequate water, timber and grass there to
support their stock. 38

As a first order of business they built a roofless pine log cabin and a large corral to keep the stock in. 39 Shortly thereafter Abner Blackburn and Beatie took several teams over the mountains to Placerville, California, to get supplies for the expected trade. They brought back flour, dried fruit, bacon, sugar and coffee to "Mormon Station," 40 in preparation for their trading enterprise in the Carson Valley. The Blackburns and Beatie made several other trips to California that summer to get supplies for their successful station.

Prices were exceedingly high at Mormon Station, but the travelers were willing to pay after crossing the desert, for the trading post was a welcome sight to the exhausted emigrants. This business was too profitable to keep it a secret for long. The monopoly that the group enjoyed lasted no longer than it took for a few enterprising businessmen in California to hear the news and then pack supplies over the mountains in order to stock their own competing post. 41 One of these men, James Henry Rollins, took two pack trains loaded with flour, pork, hardtack, coffee, sugar and tea into Carson Valley that summer. Rollins was assisted by Dan Clark and Frank Dewey all of whom were members of the gold missionary expedition. Trading was brisk and in the short few


40 Ibid., pp. 169-170. Mormon Station is the name used to refer to the trading post in Carson Valley at this time. It is strange that the word "Mormon" was used because there is a question whether any of the seven partners were Mormons.

41 Morgan, Humboldt, p. 200. See also Beatie, "First In Nevada," p. 169.
weeks these men were in the valley profits justified their effort.\textsuperscript{42}

Before the season was over DeMont and Kimball left the Beatie and Blackburn group for California probably because of the lack of harmony in the Mormon Station group brought on by the problem of drinking.\textsuperscript{43} As time passed, ten Mormons came from the west coast to Carson Valley on their way to Salt Lake City.\textsuperscript{44} Shortly after their arrival in September the emigration from the East dwindled to the point that business was no longer profitable. The partners of Mormon Station decided to sell their interest in the trading post to a man named Moore.\textsuperscript{45} They then separated and went their different ways.

The Blackburns, Beatie, the ten men from California and one other decided to return to Salt Lake City by way of Fort Hall. There they could sell the horses they had taken in trade at Mormon Station. However, before they reached their destination a party of Bannock Indians stole from them most of their mules, horses and supplies.\textsuperscript{46} Because the company lacked the fighting spirit to retrieve their goods they merely pressed on to the Mormon capital. The only supplies the men had left were a little sugar and coffee which soon gave out. It was only with the aid of a supply train heading for Fort Hall, which they met and bought food from, that they were able to make it alive to

---


\textsuperscript{43} Herbert S. Hamlin, "Introduction," \textit{The Pony Express}, July, 1948, p. 4.

\textsuperscript{44} Beatie, "First In Nevada," p. 170.

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid., p. 169.

\textsuperscript{46} "California," \textit{Deseret News}, November 2, 1850, p. 149.
Brigham City by October 19.\textsuperscript{47} One week later they finally reached Salt Lake City, their destination.\textsuperscript{48}

After the arrival of the company in Salt Lake City it became very apparent that their trading season had been successful in several ways. The supply station in Carson Valley was very profitable. Secondly, Abner Blackburn confirmed his discovery of "color" of the year before by establishing the fact beyond a doubt that there was gold in the general area.\textsuperscript{49} Beatie also reported that the future of the Carson Valley area looked more promising than ever before.\textsuperscript{50} This news he delivered personally to Enoch and John Reese, Mormon merchants, who employed him as a clerk in their Salt Lake City general store.\textsuperscript{51} John Reese later indicated that it was this information which Beatie gave him that resulted in his decision to locate a trading establishment in the western portion of the new Territory of Utah.\textsuperscript{52}

\textsuperscript{47}Beatie, "First In Nevada," p. 170.

\textsuperscript{48}"California," Deseret News, November 2, 1850, p. 149.

\textsuperscript{49}Beatie, "First In Nevada," pp. 169-170. See also Morgan, Humboldt, p. 199, citing "ABR."

\textsuperscript{50}Col. John Reese, "Mormon Station," Nevada Historical Society Papers, I (1917), p. 188. Previous to the return of Hampton S. Beatie, Carson Valley had received many Mormon travelers. However, the evaluation that this valley was one of much promise is questionable. The "Manuscript History of Nevada," in the Church Historian's Office reports a statement from the Gold Missionaries: "They gave a flattering report of the natural resources in said valley (Carson) to their co-religionist." This statement however, does not in the least correspond with the report made by a Gold Missionary, Joseph Cain, published in the Deseret News, under the heading of "For the News," October 5, 1850, p. 135.

\textsuperscript{51}Beatie, "First In Nevada," pp. 170-171. See also Reese, "Mormon Station," p. 188.

\textsuperscript{52}Reese, "Mormon Station," p. 188. Congress had taken action earlier on a plea for statehood but on September 9, 1850, gave
John Reese organized a company to set up a trading outpost in the western portion of the Utah Territory and on April 10, 1851, the group departed from Salt Lake City. By the twenty-second of April the company had passed the Bear River ferry on its way to what was expected to be a successful business enterprise. Many of the members of the group had only intended to stay for the trading season and to return before the winter set in.

Reese, his loaded wagons and companions arrived in Carson Valley on the first of June and located in the area of the old Mormon Station established a year before. Reese first bought out Moore whom Beatie and company sold to, and then gave two sacks of flour to Chief Jim of the Washoe tribe who also claimed ownership to the land. Reese and his men built a store and planted a crop on the purchased land that year, but to their disappointment the number of passing emigrants was very insignificant. However, during the later months of 1851 a number of California citizens came into the Carson Valley to settle permanently.

On November 12, 1851, most of those living in the immediate area decided to organize a local squatter government. Their record

---


56Thompson and West, Nevada, p. 32.
of the proceedings indicate they were concerned about the law, land claims, timber and water rights, toll bridges and roads. The first law suit in that area was likewise recorded in this early record.

Although 1851 was not a good year for trade, 1852 was the reverse. For Reese it was profitable; adequate supplies could not be kept to satisfy the needs of the emigrants. While his reminiscences gave a ring of success to the year of 1852, others saw problems. Thomas S. Williams passed through Carson Valley on June 24, 1852, and he reported to Brigham Young:

Your Excellency will please find enclosed a transcript a document served upon me in the shape of a summons and attachment. Having had a little leisure, I considered it expedient to inform your Excellency as brief as possible about some of the doings of the citizens of this valley, so that you in your wisdom may take such steps as will insure or protect the interest of our people who may be traveling in these parts from the Territory of Utah, which your Excellency has the honor to govern. The citizens of this valley declare in language too strong to utter that they will no longer be governed or tried by Mormon law, that they are chiefly organized here to redress the wrongs inflicted on United States citizens who had the good luck, or were fortunate enough to escape with life and limb from Utah (especially from Salt Lake). I did not upon reading this writ and attachment (by a constable of their own appointment) recognize their jurisdiction or legality in the proceedings, as the matter had been fully settled by a legal process in G. S. L. City. Major Holeman, Holliday, Warner Livingston, Kinkade and others who are here from the territory supported me and commended the course I have pursued which I trust will be likewise agreeable to your Excellency. I have learned that they (the citizens of Carson Valley) have withdrawn their suit as they could not legally plant any. Mr. Peebles has left and gone over the mountains to California. I do not on my own behalf apprehend any danger or trouble as regards to my affair with Mr. Peebles. But I do know that if there are no legal steps taken to organize this part of the territory, the safety of the inhabitants will always


58 Ibid., p. 2.

be in danger while sojourning in these parts. I would not have troubled your Excellency with these matters, but thought that your knowledge of these things might prove a benefit to our people. I myself know that Col. Reese and his nephew Mr. Kinsey who are both so good and accommodating while in Salt Lake have been ringleaders in opposing the organization of the territory of Utah and declare they will pay no taxes that are levied on them from that source and advise others to hold out in like manner until, they get this valley annexed to California.  

The disharmony between Western Utah and the Utah capital was even more apparent when the disaffected citizens of Carson Valley petitioned the Surveyor General of California or the Territory of Utah. By December 15, 1852, after the survey, the Surveyor General "was reluctantly forced to the conclusion that the valley was from twelve to fifteen miles out of the state of California."  

Apparently many of the citizens of Carson Valley by early 1853 were still displeased with the fact that they were officially in Utah territory. Consequently forty-three of their number, which had grown rapidly, petitioned the legislature of California to annex their area to California for judicial purposes until the Congress of the United States could make other arrangements.  

The California legislature failed to act on the petition and as a result the squatter government continued to function in absence of too little attention from either California or the distant Utah government. The area thereafter saw a gradual population increase. A few settlers came from Eastern Utah but by far the majority came from the

---

60 "JHC," June 24, 1852.  
state of California. The people began to expand their economy by building a saw mill, starting an additional dry goods store, and increasing agricultural production. As a result they became fairly prosperous.

Financially, the settlement in Carson Valley seemed to be a success, but spiritually, as far as the Mormon Church was concerned, it was failing. Edwin D. Wooley reported on the condition in a letter to Joseph Cain June 19, 1853. Wooley stated:

This is a great country when we get it all fenced in, whether it has changed much for better or worse since you were here I cannot say, but if for the worse it must have been very fast, it is the most God-forsaken place that ever I was in, and as to Mormonism, I can't find it here. If the name remains, the Spirit has fled. I have my doubts whether Mormonism can exist in the country as far as I have been.

It should be evident by now that the settlement of Carson Valley was not instituted by the Mormon Church. Generally those who went there were not in harmony with the Church in Salt Lake City. The settlement had an unsavory reputation and was not by any stretch of the imagination sanctioned by Mormon leaders. In the overall colonial picture, to that date, it was not part of the system being established throughout the Great Basin.

Communication between Carson Valley and Salt Lake City was almost non-existent except for travelers such as John and Enoch Reese, Hampton S. Beatie and others who traveled back and forth in pursuit of

---

63 Hunter, Brigham Young, p. 259, citing "Manuscript History of Nevada," p. 11.

64 Thompson and West, Nevada, p. 35.

65 News item in the Deseret News, July 30, 1853.

66 Morgan, Humboldt, p. 203.
business. However, George Chorpenning, who had secured the United States mail contract from the government in April of 1851 between Salt Lake City and California by way of Carson Valley, did visit Mormon Station fairly regularly. 67 No real advantage for the people in the Carson area developed from this service even though a mail station was established in that community as early as 1851. If anything, trouble was forthcoming and as a result the first law suit of Western Utah was filed against Chorpenning by Reese. Chorpenning, while carrying the mail to California, had been furnished by Reese with $675 in supplies for which he had refused to pay. When the case came to trial Reese had very little trouble winning the suit. 68

There were more problems in Carson Valley than appeared on the surface, as revealed by the Indian Agent John H. Holeman. Holeman reported to Brigham Young, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, on September 30, 1853:

In my last annual report I have it as my opinion that it was very important to the peace and safety of travel on this route that the government should establish a post on these rivers; without which, I firmly believe, there will be no safety to emigration. The road is lined with trading posts from California to within 150 miles of this city, principally by men from California; they station themselves at every point where food is to be found. Their stock in trade consists principally of liquors; scarcely an article is found that the emigrants stand most in need of. By unkind treatment to the Indians they make them unfriendly toward the emigrants; schisms arise which they take advantage of, and steal, and commit more depredations than the Indians, all of which they manage to have charged to the Indians. 69


Holeman was even told by the Indians that the traders advised them to steal from the emigrants. The traders would then market the stolen goods. When he warned the traders they just laughed at him and the laws of Utah.

Holeman's second visit to Western Utah confirmed his first impressions made two years previous in 1851. His 1853 report gives a vivid account of conditions in the general area:

I feel satisfied that until the government throws protection over this route, and places the means within the reach of the officers to enforce their authority and laws, there can be no safety to travel. The whites who infest the country are far more troublesome than the Indians.

With the combination of Indian trouble and annexation aspirations, the Utah Territorial government under Mormon influence felt the need to act in behalf of Western Utah. Either the establishment of a fort or the inclusion of the area within territorial organization and jurisdiction seemed imperative. Apparently the latter suited the Mormons better, as the Utah legislature on January 17, 1854, created Carson County. The local newspaper reported the territorial change:

Section I. Be it enacted by the Governor and Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Utah, that all that portion of country bounded north by Deseret County, east by the parallel of longitude 118 degrees, south by the boundary line of this Territory, and west by California, is hereby included within the limits of Carson County; and until organized, is attached to Millard county for election, revenue, and judicial purposes.

Section II. The Governor is hereby authorized to appoint a Probate Judge for said county, when he shall proceed to organize said county, by dividing the county into precincts: and causing an election to be held according to law, to fill the various county

---

70 Ibid., p. 447.
71 Ibid.
and precinct offices, and locate the county seat thereof.\(^{72}\)

Juab, Millard and Iron counties were reduced in size to allow for the creation of Carson County which was given one seat in the legislature. United States Justice George P. Stiles was assigned to preside over the county\(^{73}\) which was in the third judicial district of the territory.\(^{74}\)

Beyond this piece of legislation, however, nothing more was done on behalf of the county by the Utah legislature for over a year.

On August 31, 1854, there arrived in Salt Lake City a federal government official who was to have an effect on all of Utah including Carson County. Lt. Colonel Edward J. Steptoe was sent by President Franklin Pierce to the Utah Territory as his appointee to replace Governor Brigham Young.\(^{75}\) Orson Hyde acknowledged the presence of Steptoe and his men in the Salt Lake City area in the following note:

Colonel Steptoe, of the United States Army, with his command, is now in our Territory, and expects to winter with us. This gentlemanly officer and his associates have the good will of our society, and have thus far acted in a manner becoming officers of their rank. The Colonel wishes his men to conform to the best principles and rules of moral society; and if we mistake not, has order to this effect.\(^{76}\)

In addition to his duties as territorial governor Steptoe was to investigate the possibility of constructing a road from Salt Lake

---


\(^{73}\)"Carson County," Deseret News, February 15, 1855.


\(^{75}\)Neff, Utah, p. 180.

\(^{76}\)Orson Hyde, "Honor to Whom Honor," Deseret News, October 26, 1854.
City to California.\textsuperscript{77} The Colonel decided to search for a more direct route to Carson Valley from Salt Lake City.\textsuperscript{78} Since John Reese and four others had just pioneered a new and shorter route further south, Steptoe believed Reese to be a logical guide.\textsuperscript{79} A group under Reese started out on September 18 and arrived at Mormon Station on October 15. After more than two weeks rest they started back on November 1 and arrived in Salt Lake City on the twenty-seventh of the same month. The return trip was made in three days less than their journey westward. The new route, by use of the Beckwith Cutoff, was 150 miles shorter than the old trail.\textsuperscript{80} Oliver B. Huntington who had gone along gave a glowing account of Carson Valley:

\begin{quote}
We were detained in Carson Valley 17 days, in which time we took good notice of the advantages of that country. Its soil and climate is equal to the best of the mountain valleys. Its timber is exhaustless and of superior quality.\textsuperscript{81}
\end{quote}

At the close of 1854 the \textit{Deseret News} published a report of the

\textsuperscript{77}Steptoe's responsibilities as Utah Territorial governor were eliminated by the fact that he, along with others, worked to get the reappointment of Brigham Young to the governorship. They determined that Young had the approval of the entire settlement, was a "firm supporter of the Constitution and the laws of the United States," had diligently defended the interests of the nation, and in sum "would better subserve the territorial interests than the appointment of any other man." As a result of this work Young retained his office as governor of the territory. During the process of his stay in Utah Steptoe's bill to the federal government for road improvements in the Territory was approximately $25,000.

\textsuperscript{78}Oliver B. and Clark A. Huntington, "New Route: From Carson Valley to Great Salt Lake City," \textit{Deseret News}, December 7, 1854.

\textsuperscript{79}Thompson and West, \textit{Nevada}, p. 37. See also Brooks, "Mormons in Carson County," p. 15.

\textsuperscript{80}Huntington, "New Route," \textit{Deseret News}, December 7, 1854.

\textsuperscript{81}\textit{Ibid.}
trip. The success of the expedition was stressed and the good news of wonderful opportunities in Carson Valley was brought to the public's attention.82

Up to this point the settlement of Latter-day Saints at Mormon Station and in the Carson Valley had not been directed as a special colonization movement by the Mormon Church officials.83 However, 1855 would bring a change in this policy.

82 Ibid.
83 Hunter, Brigham Young, p. 260.
Chapter 2

CARSON COUNTY 1855

Brigham Young and the other Mormon leaders had been aware of problems in the Carson Valley settlement since 1851. It was hoped that the creation of Carson County by the legislature in January, 1854, would give the people in that valley some identity with the Territory of Utah. However, if anything, it increased the problems between the government in Salt Lake City and the citizens in the Carson area. The succeeding months after the county's creation gave ample evidence that the people of Carson Valley were not of the same temperament as those in the Salt Lake Valley.

During 1854 Brigham Young reflected on the situation and came to the conclusion that the best course of action would be to give the Carson County more autonomy for the purpose of preserving the interest of the Territory of Utah. He decided to use the January Organic Act of that year as the basis of his plan. The Act had authorized him to appoint a probate judge who in turn would:

... proceed to organize said county, by dividing the county into precincts; and causing an election to be held according to law, to fill the various county and precinct offices, and locate the county seat thereof.¹

Brigham Young thought over the possible candidates for the job and came to the conclusion that the fifty year old Orson Hyde would be

a worthy representative for both Church and Territory. He wrote to
Hyde on January 17, 1855, asking if he would take the positions:

Having for sometime contemplated organizing Carson County. Whenever
my mind should settle upon a suitable person to go and
reside there two or three years, and you incidentally mentioning
that "you were now ready for anything that might be required of
you." It suggested itself to my mind to make the propositions
to you. Would you be willing to take that mission, and if so
would you like to receive the appointment of Judge of Probate from
the present legislative assembly and again would you like to be
associated in a charter with J & E Reese in making a road through
the two canyons leading over the mountains into California with
authority to erect toll gates thereon as contemplated in a petition
now before the legislative assembly. I should be pleased to know
your feelings in relation to these propositions previous to making
any move in the matter or suggestions to anyone else. Please to
answer soon as the time of adjournment is near at hand . . . .

Apostle Hyde accepted the responsibility as probate judge and
ecclesiastical leader of the Mormon county. He was also aware that
the Church leaders were interested in building a majority of Mormon

---

2Orson Hyde had been converted to the Mormon religion in 1831
after serving as a pastor in the Campbellite movement in Ohio. From
his baptism to the winter of 1835 Hyde served almost continuously as a
missionary in Ohio, New York, Massachusetts, Maine, Rhode Island and
Pennsylvania. On February 15, 1835, he was chosen as one of the Twelve
Apostles and thereafter served on a number of missions abroad. Most
noteworthy was his call to Jerusalem in 1840 where he dedicated and
consecrated the land for the gathering of the Jews. In 1846 while in
England he was given the responsibility of publishing the Millennial
Star for one year. When Hyde returned to the United States in 1847 he
was elevated to the position of president of the quorum of the twelve.
From 1849 to 1853 he published the Frontier Guardian at Kanesville,
Iowa. Hyde then moved to the Salt Lake Valley in 1853 where he was
called by Brigham Young to lead a company of Mormons to Fort Supply to
settle the area on behalf of the Church. Two years later he was called
to serve in Carson Valley. (Andrew Jenson, Latter-Day Saint Biographical
Encyclopedia (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1901), pp. 80-82.)

3Brigham Young to Orson Hyde, Salt Lake City, Utah, January 17,
1855. Brigham Young's Letterbook, Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake
City, Utah. The library and archives of the Mormon Church are located
in the office of the Church Historian, 47 East South Temple Street.
Unless otherwise indicated, all the personal letters of Young, Hyde and
certain others used in this study are found in the Church Historian's
Office.
settlers in that region for voting power. Therefore, he expected that a goodly number of Saints would be called as missionaries\(^4\) to make the settlement. Through this process the Mormons intended to control the county politically as well as guarantee religious freedom in that area for their sect.\(^5\)

Two days after Young's letter to Hyde the legislative assembly of the Territory of Utah, to further show its honorable intentions toward the new county, authorized one representative from Carson County to the Utah legislature. Weber County's representation was reduced by one as compensation.\(^6\)

Alber Carrington, editor of the *Deseret News*, on February 15, wrote in an attempt to mollify the citizens of Carson County. He summarized the efforts of the Territory of Utah for the past thirteen months and commented on some other problems existing between the two areas to reassure the people in Western Utah that their needs and interests were foremost in the hearts and minds of those in Salt Lake City. Carrington wrote editorially that:

The legislative assembly of 1854-55 passed "an act defining the boundaries of Carson County, and providing for the organization thereof," and gave it the following boundaries—"North by Desert

\(^4\)It was the custom of the Mormon Church to send out different kinds of missionaries depending on the type of work to be done. Some missionaries were called to proselyte, others to colonize; however, the first Mormon missionaries called to Carson County went there to assist Orson Hyde in County matters.

\(^5\)Brigham Young had other motives for establishing this colony in Western Utah. He was interested in creating an Indian mission, a military stronghold, a stake of the Church and in making Carson Valley a subsidiary gathering place for the Saints coming from California.

\(^6\)"Resolution: Apportioning a Representative to Carson County," *Deseret News*, February 8, 1855.
county, east by the parallel of longitude 118 degrees south by the boundary line of this Territory, and west by California." The Assembly which adjourned on the 19th inst. apportioned one representative to that county; reorganized the Judicial Districts, making Carson County the third; assigned the Hon. George P. Stiles, Associate Justice, to that district, and elected the Hon. Orson Hyde, Probate Judge of the county; both of whom will proceed, at an early date, to personally, and efficiently aid the inhabitants of that portion of our Territory with their skill, and wisdom.

We publish the foregoing that the people of Carson County may be advised that the legislature of Utah have not been unmindful of their situation, and have legislated, with a view to promote their welfare, as speedily as the number of the population seemed to warrant. The Cal. Mail, of the 27th ult., brought the return of a provisional election in Carson County, and a petition signed by William B. Thorington, and nine other residents, to the House of Representatives, asking for the organization of that county, and the sanction of their election. These petitioners will at once perceive that their papers did not arrive until the Assembly had adjourned, but will doubtless be pleased to learn that their desires had been complied with, so far as lay in the power of any authorities in Utah. In regard to their petition for an Indian Agent, it is obvious to all who know the facts in the case, that no place in Utah, even if at any other point in the States; needs an Agent more than that region. Still, as the Indian Department have often been applied to from this quarter for the appointment of Agents, and Sub Agents, and without any attention being paid to ones wishes, it will doubtless be best for the people of Carson to directly petition the Department, and perhaps their request will be attended to. In the meantime we congratulate the settlers in our western borders upon the energy they evince in their movements for organized civilization, and are pleased in being able to assure them of the hearty co-operation of their eastern brethren in every laudable, and beneficial effort for their best interests. It may be possible now to induce the Post Office Department to put mail service on the line between this city and California by way of Carson Valley, since without it, one portion of our inhabitants are, in a matter, isolated from the balance.7

Carrington's remarks publicly gave evidence to those living in Carson Valley that the Territorial officials were interested in their situation and in the general well-being of the citizens in that distant valley.

On March 21, just prior to the departure of Orson Hyde for Carson Valley to fulfill the Territorial responsibilities and Lt. Col. Edward J. Steptoe for California, Hyde again in the Deseret News

acknowledged the fact that Steptoe was "noble minded and honorable." He also spoke in like terms of some of Steptoe's men. Hyde and Steptoe would meet again in a little over two months near Carson Valley under not so favorable circumstances.\(^9\)

After Hyde's company had left the city the **Deseret News** reported their departure and plans for Western Utah:


Messrs. Hyde, Stiles, and Heywood go out on official business pertaining to the organization of Carson County, and holding courts therein. A part of this company, in connection with Col. Reese of Carson, intend to make a good road up Carson River Canyon to our western boundary, to connect with a road being made by the people of California.\(^10\)

After leaving Salt Lake City on May 16, Hyde and company traveled north to the Bear River; thereafter they turned more westwardly expecting to reach the Humboldt within a few miles. Hyde commented on the trip to Haw's ranch in what is now northeastern Nevada:

I think that I should be unwilling to exchange my garden of one and a half acres in Salt Lake City, for all the land that I have seen lying between the point of the mountain a few miles north west of Bear River ferry to within thirty-five miles of this ranch, a distance of about 200 miles.\(^11\)

---


\(^9\) Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Carson County, June 19, 1855.

\(^10\) "Departures," **Deseret News**, May 30, 1855. The missionaries who accompanied Orson Hyde were: N. Dodge, Seth Dustin, George W. Hancock, Shepherd Hutchins, Chester Loveland, Christopher Merkely and his son Nelson, James and Simpson Riddle, and Riley Steward.

After the company passed the ranch and progressed further down the Humboldt River Judge Hyde began to change his opinion of that part of Western Utah.

The very best mountain grass waves in rich abundance all around you. There is plenty for all the stock that ever did travel, or ever will on this western route. The water is as abundant as anyone could wish, and as pure and clear as the crystal itself. The finest speckled trout abound in all the streams. We saw them, caught them, and ate them, and we know that they are good; yet it is a cold country, most admirably calculated for stock growing, and entirely free from saleratus. Potatoes and small grain may be produced here to a limited extent, as far down as this place. Here it grows warmer, and the soil and climate more adapted to agriculture pursuits.12

Orson Hyde's evaluation of this part of Western Utah was characteristic of those who traveled this northern route. To a greater degree it foreshadows the conditions the Mormons settlers would labor under during the next two years. This area was good stock raising country but rather poor farming land.

On June 2, Hyde, Stiles and Heywood crossed the Humboldt to visit Lt. Col. Steptoes' camp and to discuss with the Colonel matters concerning Carson Valley. Hyde wrote to Brigham Young explaining their reasons for conferring with Steptoe:

Our object . . . was to allay a little acrimony that we thought might exist so that the command might not give aid, strength and comfort to the rebellious in Carson Valley. We wished to mollify things a little and pave the way for a better state of feeling in Carson Valley. Whereas if we had slid by them and not called at all, they would have said that we were afraid or ashamed to call on them. We knew we had to meet in Carson, and we thought we would visit them a little beforehand. Col. S. appears like a gentleman, but some of his officers cannot bear a justly minted rebuke for their corruption and licentious practices. On the whole, our visit had a most beneficial effect.

12Ibid.
A little time will disclose the finale.\textsuperscript{13}

It is evident they expected hostility from some of the Carson citizens. After leaving Steptoe on the Humboldt, it took the company fifteen days to reach the John and Enoch Reese ranch in Carson Valley which Judge Hyde described in a letter to President Young:

We arrived at J. & E. Reese's Ranch in this county on the 17th inst. We had an excellent trip, but a very fatiguing one for both man and beast... Messrs. J. & E. Reese have a most splendid mill and ranch. The labor that has been done by them is immense.

\textsuperscript{13} Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Carson County, June 19, 1855. It should be noted here that Hyde had indicated at least twice in the Deseret News that all was well in Salt Lake City relative to the conduct of Col. Steptoe and his men. This does not appear to be completely true according to the above letter. When Judge Hyde and company met Steptoe on the Humboldt trouble developed between one of the Colonel's men and Hyde. The incident was reported to Governor Young:

On Saturday night June 2nd, I, Marshal Heywood, and Judge Stiles crossed over the Humboldt to see Col. Steptoe as we passed. He received us cordially and treated us very gentlemanly. While at his marker, Capt. Ingalls with several others came in and the Capt. immediately undertook to call me to an account for what I had said about him in Salt Lake City at a public meeting. The Col. reproved him for touching the subject at that time. He apologized to the Col. but insisted upon my telling him what I said; and I told him plainly that I highly disapproved of his abducting the two minor girls from Salt Lake City in the way that he did.

Whereupon he slapped me in the face and drew a revolver instantly. My pistols being in the holsters outside on my horse, I was not exactly prepared to measure arms with him at that time. He was taken out of the Col's tent immediately and the Col. felt very bad at the occurrence and said that he would prove to us that he should be dealt with according to his offenses. Next day he, Ingalls, sent me word that he would see me in Carson Valley. He is expected in here in the course of two or three days. He will hardly find me so unprepared I think. I am resolved to defend myself if I have to shoot him down wherever and whenever I see him. I said nothing but the truth about him in Salt Lake City, yet not all the truth. The balance I have resolved to tell him on his arrival here. It is out of no revenge that I do it; but personal safety requires it in my judgement. The Lord order the matter!

Though the problem seemed to be very serious at the time it did not fully develop into a clash between Hyde and Ingalls because the Captain never came to Carson Valley to carry out his threats. (Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Carson County, June 19, 1855.)
Their crops generally look well. However, grasshoppers are very destructive on wheat and vegetables, especially on late wheat. The harvest will be only middling on account of the insects.

This is a beautiful valley; and if I say anything about it, I must speak in its praise. There are also many valleys in this vicinity rich and fertile sufficient to make a state or an empire.\footnote{Ibid. Parts of this letter were published under the title of, "Carson County: From Elder O. Hyde to Governor Young," in the Deseret News on August 1, 1855.}

In this same company was Hampton S. Beatie, who had been in the Carson Valley five years before. He gave a more exact description of the valley:

In 1853\footnote{Beatie is in error in recalling the date of 1853. The year was actually 1855 as the other facts indicate. Beatie is not known for his accuracy in his reminiscences.} I went out to Carson Valley with an escort with Marshall Hayward and Judge Stiles who were going for the purpose of organizing Carson as a County in pursuance of an act of the legislature the winter before. Enoch Reese went with the company and I was in his employ. Took thirty or forty head of mules and disposed of them in the Sacramento mountains. Took provisions from here for the Colonel's station out there.

Then I found houses built extending through the whole length of Carson Valley--frame houses, blacksmith shop and a mill had gone up. There were no mines in the country then unless there were some in the hills that were not known. Farming and stock-raising was the principle trade. The Indians that came in were friendly disposed and would help to get in the harvest etc. Produce was sold to the emigrants still. There was about a dozen houses in the valley at that time. No houses anywhere else. There was a trading post called Ragtown on the emigrant line E. of Genoa, which was trading with emigrants.\footnote{Beatie, "First In Nevada," p. 171.}

There is no doubt that Carson Valley was very attractive for both Gentiles and Mormons alike. But this was not the only reason the Mormon leaders had sent their representatives there. Political unity was also an objective of the Salt Lake leaders for this troublesome area. Hyde gave his evaluation to Young in a letter regarding the
politics of the county:

The people generally in this valley are anxious for an organization of some kind. They are much divided in their views and feelings. Some are willing to come under Utah, others claim that they live in California, while some want a distinct Territorial Government, embracing the valleys and country half way to Salt Lake. This country has been neglected quite long enough if Utah wishes to hold it. It is a great and valuable country.17

Judge Hyde was very favorably impressed by Carson Valley and its importance to the Territory of Utah. In his letter to Brigham Young on June 19, 1855, there is evidence of other reasons for his being in that area. One of the most important assignments Hyde had was that of commissioner to aid in the establishment of the proper boundary between the state of California and the Territory of Utah. However, problems immediately developed which prevented the early completion of that responsibility. Hyde had expected California Governor John Bigler in Carson Valley to aid in the settling of the boundary between the two areas. Bigler was to have acted as road commissioner for his state but after he did not show up in ten days Hyde became concerned. Judge Hyde wrote to Governor Young on the nineteenth of June and reported that Bigler was not coming to Western Utah for the time being.18 Hyde knew California was aware of the value of the Carson Valley area and he was concerned over that state's position in regard to settling the boundary.

California is not going to take any measures to establish this line in my opinion, with the view of keeping the line in doubt that she may stand the better chance to get the country by hook or crook. If the line be correctly established Cal., I think, knows she will lose; but if she can keep it in doubt

17 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Carson County, June 19, 1855.
18 Ibid.
and mist she hopes to gain by an appeal to Congress. 19

In order to speed up action Hyde advised Young to send Orson Pratt with surveying instruments. Hyde felt sure the government at Washington would ultimately pay for the survey, but he was afraid if the line and organization were not completed by the next session of Congress Utah would lose that valuable country either by annexation or by the creation of a separate territory. It would be unwise to try to organize the county and locate the county seat until after the survey. 20 He determined that the only hope at present for a quick settlement over the boundary was to go to California and see if he could not stimulate some action there.

There were also two additional reasons for the Judge's presence in Western Utah. First, Hyde was to investigate the possibility of creating an Indian mission in the Carson area. He wrote:

The prospects for an Indian mission are very flattering; yet it is the labor of time, patience and perseverance to do much with this benighted race. We intend to spare no pains, however, which may be in our power to take, to do a good deed or work for Laman. 21

Hyde's second assignment was to determine the worth to the territory of Carson Valley and its surrounding area. If his feelings were not evident earlier, he chose to make them very clear and apparent to the leaders in Salt Lake City when he wrote:

I would say, secure, secure for growing and increasing Utah. As an Indian agent, I care not five cents about the line or country; but as an agent for a great people I say that I want it secured. The timber, the water, the grass, the fish, the remarkably healthful

19 Ibid.
20 Ibid.
21 Ibid.
climate and rich soil are elements of vital importance to the increasing strength and glory of Zion. Its mineral wealth, though of minor consideration, is hardly exceeded by any portion of California if they can manage to get water to it, which they are now endeavoring to do. With the views and feelings of the people here, the work assigned me in this country is not the work of a week or month. It will require patience and perseverance to do anything to account.\textsuperscript{22}

It is evident from the above excerpt that Hyde was very favorably impressed by the possibilities of the area around Carson Valley. He hereafter is partially if not wholly responsible for the further Mormon development of Carson County by encouraging Brigham Young to secure the county.

After remaining in Carson Valley for less than a week Judge Hyde, Judge Stiles and Marshal Heywood continued on to California. They reached Sacramento on the twenty-fifth of June with intentions of going on to San Francisco to fulfill additional responsibilities.

While in Sacramento Hyde saw Governor Bigler who referred him to the Surveyor General S. H. Marlette for help in determining the line. Judge Hyde's first impressions were confirmed as he talked with Marlette who indicated California's disinterest in establishing the boundary at that time. However, when Hyde told Marlette that he had sent for a competent man from Salt Lake City to survey the line he took a different attitude about the project and soon recommended the use of the California surveyors for the work. Judge Hyde agreed to the proposal, understanding that the job would be undertaken in a week or ten days.\textsuperscript{23}

In the meantime Hyde took time to write to the Church leaders

\textsuperscript{22}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{23}Orson Hyde to Jedeiah M. Grant, Sacramento, California, June 27, 1855.
in Salt Lake City regarding his mission in California, which showed another of the many responsibilities of Judge Hyde in Carson County. In writing to Jedediah M. Grant from Sacramento on June 27, Hyde stated: "My letter of instruction requires me to take the financial oversight of a paper to be published by Bro. Parley & Cannon, and Parley is going home." Some confusion existed in regard to this particular assignment because Parley P. Pratt had gone back to Utah. Judge Hyde felt that it was:

... a poor investment to start a press here at present so far as dollars and cents are concerned. The paper will not support itself judging from the tone of the public sentiment. But in another light it may break down much prejudice and prove like bread cast upon the waters, seen after many days. Br. Parley has been here longer than I, and he is better prepared to judge of it than myself. I have no communication with him upon any subject as yet.

In San Francisco Hyde found his situation even more confused because of the problems presented by the job of probate judge in Carson and his responsibilities to the paper in California. Both jobs demanded more attention than he could give considering the fact that he would have had to travel back and forth from Carson Valley to California which would have consumed more time and money than he had or hoped to receive in the near future. The Judge felt that another man should be assigned to one of the two positions. Hyde explained this to Young:

I am ready to operate at Carson or in this place as you may think best; but to attempt to operate in both, under present circumstances, I fear may defeat both. I expect to go to Carson

---

24 Ibid.
25 Ibid.
26 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, San Francisco, California, July 3, 1855.
in a few days and organize, to attend to the mission and to prepare for a settlement. I am ready to resign my judgeship if you think best or return it. Br. Parley having gone home, we are short of an editor until he be sent back or another appointed.27

When Hyde returned to Carson Valley he felt the need to address the citizens of that area on the subject of his assignment in the valley. Quite a number turned out and the Judge had very good success with the exception of one outspoken individual, Hirman Mott. Mott warned the people of tyranny, usurpation, taxation of emigrants, tithing, and hell and damnation. The residents of Carson Valley decided to gather and vote to determine whether there would be an organization in the valley or not. Hyde, seeing the matter slipping from his grasp, proposed to postpone the voting until boundaries were settled. He suggested that if a survey proved they were in the Territory of Utah then they should submit to that authority; however, if on the other hand they were in California, then they should respond to that state. This proposal was almost unanimously agreed upon but Judge Hyde was of the opinion that at this time most of the people were interested in being associated with California because of its closeness to their area which aided trade and intercourse with the merchants over the mountains. The settlement of the boundary line would work in the favor of Utah and cure some of the problems in the valley. However, the Judge was somewhat pessimistic about the swift completion of the line by the California authorities:

27Ibid. On September 29, 1855, Governor Young released Hyde from his commitments to the newspaper in San Francisco and appointed the capable George Q. Cannon to the position. This action settled that problem and gave the Judge more freedom and liberty to work with the affairs of Carson County.
I have seen Gov. Bigler, the Surveyor General, Mr. Marlette . . . They promised to attend to it; yet it was with a doubtful and faltering tone. I have little faith that they will attend to it. They want the line to remain unsettled till they can ask Congress to give them all this country which application, if made, should be strenuously opposed by our delegate.  

Because of the problems over Carson Valley, Judge Hyde sent out parties to explore other areas east of their present location for possible settlement sites. Men were first sent to Walker's River Valley. They reported that the valley was fifty miles directly east of Carson Valley and unfortunately was not fit for farming or settling. One good note was the numerous Indians in that area who seemed very friendly and appeared good subjects for the Indian mission.

Preparations were later made to investigate the Washoe and Truckee valleys to the north. Judge Hyde felt that the Ruby Valley, about half way between Salt Lake City and the Carson area, would be a possible Mormon settlement site because of its abundance of grass, water, trees and good soil. As a matter of fact Hyde used deception to discourage a number of Californians who had planned to settle there by telling them that a large number of Mormon men had gone there to build a fort in preparation to receive their families. Hyde expressed his opinion to Governor Young by stating that a strong settlement should be established in Ruby Valley because a new territory was being talked about by some. This area would cover the territory between Salt Lake City and the Sierra-Nevada range. It was Hyde's impression that if a

---

28Orson Hyde to Brigham Young or the Presidency, Carson Valley, Carson County, July 15, 1855.
29Ibid.
30Ibid.
Mormon settlement were created there, then the Church would have no trouble controlling it.\(^{31}\) In his closing remarks to Brigham Young on July 15, 1855, Judge Hyde indicated they might change locations for more compatible reasons.

If we find a good location in the valley north and east, our missionaries will take a location there and open farms, and unless you counsel otherwise, I had thoughts of directing those from California to locate there who cannot well go through to Salt Lake . . . .

This valley (Carson) is decidedly a great stock growing place, but inferior to Salt Lake for crops. I said in a former communication to you that I must speak in favor of it to you; but to others I shall speak as wisdom guides. It is not a great grain growing country. It is frosty and healthy having good water, grass and timber.\(^{32}\)

After exploring and giving considerable thought to the valleys in the neighborhood of Mormon Station, Hyde decided to return to California in order to speed up the process of getting the line surveyed. When he visited the California authorities the second time, it was agreed that he would furnish three competent men and two animals to accompany the California team lead by George H. Goddard. Hyde assigned Christopher Merkley, Seth Dustin and George W. Hancock to the surveying group and in addition he accompanied the men most of the time himself.\(^{33}\) They began the survey from Placerville and continued to work for the better part of August and September.\(^{34}\)

From Placerville we proceeded along the old Carson route,

\(^{31}\) Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Genoa, Carson County, October 2, 1855.

\(^{32}\) *Ibid.*

\(^{33}\) Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Carson County, September 4, 1855.

taking observations every night and triangulations every day carefully, and from peak to peak. Came to a halt between the summits and for ten days and nights or more took a series of observations and triangulations, bearings etc. Afterwards made other halts in the mountains. Our men were detained in these mountains so much longer than they anticipated that they became somewhat dissatisfied. They discovered that the country was being mapped, and many bearings taken with the view of aiding the survey of the road. They considered this, extra service, and not forwarding the establishment of the line particularly; but as both maps and the road across the mountains would prove highly convenient and useful to the public generally, and as a series of observations, triangulations and bearings in the vicinity and neighborhood of the line would enable us to arrive, with greater certainty, to the true course and position of the main angle running from the point north, where the 39th degree of north latitude crosses at right angle the hundred and twentieth degree of west longitude I encouraged them to continue to the last, which they have manfully done remaining in the mountains many chilly days and frosty nights. It was a cold and stormy berth; but it is done.\(^{35}\)

Before Orson Hyde and the Carson residents knew of the results of the survey, the district court was organized by Judge George P. Stiles on September 3. He sat on the bench with Hyde acting as the clerk of the court and L. A. Norton as the district attorney. This annual session lasted four days but little business was done. Business completed, Judge Stiles and Marshal Heywood left for Salt Lake City leaving Judge Hyde to organize the county.\(^{36}\) They arrived in the Mormon capital on October 3 and there indicated that ". . . all was peaceful, with a prevailing good feeling towards the Hon. O. Hyde . . . " in Carson County.\(^{37}\)

About this same time, September 4, 1855, Hyde wrote to Brigham

\(^{35}\) Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Genoa, Carson County, September 30, 1855.

\(^{36}\) News item in the Sacramento Daily Union, September 19, 1855.

Young informing him that within a few days they would know whether Carson was in Utah or California. In this same letter Hyde again, but more plainly, expressed his lack of interest for his assignment as the probate judge. He also invited President Young to send him a wife if it was his responsibility to stay in Carson Valley for an undetermined time. In regard to the probate judgeship and the wife situation Hyde stated:

I should think that it would be well for some man of a little strength and forecast to be in this western part of the Territory to keep an eye upon things here. Yet I have no wish to stay if I am needed more in any other place. But if I do stay I want a wife with me. Either Marinder or Mary Ann or some one else, say sister Paschall . . . I will leave it to you however to determine . . . If you think not wisdom for anyone to come to me from the Lake, may I get one here if I can find one to suit? . . . all right if you think I had better stay here I wish ever to be at the service of the church, and am determined to engage in nothing except that which I am sure is right and that will meet with your approbation. To anyone who had not some faith and patience, this has been the darkest and least desirable mission, and the most dull and discouraging prospects that ever presented themselves to me. But I have been determined and still am to hold on and to do all in my power to accomplish a good work here.

I wish you to write me if you please on reading of this and let me know if I am to remain here for any length of time and give me a word of counsel about a wife before alluded to; and then I will make my calculations and take measures accordingly.

The chances to get a wife here are not very many even if a man wanted to get one in this country. Women are scarce here, and good ones are scarcer still.38

Three days later on September 7, Surveyor Goddard arrived in Carson Valley and officially informed Judge Hyde that the principal part of the Carson Valley was on the Territory of Utah's side of the line.39

On receiving this information Hyde immediately called for an election to be held at Mormon Station on the twentieth of the month.

On the designated day all Mormons who ran for county offices

38 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Carson County, September 4, 1855.
were elected. One non-Mormon, Charles D. Daggett, was also elected to the county slate. The elected officials included:

(1) James C. Fain, Sheriff  
(2) Henry W. Niles, Surveyor  
(3) Charles D. Daggett, Prosecuting Attorney  
(4) Richard D. Sides, Treasurer  
(5) H. M. Hodges, Constable  
(6) James A. Williams, Constable  
(7) Nicholas Ambrosia, Justice of the Peace  
(8) Henry Van Sickle, Justice of the Peace  
(9) Henry D. Sears, Selectmen  
(10) William P. Allen, Selectmen  
(11) James Mckarlin, Selectmen

Orson Hyde sent a general abstract of the proceedings of the day to the "Honorable Secretary at Salt Lake City" and a letter to Governor Young which also included the election news and selected location of the county seat. Because there was some difference of opinion regarding the location of the Carson county seat Judge Hyde put that decision to vote also on the twentieth of September. The results were explained to Young this way:

They voted however for the very place upon which my mind was fixed as the most suitable place for the county seat. Consequently I am satisfied, and the people are satisfied, and I am relieved of the responsibility; and conscientiously confirmed and honored the vote of the people. It is named "Genoa," after the birthplace of Columbus, him who discovered this glorious land.

Judge Hyde's opinion after the election was that the people of Carson County were perfectly satisfied with their organization. They

40 Thompson and West, Nevada, p. 38. Also see Bancroft, Nevada, p. 76.
41 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Genoa, Carson County, September 30, 1855.
42 Ibid. Also see Thompson and West, Nevada, p. 39. Here the author identifies Genoa with old Mormon Station; Mack, Nevada, p. 158. Dr. Mack reports that Mormon Station was surveyed under Hyde's supervision and then named Genoa.
now had no need to travel to either Salt Lake City or California for business of a legal nature. At this point it did seem that the new county would have a peaceful existence. However, even though the civil temperament of the region was apparently harmonious, Hyde indicated to Brigham Young that he was not completely satisfied:

I was sent here by executive appointment, and feel to remain until other provisions are made for probate judge and that appointment revoked. The work is done for which I was officially sent to wit; to organize the county and determine the boundary line.

A few days later on October 2, Hyde wrote to President Young in Salt Lake City concerning the conditions of the Mormons in that part of Western Utah. He explained to the Mormon leader that the missionaries had been busy surveying the boundary line, harvesting crops and other jobs that offered employment. Even at best the Saints were only able to acquire a minimum amount of clothes and food because of high prices. The Mormons had thus far fared rather roughly. This condition resulted from very little business caused by little or no emigration through the area and a grasshopper plague on the crops.

It was Hyde's advice to Brigham Young, since most of the land was taken up by a number of 320 acre spreads, to buy a half dozen of

---

43 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Genoa, Carson County, September 30, 1855.

44 Ibid. The lack of communication, much less instant responses, helped to create additional problems in regard to the length of Hyde's assignment in Carson Valley. After the author read and studied all of the Hyde letters and those few from Brigham Young it was his conclusion that Judge Hyde could have returned to Salt Lake City right after his completion of the organization of the county in 1855. This probably would have terminated his relation with that settlement; however, because he was not able to get quick responses to his letters his stay in Western Utah was prolonged by almost another year.

45 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Genoa, Carson County, October 2, 1855.
these ranches in the valley at a cost of $4,000 each.\footnote{Ibid.} This would give the Mormons power and control over the area as well as over the most luxuriant grass lands in Western Utah. With the addition of their families and a few cattle their material well-being could be considerably enhanced.\footnote{Ibid.}

Hyde had not heard from Salt Lake City during the five months he had been in Western Utah. In absence of advice it was his suggestion that the missionaries return home for the winter; there was nothing much for them to do in the Valley. They could then return in the early spring with their families and supplies such as ox teams, cows, some tools and utensils, seeds and other necessities.\footnote{Ibid.}

In Hyde's October 2 letter he advised Young that the possibility of establishing an Indian mission was very promising. Carson Valley was a favorable location because it bordered many tribes which would offer an extensive source of labor. The Indians were not averse to work as long as food was supplied them. The "Pah Utahs" were by far the most numerous and for that reason looked like the best subjects for the mission.\footnote{Ibid.}

Continued interest in separating Western Utah from the Territory by some of the Carson citizens was still present and communications between Salt Lake City and Judge Hyde were lacking. For these reasons Hyde again expressed his uncertainty concerning his stay in Carson County.\footnote{Ibid.}
At this juncture of affairs, I hope I shall get definite instructions by the November mail from headquarters what I am desired now to do, whether to stay here or return home to Salt Lake. I am on hand to do either; yet if I am to stay I would like to know as soon as consistent that I may arrange accordingly.50

Almost a week later action was taken in Salt Lake City on behalf of Orson Hyde and his assignment in Carson Valley. In a letter to Hyde Brigham Young indicated that he had received news of his desires from Brother Reese and others. He confirmed his statement from an early letter by saying that Hyde was released from the San Francisco newspaper assignment and in addition he informed the Judge that George Q. Cannon was given the responsibility as editor of the San Francisco paper. Probably more welcomed was the news concerning Hyde's wife.

Learning last Friday that you had remained and do not intend to return this season, also of your want of a wife, we went to work and obtained the services of Brother James Townsend, purchased a team etc. to go out to Carson County and take your wife to you, for which we doubt not you will appreciate that we have done pretty well as they are going to start tomorrow morning.51

President Young also indicated that Hyde would:

... receive orders to organize a military command, probably a battalion of infantry and a company of cavalry, from the Lt. General. You will probably receive advice in due time of all the news from the press and other sources.52

In order for the Mormons to organize an army in that distant land they would have to be reinforced by larger numbers of Saints, but for the time being this was not possible.

However, if the military was not on the mind of the people in

---

50 Orson Hyde to Daniel H. Wells, Genoa, Carson County, Utah, October 4, 1855.
51 Brigham Young to Orson Hyde, Salt Lake City, Utah, October 9, 1855.
52 Ibid.
Carson Valley certainly the possibility of mining in that region was. On October 27, a number of the Mormons came together and held court in John Reese's house. On that day they granted sole and exclusive right to use any portion of the water in the Carson River for mining and other purposes in the vicinity of Gold Canyon. The order was granted to James C. Fain, John Reese, Stephen A. Kinsey, John McMarlin, James McMarlin, Christopher Merkley, Morris Fitzgibbon and Orson Hyde.53

On October 28, at the height of excitement about the possibility of mining in Gold Canyon came the first news Judge Hyde received from Brigham Young since being in Carson Valley. The letter was two months old and that much time behind the current problems. Hyde responded the next day to inform President Young concerning some of the people in the Valley. "There are many Mormons here, but I fear not saints."54 Nevertheless the Church leader continued to preach to them every Sabbath in hopes they would straighten up their lives. Hyde felt that if the Mormons would act according to their religions teachings some of the Gentiles would come into the Church.

In addition to his concern for the moral state of affairs, Hyde was also very interested in the new territorial movement in Carson County. Some attorneys from California had contacted him about giving his support to the new creation. Hyde was unsure how to act regarding this latest move so he inquired of Governor Young for his advice. At that time it was Hyde's opinion that maybe two territories controlled

---


54Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Genoa, Carson County, Utah, October 29, 1855.
by Mormons would be better than one.\textsuperscript{55}

It was news of this kind that the missionaries Hyde sent back to Salt Lake City carried to the Church leaders in late October. Chester Loveland, Seth Dustin, George W. Hancock and Shepherd Hutchins were among this number. Their news was not all negative, however, as they were able also to report the favorable conditions in that valley.\textsuperscript{56}

By the last of October it was understood by both parties in Salt Lake City and Carson Valley that Hyde would stay in Western Utah for the winter. The arrival of his wife Mary Ann in Genoa on October 31 with James Townsend after their three week trip foretold a much more satisfying winter than was expected.\textsuperscript{57}

After Orson Hyde had collected all the news about the persistent effort of California to annex Western Utah and the new territorial movement in Carson Valley he sent the final group of missionaries home on November 18 to convey this information to the Governor. It was the responsibility of Christopher Merkely and son, Riley Steward, James and Simpson Riddle and N. Dodge to carry this last news of 1855 to Brigham Young. Their trip over the 500 miles took one month as they arrived in Salt Lake City on December 17. The cold stormy weather and short provisions prevented the missionaries from traveling the distance in the fifteen days they had originally hoped.\textsuperscript{58}

The year of 1855 ended with most of the missionaries returned

\textsuperscript{55}\textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{56}"Arrivals: Carson Valley," \textit{Deseret News}, October 31, 1855.

\textsuperscript{57}Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Genoa, Carson County, Utah, November 17, 1855.

\textsuperscript{58}"From Carson County," \textit{Deseret News}, December 19, 1855.
to their homes in order to make preparations for a second effort early the next spring with a larger force of Mormon settlers.

Politically, at least, Carson County was in the hands of the Mormons by the end of that year. However, it was questionable if the time would ever come when the Mormons would dominate without any opposition. Judge Hyde recognized this fact.

The people here are not Saints. They feel their self-sufficiency and must be governed for the present with a gentle hand if governed at all.59

To control Carson County was the Mormons intention. Many expected to rejoin Orson Hyde the next spring in order to give that county a majority in favor of Utah rule.

59 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Genoa, Carson County, Utah, November 17, 1855. Hyde in this statement to Young indicates that the residents of Carson Valley are not Mormons and they must be handled very carefully if ultimately the Latter-day Saints are to control the area. However, some of the people in that valley were Mormons but they were non-practicing members.
Chapter 3

MORMON SETTLEMENT IN THE BALANCE

In the absence of most of those who had come to Carson Valley six months previous, Orson Hyde took the opportunity to reflect on the conditions in Carson County during the month of January, 1856. It was Hyde's opinion that even with all the Territory of Utah had done for Genoa and the surrounding area, it was not enough to satisfy the majority of the citizens in that region. It appeared that the Utah Government would not be able to please Western Utah with legislative action. The Carson citizens were more interested in political and economic ties with California than with the Mormon government in Salt Lake City. Therefore, to prove their point a number of the residents of Carson Valley petitioned Congress in January to remove their valley from the jurisdiction of Utah and attach it to the state of California.

Judge Hyde wrote to Governor Young on January 13, expressing his anxiety concerning the problems in Carson County. Hyde was very frank with the Governor. Probably the outstanding reason for his

---

1"Arrivals," Deseret News, October 10, 1855. In addition to those who left Carson County which were mentioned in Chapter 2 there were others who also returned to Salt Lake City for the winter. They were Amasa Potter, Enoch Reese, Jefferson Edmonds, P. D. Pitt, a Mr. Chadwith and son, a Mr. Davis, and a Mr. Morgan.


52
candor was because he had just recently received a letter from Young releasing him from his post in Western Utah as of the coming spring.  

Because a new Probate Judge would have to be chosen, Orson Hyde felt he should be exact with the information of the actual conditions in the county in order that the Governor could select the proper man for the job. Hyde informed Young of the petition sent to Washington as well as a counter-petition, signed by a number of Carson County citizens, to be used by Doctor John M. Bernhisel against the Gentile petition. There was also a third petition by the females of the valley expressing their objection to Hyde's spiritual wife and to a government which advocated the practice of plural marriage. 

These ill feelings between the Gentiles and the Mormons had been developing ever since the first arrival of Judge Hyde and the Church missionaries. The September election results especially disturbed the non-Mormons around Carson Valley. Therefore, they expressed their feelings in January, 1856, by requesting California to extend their eastern boundary to include the Carson area.

Even with this opposition Hyde pointed out that there were some very fine residents in Carson Valley who had treated him and his wife favorably. Contrary to the opinion of some, he had found John Reese to be acting his part as a brother to most of the Mormons. However, Reese was peculiarly situated in business with the non-Mormons in the area.

---

3 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Genoa, Carson County, January 13, 1856.
4 Ibid.
5 Ibid.
The Judge felt, considering he was only going to be in the area another two or three months, that he could get along well enough with the citizens until he left. Although his relationship with the community was not completely amiable, he could give the following positive advice to Young:

This is a good country but is of not much use to try to do anything here without a heavy emigration to settle and control it. You will know best what to do about this. Unless there are enough come to hold a balance of power, I could not advise that any come. There are many vacant valleys north just as good as Carson or better.6

After Judge Hyde had concluded discussing county problems, he proceeded to tell of a close call with death he had just recently had while trying to fulfill his responsibility of collecting a few debts.7 This experience plus those which he had already had in Carson County no doubt aided in forming Judge Hyde's opinion of his seven month assignment in the Carson Valley.

My feelings are to get away from here as soon as I can where

6Ibid.
7Hyde had taken the advice of Young and tried to collect the county taxes and other dues rightfully owed the government in Salt Lake City. In the process he attempted to cross the Sierra Nevada on December 15. Hyde was accompanied part of the way by a young man named Willis. Their first attempt was unsuccessful because, after leaving Willis, Hyde encountered deep snow and had to return. A second effort was made on the twentieth of the same month with an equal lack of success. However, Hyde got caught this time in a severe snow storm after he left Willis which forced him to make camp and later try to return to the Carson Valley. It was only with all his effort and after spending several nights in the snow that he was able to limp back to Genoa and to Doctor Daggett's house. His feet were badly frost bitten but after the doctor gave him treatment he predicted that Hyde would only lose his little toe. The total ordeal had caused Hyde to become very sick and in the process he lost fifty pounds. Willis however was not so fortunate; after they split up he apparently became lost and perished in the snow with his animals. (Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Genoa, Carson County, January 13, 1856.)
my light and talent will not be under a bushel or rolled up in a napkin. Mormonism never appeared more precious to me than now. The Lord is good and gracious and his mercy endureth forever. Thanks to his name for my deliverance from the horrors of the mountain storms.8

Hyde had faced many difficulties in attempting to fulfill his assignment in Carson County. Before he left the area Brigham Young asked him to suggest a suitable man as his replacement. Responding to the Governor's request and remembering a friend who gave him aid in a critical time of need, Hyde suggested a man he considered an able candidate for the position.

It should be a man who has at least some little knowledge of the principles of law, and a greater knowledge of the principles of justice and right. But you know all this without my telling you. I had almost said a good man. But to confine a very good man here by the chain of a legal appointment in the midst of the present society (though some very good people) would be a punishment almost too great and severe for your generous heart to inflict after knowing as I do the real character and sentiment of the inhabitants. If someone is to be sent out from Salt Lake, you will know better whom to send than I can tell you; but if any citizen here were to receive the appointment (which later suggestion would be the more acceptable to the people) Dr. Charles D. Daggett is the most suitable man for the office in my opinion. . . . Dr. Daggett acted the part of the good Samaritan towards me when I came in from the mountains and if you are amind to make him Judge in my place you have my vote for it if you think of none more suitable, or if you do not contemplate setting up this country.9

Governor Young, as of January, 1856, had no intentions of giving up Carson County to the Gentiles. The Legislature on the sixteenth of the month, instead of minimizing the role of that county, increased its size by extending the northern boundary line all the way to the Oregon border.10

Judge Hyde, not knowing the action of the Governor and the

---

8Ibid.

9Ibid.

Legislature, persisted in writing to Brigham Young indicating his opinion on what should be done with the county.

I long for spring to come that I may return to the city and council of the Saints. This country is good and extensive; but oh, the society! (A few very good citizens.) There can never be much good effected here religiously or politically while the present inhabitants are in the majority. I believe that I have done about all I could do to bring them into line without mingling in their gambling and drinking cabals. This I have not done, neither would I for all the country. If an emigration from Salt Lake City of the right kind of men and families were to come here, the scale might easily be turned and the country held but as it is, it is not worth holding, even if we could. The California Mormons ought to go to Salt Lake otherwise they might as well stay where they are, generally speaking. A mere form of law without the power to enforce, where there is either a careless indifference or a disposition to resist, is but a burlesque upon any civil policy.11

Reflecting on what he had just written to Young, Hyde then spoke more specifically as to what could be done to give the Mormons the upper hand in Carson County.

One of two things must be done in my opinion. Either settle this country up with good Saints who have salt in themselves and hold it, or else it would be totally abandoned by every man who fears God and worketh righteousness. A few good journeymen and a cabinet maker with tools would do well here, and hold more influence than almost any other sort. Some acquainted with grist and saw mill operations, grinding and sawing etc. The inhabitants are so scattered that they cannot have school. A few families with a good school teacher or two would hold a good influence. The people here are like the main timbers in a building no pins, braces, girts, joints, etc. These little appendages to society should be far the more numerous in the shape of necessary mechanics, laborers, etc., which add greatly to the numerical strength of society, yet aid measurably.12

With this exact advice Judge Hyde concluded "it would be my idea to hold the country."13 Brigham Young now had the precise information which

---

11 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Genoa, Carson County, January 25, 1856.

12 Ibid.

13 Ibid.
Hyde assumed he needed to decide what should be done in regard to further Mormon influence in Carson Valley.

To make way for the Governor and the Legislature to appoint another to the leadership of Carson County, Hyde submitted his letter of resignation as Probate Judge on January 29, 1856. However, when Hyde found out that Young planned to send a large group to settle in the Carson area early in the spring of 1856 he had a change in attitude. The possible control of Carson Valley by large numbers of Mormons helped change Orson Hyde's mind about his future in Western Utah. The influence of a large Mormon colony in Carson County, the fact that gold had been discovered in the northern valleys and Hyde's interest in a possible grist and saw mill helped to change the importance of Genoa and the surrounding area in his mind. Hyde figured that this meant a promising future for Carson Valley so he volunteered to stay in the area until the fall of 1856. He could help settle the colony and reduce many of their problems as a result of his experience with the Gentiles during the previous twelve months. This new approach of Judge Hyde was certainly a change from his previous attitude. Altogether the difference reflected a bright Mormon future for Western Utah.

Judge Hyde wrote to George Q. Cannon of The Western Standard

---

14 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Genoa, Carson County, January 29, 1856.
Hyde's resignation to Young stated:
I here by resign the office of Probate Judge of Carson County Utah Territory which I had the honor to receive from under your hand. Said resignation to take effect so soon as I am officially notified that this resignation is accepted and the vacancy caused by this resignation filled, so that the County may not be left without an acting Judicial officer of this class.

15 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Genoa, Carson County, March 22, 1856.
and informed him of the emigration expected from Salt Lake City to Carson Valley and encouraged him to invite interested and righteous Mormons in California to join the many residents\(^{16}\) of that valley in April, May or June. In this March letter he petitioned the people to bring tools of their trade so they could make an immediate contribution to the settlement such as building a grist and saw mill. All were admonished to bring their animals to build up large herds of stock as that area was well suited for stock raising.\(^{17}\)

Editor Cannon took the occasion to reply to Judge Hyde's letter in The Western Standard. In his response he revealed another reason why Carson County was established:

We hope the Saints will carefully peruse Pres. Hyde's communication from Carson Valley, published in another column under the head of correspondence, and ponder well the sentiments and good counsel contained therein. We have felt for some time the importance of this subject, and when opportunity has afforded we have taken pleasure in speaking on it before the people . . . .

Carson Valley has been selected as a subsidiary gathering place for the Saints; it is for those who have any desire to gather to the places appointed that Elder Hyde makes this call, and we hope they will rightly estimate its importance.\(^{18}\)

It is clear from the above article that Hyde was not only expecting an emigration from Salt Lake City, but he was also hoping to gather the

---

\(^{16}\) "Trip to Salt Lake," Deseret News, March 12, 1856. In this article a Mr. Jules Remy reported that there were 500 people in the Carson Valley. This is probably very unlikely at the early date Remy made his trip through Western Utah. The reader should see also Thompson and West, Nevada, p. 39. The authors in this publication indicate that the population of the Genoa area was only 200. This is a more likely figure because the area did not get a population boost until the large Mormon group arrived there in June and July of that year.

\(^{17}\) Orson Hyde to George Q. Cannon, Genoa, Carson County, published in The Western Standard under the title of "From Carson Valley," March 22, 1856.

good Saints from California to his settlement site.

On March 24, Hyde wrote to Young indicating that he was going to start exploring the valleys north of Genoa for possible settlement. He expressed to the Governor that there was good grass, timber, water and gold mines in these areas. The valleys about forty miles north were rumored to be even better and larger than Carson Valley. It was Judge Hyde's suggestion to Brigham Young to start a new settlement rather than to try and buy out the residents of the Genoa area. Hyde also invited the Church leader to send to Western Utah large numbers of settlers qualified to vote so that they could more fully control the county.19

Conditions in Carson County were looking very good. Orson Hyde had developed some enthusiasm for his assignment; more Mormon settlers were expected; the wagon road being built between Placerville and Carson Valley by California was going to make travel much easier between those two points.

With the state of affairs going so well in Western Utah, Orson Hyde took a dim view of the fact that it appeared that Brigham Young was not receiving all his letters. For this reason as late as March 3, the Mormon Church leader was unaware of Hyde's intentions to stay longer than he had been instructed. Even with this handicap the Judge continued to write to the Governor concerning his progress. On April 2, he reported his findings during his exploration from Carson to near the Oregon border, a distance of 150 miles.20 Hyde was very favorably

---

19 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Genoa, Carson County, March 22, 1856.
20 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Genoa, Carson County, April 2, 1856.
impressed with what he had found.

I have made a trip up towards Oregon, a distance of one hundred and fifty miles to the north of this place, along the eastern base of the Sierra Nevada Mountains; and have discovered some of the finest country and richest valleys I ever saw. It is rather too far into the Indian country to jump into at once; moreover I am inclined to think much of it is in California. I have taken up many claims of land and water for the brethren that I hear are coming from Salt Lake.21

Judge Hyde was very interested in the arrival of the additional Mormons but his enthusiasm was given a set back when he read the comments of the Church Presidency in the Deseret News concerning the assignment of the missionaries for the spring. In the February 13 edition of the Deseret News President Young implied that the missionaries would not establish permanent residence when they went there in May or June. They would return to Salt Lake City in the fall.22 This information did not agree with Judge Hyde's thinking.

It is not for me to advise in the case, but I may perhaps entrust an opinion, that this country will never pay costs to Utah or to the Saints unless there is a permanent and liberal majority of the Saints here. I may not comprehend your views and purposes from the public News. But can see how no more real good can be accomplished this year by them coming out and returning than was accomplished last year. It is almost a season's labor to come out here and to return. But still it is all right, I presume. It appears to me that if this country is to be taken, it should be laid hold of with a firm, determinate, and permanent grasp, or not at all; and that there should be no time lost in doing it.23

It is obvious that Judge Hyde's plan for the new colony was that of permanence. Therefore, he indicated to President Young that

21 Ibid.

22 Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball and Jedediah M. Grant, "To the Saints Throughout the Territory of Utah," Deseret News, February 13, 1856.

23 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Genoa, Carson County, April 2, 1856.
he had inspired the farmers to plant large crops of wheat, barley, potatoes and other vegetables to counteract the shortage that might develop with the arrival and permanent settlement of additional colonists. Hyde wanted Young to be aware of all the attributes of this Western Utah area and listed other possibilities for food supplies such as the abounding fish, rabbits, ducks, geese and some deer and antelope. 24

Judge Hyde continued to try to attract other Mormon settlers to Western Utah by writing for The Western Standard. James Townsend was coming to San Francisco during the second week of April to collect money for a sawmill which was soon to be built in some valley in Western Utah. Hyde encouraged those who were interested to come to the Carson area and those who could not come to donate to the building of the sawmill. 25 George Q. Cannon added his support to Orson Hyde's request by suggesting that the Mormons of Northern California take the advice of Elder Hyde and sustain the Church in Carson County. 26

During this time when the future of Western Utah looked so promising for the Mormons, California persisted in casting a dark shadow of uncertainty over the near future of that area. Its most recent pressure was felt on April 2 when the possibility of moving the Utah line two degrees further east into the Territory of Utah was indicated. Judge Hyde wrote to Governor Young concerning this matter and informed

---

24 Ibid.
26 News item in The Western Standard, April 5, 1856.
him that he would oppose the move by a petition to Congress when the brethren from Salt Lake joined him in Genoa that spring. It seemed almost a race between California and Utah during the months that Hyde was in Carson Valley to determine who would control the valleys east of the Sierra Nevada range.

All this attention was not given to the Carson area without good reason. The Western Standard published, on April 12, an article previously published in the Placerville American, that gave an account of the many attractive characteristics of the several valleys east of the mountains. The agricultural, stock raising and mining possibilities were the major themes of this article. The ultimate plea of the editor was for California to provide a state road to that area so the resources could be exploited by their state.

California was constantly advised by John A. Thompson, who supplied mail service between Placerville and the Carson Valley, of the progress made in those Western Utah valleys. "Snow Shoe" Thompson's semi-monthly mail service was another reason why the relationship between California and Western Utah was more harmonious than that of Carson County and Salt Lake City. Thompson's information was regularly published in the Placerville American, Sacramento Union and The Western Standard.

27Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Genoa, Carson County, April 2, 1856.

28"Advantages of Locality," The Western Standard, April 12, 1856.

29Ibid.

30"Later From Carson Valley," The Western Standard, April 19, 1856.
Carson Valley’s contact with Salt Lake City was neither as often nor as regular as its contact with California. But when travelers arrived from the East, they usually attracted much attention. Enoch Reese was expected from the Mormon capital city in late April, with news, letters, supplies and $2,500. Because Carson was short of goods, especially flour, Judge Hyde had plans for the cash which belonged to the Reeses. He hoped to get him to invest that sum in flour from California to aid the arriving emigrants expected in Genoa in the next two months. These kind of arrivals in Carson Valley from Salt Lake City created much excitement.

Also as a possible supply of money Judge Hyde had been out in the mountains, as before stated, not only looking for settlement sites but also for areas that might produce a little mineral wealth.

I have taken up many good claims of land, water and timber for the brethren that are coming; and if worst comes to worst, to supply their immediate wants, I hope I have found a place where a few thousand dollars can be dug out. Lame and crippled as I am, during the last month, I have climbed over some of our highest mountains part of the time on a mule and part of the time on hands and knees, exploring the country and seeing if I could not find a place to dig out a little cash if we should get into a pinch. I think perhaps we may if driven to it. I have rambled over and among the mountains about 500 miles within the last thirty-five days.

The gold that might be found and mined in the hills could give some support to the colony in absence of a better means of income. Elder Hyde wanted President Young to know his value to the area and the colony so he indicated to him again in a letter that he was willing to stay in Genoa until after the August elections to aid the Saints in

---

31 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Genoa, Carson County, April 27, 1856.

32 Ibid.
locating themselves on the claims he had registered and if the need arose he could also guide them to the right areas to hunt for gold.

Not only did he want to remain in the valley a few months longer but he also indicated to President Young that it was his intention to maintain some financial ties with the Carson Valley settlement.

As Brother Bently is coming out, I have some thoughts of leaving Mary Ann here with her sister, having taken up a good ranch that will do for both, and not knowing what my future destiny may be. Please advise me in relation to this matter. I feel that I have been through the mill here pretty roughy, the first grinding after picking the stones, and I would like to retain a little footing and interest here if not inconsistent with the policy and designs of the Church.33

It was Orson Hyde's conviction that Carson County should be settled by permanent settlers. His desire to own and retain his property is evidence of his convictions in support of his opinion. The only problem holding up the achievement of this goal was the arrival of the Saints who were due in only a few weeks. Then Carson County would take on more of the Mormon appearance which was characteristic of the Salt Lake area.

33Ibid.
Chapter 4

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CARSON VALLEY MISSION IN 1856

President Young, on April 3, 1856, wrote to Orson Hyde and informed him that a considerable number of members were going to be called to that western region.\(^1\) True to his word, three days later in the General Conference of the Church held in Salt Lake City 257 missionaries were called by the Church leader.\(^2\) The majority of these brethren were scheduled for Carson Valley in Western Utah.\(^3\) These people were told to settle their business and be ready to leave in about one month. On April 16, Young again wrote to Hyde instructing

---

\(^1\)Brigham Young to Orson Hyde, Salt Lake City, April 3, 1856.

\(^2\)"Minutes of the General Conference, April 6, 1856," Deseret News, April 9, 1856.

\(^3\)There is considerable confusion regarding just how many missionaries were called to Carson Valley during the April conference of 1856. Bancroft in his History of Nevada, Colorado and Wyoming, p. 78, indicates that sixty to seventy families were assigned to that area. Kate B. Carter in "The Mormons in Nevada," Heart Throbs of the West, VII, p. 436, reports that two hundred Mormon colonizers were sent to Western Utah. Andrew L. Neff in his History of Utah, p. 226, quotes Heber C. Kimball as saying one hundred missionaries had been selected for Carson County. The Western Standard, a little closer to the event, stated on July 5, 1856, that one hundred and ten families had been sent to the beautiful valleys of Washoe and Truckee. Other historians suggest figures that tend to copy one of the above sources. The author has determined that 250 Mormons left the Salt Lake area for Carson Valley. This number is derived from the consideration that at least four and more probably five companies were sent to Carson County in June, 1856. If all groups had fifty people in them, as was the traveling custom of the Mormons, the total is obvious. The possibility exists that there were six companies but it is clear no fewer than four groups were involved in this movement.
him concerning the Carson Mission, settlement, and the emigration to be expected.

Brother Reese starts in the morning, I therefore write a few lines in addition to the letter written on the 31st ultimo which was designed for the mail but retained to send by Brother Reese. All is well, Brother Reese will give you particulars about the emigration to your place. If you have not already done so you will organize a high council, appoint a president of the place, bishops, etc. that a branch may be fully organized in Carson.

We intend to make it a subsidiary gathering place. We shall appoint some of the brethren going out this spring Judge of Probate for that county, and trust that the Saints will possess sufficient power, faith and influence to sustain him.

... All are going with good feelings so far as I know, but who will insure what they will say when once away. I am quite sure I will not, it would be too great a risk. I have however, one great consolation that it would make no odds.4

Orson Hyde had previously invited President Young to come to Carson County but, as indicated, the risk was too great for the Church leader. In lieu of a visit his instructions by correspondence sufficed.

Enoch Reese and ten other men left Salt Lake City the next day, which was the seventeenth, enroute to Carson Valley with the mail, two wagons of supplies and general instructions for the county.5

By May 3 most of the other missionaries had departed for their various fields of labor except those going to Carson County. Brigham Young had given these Saints a letter containing additional instructions to be delivered to Orson Hyde on their arrival in Carson Valley.

I have nothing to say in regard to the gold news, only I am glad that it is not found any nearer here and I hope may not be.

I feel willing that the Saints scattered around through California should gather to Carson or such other place, as you shall select for a subsidiary gathering place in that region, and

---

4Brigham Young to Orson Hyde, Salt Lake City, April 16, 1856.
5"First Arrival From the Plains," The Western Standard, May 31, 1856. "Departures," The Western Standard, June 14, 1856. Also see Brigham Young to Orson Hyde, Salt Lake City, April 16, 1856.
that you direct the emigration in regards to location, and other matters pertaining to the settlement and mission as shall seem most advisable to you and will in your estimation best promote the object and interest thereof.6

Elder Hyde, expecting a large number of Saints from California and Salt Lake City, had secured nearly all the good land and about every stream of water for a distance of 150 miles north towards the Oregon border.7 Having completely regained his health since his tragedy in the mountains five months earlier, Judge Hyde began to survey the valleys he expected the Saints to occupy. He hired two non-Mormons to accompany him on the survey and between them they schemed to fool the other non-Mormons in the Carson area to avoid claim jumping. Their plan, as explained to President Young, was to have the two Gentiles spread a rumor indicating Judge Hyde had selected the Honey Lake Valley as a area for the Mormons to settle. With the "secret" out, the non-Mormons squatted on what they thought to be the Judge's claims in Honey Lake Valley with the the intention of collecting dearly from the arriving Mormons. Hyde said the Gentiles passed "on a dog trot" the actual valleys he had chosen, Washoe and Truckee. After this time Hyde waited patiently for the arrival of the Saints. He had little worry that the Gentiles would jump his real claims.8

The Latter-day Saints assigned to Carson met above the Bear River to organize into companies for the trip. The missionaries were divided into four or five groups of about fifty people each.9 The

---

6 Brigham Young to Orson Hyde, Salt Lake City, May 3, 1856.
7 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Genoa, May 11, 1856.
8 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young Washoe, Valley, August 8, 1856.
9 Madison Daniel Hambleton to Albert Carrington, Washoe Valley, June 29, 1856.
first four companies were led by Captains Ebenezer Brown, Nelson Higgins, William Jennings and Chester Loveland. The first group left the camp site on May 10, and by the twenty-ninth of the month all the missionaries had departed. The companies traveled fairly close together for protection against possible Indian raids. After six weeks on the road the lead companies arrived in the Carson area. Ebenezer Brown's group on June 24 was the first to reach Mormon headquarters in Washoe Valley. By July 2 most of the Saints had now arrived from Salt Lake City.

This large number of Mormons had not come to Western Utah unnoticed. The Placerville American and the Mormon newspaper The Western Standard published articles regularly concerning the expected arrival of these settlers. Judge Hyde believed that this kind of publicity would retard Gentile intrusion into Carson County. While this action worked to a limited degree Californians were not completely discouraged. They were regularly informed in the same newspapers of

---

10 Oliver Branch Millburn, A History, Diary and Genealogy of William Henry Branch, Sr. (Salt Lake City: Paragon Printing Company, 1952), pp. 21-24. This source indicates that there were four and probably five companies of pioneer settlers sent to the Carson Valley Mission in June, 1856, from the organizing point of just north of the Bear River.

11 Brigham Young to Orson Hyde, Salt Lake City, May 29, 1856.


13 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Washoe Valley, July 2, 1856.

14 The following articles are found in The Western Standard: "First Arrival From The Plains," May 31, 1856; "From Placerville," June 14, 1856; "Gold Fields Beyond The Mountains," June 14, 1856; "From Carson Valley," June 21, 1856; "From Utah Valleys," July 5, 1856; "From Wash-Ho Valley," July 12, 1856; "From Our Correspondent," August 9, 1856; and "From Our Correspondent," August 23, 1856.
the tremendous possibilities in Carson Valley.\textsuperscript{15}

When the missionaries arrived in Washoe Valley some wondered why California was so interested in this unsettled and uncivilized region. Placer gold was a possibility but beyond this other attractions were not immediately evident. What was clear in the minds of all was Elder Hyde's intentions to organize a homestead type settlement. When the Mormons came into Washoe Valley they found their leader busy building his sawmill from parts brought from California by the faithful missionary James Townsend.\textsuperscript{16} Hyde had surveyed the Washoe Valley land as County Surveyor\textsuperscript{17} and laid out a future city in acre and quarter lots which were on sale for ten dollars per lot.\textsuperscript{18} Elder Hyde also had words of advice for his people.

\ldots His counsel to the brethren here was to labor hard, settle up, mind their own business, to be slow of speech, and to live

\textsuperscript{15}The following articles are found in The Western Standard: "From Carson Valley," June 2, 1856; News item, June 14, 1856; and "Pack Trains," May 1, 1857. The Placerville American also published numerous articles extolling Carson Valley potential. The following news items were reprinted in The Western Standard from the Placerville American: "The Carson River Country," August 30, 1856; "Carson Valley," October 11, 1856; "Gold Fields Beyond The Mountains," June 14, 1856; "Important From Carson Valley," December 20, 1856; and "Late From Carson Valley," December 17, 1857.


\textsuperscript{17}Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Genoa, May 11, 1856. Also see Thompson and West, Nevada, p. 38.

\textsuperscript{18}William H. Sherman to George Q. Cannon, Pleasant Hill, July 26, 1856, published in The Western Standard under the title of "From Our Correspondent," August 9, 1856.
their religion; to fear God and work righteousness; if they obey it there can be but one result.19

However, some of the missionaries were not overly impressed with the people already in Carson Valley. William Jennings wrote:

The Carson Valley people I think were mostly apostate Mormons before this Company went there. This was the first genuine Mormon settlement there. The Reeses were partially connected with the Church.20

The inactive Mormons in Western Utah were about as much of a frustration to the Church designs as were the Gentiles. Hyde was not overly impressed with some of the missionaries sent to him by President Young either.

Some are sick of the country and may continue over the mountains. Others are pleased. It is new country and comforts and conveniency have to be located by industry before they can be enjoyed. They are all pretty short of provisions. Flour is from 15 to 20 cts per pound, and other things in proportion. This scares some of them. Some also are hard to please with locations. But I think we shall all get along first rate. We cannot starve while there is so much stock, milk, butter, etc. Some of the stock have died since arriving here from the desert which is invariably the case. This frightens some. But few comparatively have died. They are now recovering finely.21

The above description characterized Mary Jane and Sylvester Phippens, among others, who had arrived in Carson Valley on July 2. They were so unimpressed with the country that they wrote back to their family discouraging them from coming to this mission:

... we are in Carson the place thats praised and talked about so much I onely wish you could see it you would remember it for one while. Imagin a city with onely three houses in it, no streets...  


21 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Washoe Valley, July 2, 1856.
tall pine trees and a great high mountain to look right strait up to. but never mind the people are buildin slab houses. but there will not be manny families here they are counsiled to go to different valies so there will not be but a few in a place. we will stay here I think untill our mission is fulfild. Father talk no more of coming to this place I would rather have one acher of land in Salt Lake City than the hole of Carson Valley. you have a good home and I beg of you to stay there I would not had as I want to see you all have you drag your family to such a place as this. do not let Joseph come here for he will get sick of his job if he undertakes it. there is plenty of Jentiles here cursing and severing gambling and horse racing is the principle business of the day. things looked rather dreary to us for a while our provisions was gone Sylvester could not get enney work to do and there to cap it all in three days after we landed here all of the Breatheren was notified to apere at Court the next morining they must go or be fined so imagin what a pickele we was in without enny prospects of getting along, but the Lord remembered us.22

It was as Brigham Young said it would be, "All are going with good feeling so far as I know, but who will insure what they will say when once away."23 John Hyde was right when he commented "Elder Hyde has his hand full."24 There were many missionaries, however, who took the assignment more in the line of duty and therefore wholeheartedly accepted their responsibility without negative responses.

Orson Hyde settled the emigrants on the land he had claimed and surveyed. He also planned to buy out some of the old residents of Carson Valley.

You will learn by letters sent round by mail the policy that

22Mary Jane and Sylvester S. Phippen to Mary Jane's parents, Genoa, July 13, 1856. A microfilmed copy of the original letter is in the Utah State Historical Library. It should be pointed out here that the spelling in this and all quotes from the Phippens will appear uncorrected and as copied.

23Brigham Young to Orson Hyde, Salt Lake City, April 16, 1856.

I have adapted in relation to the settlement of this country, and when we have sufficient backing (speak it lightly) one old settler will get sick, and then another, and then another and so on and will be willing to sell out on fair terms; whereas if we attempt to buy them out now with a rush, they will hoist up their possessions beyond our reach, and we should have nothing left to carry on with or to sustain ourselves.25

Simon Baker, Joseph S. Murdock, Abraham Hunsaker, William Kay, Nelson Higgins and John D. Chase bought out some of the ranches from the old settlers.26

Hyde had the Saints scatter out into Carson, Eagle, Washoe, Truckee, Jack, and Steamboat Springs areas.27 He also had plans for controlling the economy of Western Utah. President Young for this purpose sent him butchers, tanners, shoemakers, weavers, brick makers and layers and other mechanics.28 By this time Hyde was personally interested in the region and in remaining in Carson County.29 Judge Hyde's grist and sawmill would give a boost to the Mormon economy in

25 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Genoa, May 11, 1856.

26 Gwen Hunsaker Haws and Q. Maurice Hunsaker, History of Abraham Hunsaker and His Family (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1957), pp. 85-86. Also see Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Washoe Valley, August 21, 1856.


29 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Washoe Valley, July 2, 1856.
Washoe Valley and surrounding area when it was complete. Here was a tangible asset that could be counted on for personal revenue. However, the Saints in California who were looked to for assistance were not so dependable. They had decided to stay in that state rather than come to Carson Valley.

With 2 or 3 exceptions, we here and you in Salt Lake will be better off—without the California Mormons than with them. They can never get ready to come here or to go Salt Lake. They have all promised Ammisa [Lyman] to go to San Bernardino, and they would not break that promise for the Great God, Brigham nor the Presidency nor for Orson. They are so conscience bound to stay where they are. I would say, let them alone.30

Nevertheless the brethren did not give up on the Saints in California. They continued to write to the people through The Western Standard in hopes they would sooner or later join them.31 But the lack of money, high prices and the isolation of Carson Valley discouraged any Saints in sizeable numbers from moving to Carson County.

Even without the California Saints it was all Hyde could do to handle the problems of the new emigrants from Salt Lake City. These new settlers were put to work surveying, farming, building Hyde's sawmill, and hauling supplies from Hangtown, California to Carson with some even going to the gold diggings.32 The Latter-day Saints, however, were easier to manage with all their problems than were Judge W. W. Drummond and Doctor Garland H. Hurt who were respectively, the federal

30Ibid.


judge for Utah's second judicial district and Indian Agent for the territory.

Governor Young as early as April 16 had warned Hyde that Judge Drummond had switched districts with Judge George P. Stiles who had previously presided over Carson County and within two months he would be in Carson Valley. Both Drummond and Hurt arrived with the missionaries in late June. Drummond's ultimate objective was to return to Washington, D. C., by way of California. In the meantime he planned to hold district court in Carson County in July and September. Hyde from the beginning was opposed to Drummond's interference:

Judge Drummond is here and will hold court under the new law he says 1st Monday in July. I hardly know how he can legally hold court here under old or new. "The jurisdiction of the Judge shall be as limited by law," (See organic act). He is limited to the Second Judicial District and I cannot see what legal right he has to hold court in the 3rd more than any other man. As an appeal to the Supreme Court will be the only process of correction which will not be likely. 

Drummond was not only opposed by Hyde, but also by the Mormons at large. Mary Phippen expressed the dislike the Saints felt for the courts held by the federal judge:

Things looked rather dreary to us for a while our provisions was gone Sylvester could not get enny work to do and there to cap it all in three days after we landed here all of the Breatheren was notified to apere at Court the next morining they must go or be fined so imagin what a pickele we was in without enny prospects of getting along, but the Lord remembered us. and before the week was past Sylvester sold white face fore forty two dollars and a half he then bought fifty weight of flour some meat and groceries and so we live again as well as enny of the folks. Court has

33 Brigham Young to Orson Hyde, Salt Lake City, April 16, 1856.
34 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Washoe Valley, July 2, 1856.
lasted a week and perhaps will last two or three weeks longer and they will not let one of them off but they must go five miles every morning to a great framed barn that they hold court in. the boys draw two dollars and a half a day but they would much rather be about there own work, it dont pleas them much . . . .

Drummond's decisions in court were generally very severe. The consequences was that in short time the Judge found himself with very few friends. Hyde, among others, was particularly adverse to Drummond's decision in the case of Thomas Knott versus John Reese and others, in which Knott was given the decision over Reese. Hyde reported to Young that there were some unethical practices involved in this case. Drummond had accepted a horse from Knott and it was rumored that the Judge had received money from Knott's attorney for a favorable ruling.

Orson Hyde did feel, however, that Drummond had been able to do some good in Carson County. Drummond had created a sense of respect for Utah law. The pressure to submit to Utah laws was too great for some of the old settlers; many wanted to sell out and leave. The people were relieved when Judge Drummond left Carson County for California. However, he promised to return in September for the next court session.

After six weeks absence and a review of Drummond's previous accomplishments, Orson Hyde had changed his opinion of Drummond.

Judge Drummond has done us more harm than good. Jew & Gentile will all agree to this; and he is cursed by both parties. He is a talented and I believe an unprincipled man. He has destroyed the influence and power of the Probate Court here that if process should issue therefrom, the officer may be shot down with impunity.

---

35 Mary Jane and Sylvester S. Phippen to Mary Jane's parents, Genoa, July 13, 1856.
36 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Washoe Valley, July 30, 1856.
37 Ibid.
. . . Since his court, and since things have settled down again, I am satisfied that he has been no particular blessing to Jew or Gentile. All parties agree in this. The California lawyers charge him with bribery in the case of Knott vs. Reese et. al. His conduct was very singular and suspicious, to say the least of it, in accepting a horse as a present from Knott, and it is believed also money from the same source, through Hall, Knott's attorney, Knott is glad of the ruling but despises the man as I am told. I should hope the Supreme Court would sit this to right. Reeses are wronged, but may be all right.38

Fortunately for all, Drummond did not return in September to hold the district court as he had indicated. Instead he left California and returned to Washington, D. C., where he gave his biased report against the Mormons in the Territory of Utah.39 Drummond's actions in Carson County had adverse effect on the Mormons as long as they were in that region.

Doctor Garland Hurt had come to Carson with Drummond and the Mormon emigration in June. He was there to advise on Indian matters. However, the whole time he was in the region he seemed to work with Drummond to cause trouble for the Mormon leader in Carson Valley.

Mr. [Rupel] Kelley informs me further that Doct. Hurt said to him that the heads of the Church contrived to get the property of the members into their own hands by loan or otherwise and then would compel them to give it in on tithing etc. and remarked to Kelley that he had better look out or he would not get his pay. I do not know that Doctor Hurt has any reason to caution my men about getting their pay. I generally pay my debts as well as most other men and still calculate to pay them. I think that you kept them pent up so closely while there that they could not refrain from letting out a link or two when here.40

38 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Washoe Valley, August 21, 1856.


40 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Washoe Valley, August 8, 1856.
Hyde was certainly happy to see the day that Hurt returned to Salt Lake City; however, the leaving of Drummond and Hurt only slightly lessened his problems. The Church members sent to Western Utah were enough to keep Elder Hyde busy all his waking hours. By the end of July Hyde reported their complaints and unchristian like conduct to President Young:

Many of the brethren are dissatisfied and act childish. This is a good country for grass, timber, water and [unreadable]. It is a little cool and windy it is true, yet close by a good market where butter and cheese are worth from 50 cts to 100 per pound and beef from 10 to 12½ cts on foot and it does not have to be driven across the plains to market and get poor in the operations. Some think they want their bread and butter all spread for them, and because it is not some murmur and want to go back to Salt Lake. We can raise all we need here in a little time. It is great for grass, water, and timber right at our doors. We can get a load of wood every day in the year and every hour in the day, and I think they will get over their homesickness by & by.

... The brethren here are mostly in the habit of swearing like Turks. I have had to reprove them sharply. I think that I can shame them out of it. They don't seem to pray much. But I shall do the best I know how to make them honor and live their religion, for that is every thing to me.41

Coupled with his many other problems in Carson County, Judge Hyde had financial troubles with his mill. It was costing him more than he had anticipated; therefore, he went in debt about $2,000 before the first log was sawed. In a letter to Young he asked for help:

If there is any good man in your quarter and subject to your counsel who can bring here two thousand dollars, and you are disposed to send him to me to put into my mill operations, I should very much like it. My mill will probably be done or about done by the time he can get here; but I shall be somewhat in debt and also a little capital to go on would be very acceptable.42

As a second plan to get the money Hyde asked President Young to sell the Hyde store and smokehouse in Salt Lake City for $3,000. The

41 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Washoe Valley, July 30, 1856.  
42 Ibid.
first $1,000 should go to his family there in the City and the remainder he asked to be sent to him in Carson County.\(^{43}\)

Hyde's financial problems were more troublesome than the anticipated Carson County elections scheduled for the fourth of August. The Mormon leader knew well his people now had the balance of voting power to control the outcome.\(^{44}\) He made preparations and with instructions from Salt Lake City the brethren planned to vote a straight Mormon ticket.\(^{45}\) One hundred and twenty eight Mormons and Gentiles voted. Ninety-six voted the "Mormon" ticket and thirty-two voted what they called the "human" ticket.\(^{46}\) The elected officials of Carson County were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>Enoch Reese</td>
<td>Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>Rupeh Kelly (Non-Mormon)</td>
<td>Sheriff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>H. D. Sears</td>
<td>Select Man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>Perkins Jackman</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>William Nixon</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>Chester Loveland</td>
<td>Justice of the Peace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>Henry Van Sickle (Non-Mormon)</td>
<td>&quot; &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8)</td>
<td>Orson Hyde</td>
<td>Surveyor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9)</td>
<td>Charles D. Dagget (Non-Mormon)</td>
<td>Treasurer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10)</td>
<td>Richard Bently</td>
<td>Recorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11)</td>
<td>Nelson Merkley</td>
<td>Constable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(12)</td>
<td>Seth Dustin</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The three non-Mormons had been friendly to the Church ever since the county had been organized. If the Mormons had not been totally in

\(^{43}\)Ibid.

\(^{44}\)Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Washoe Valley, August 8, 1856.

\(^{45}\)Ibid.

\(^{46}\)John Hyde to George Q. Cannon, Placerville, August 12, 1856, published in The Western Standard under the heading of "From Our Correspondent," August 23, 1856.

\(^{47}\)Ibid. Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Washoe Valley, August 8, 1856. Thompson and West, Nevada, pp. 39-40.
harmony before, they were during the election. But within a week after the selection of their county officers, Hyde's report to Brigham Young revealed continued discontentment among the Mormons.

Not a man among us wishes to go nearer the mines than one hundred miles. Yet John Dilworth has gone to California, hook and line, after my offering him $4.00 per day, and promised him that as long as I had food he should have. He feared that I would not be able to get him his winter provisions. But I told him I would if he would go to work on my mill. He said it would be running too great a risk. I told him then to go any where else and run a greater risk. There was some little murmuring for a time; and I think Bro. Peregrine Sessions was about as conspicuous in this as anyone. Yet he wants to do just about right, and I think we shall all get along very well.48

Hyde was having a hard time placating the Saints in Carson but he believed that given a little more time all would work out. In the process of trying to keep a balance favorable to the Mormons, Hyde sent a protest to Washington, signed by most of the Mormons, which opposed any part of Utah being attached to California.49 After this action there was little said in the surrounding area about California annexing Utah territory.

As long as Mormons dominated Carson annexation to California was improbable. Hyde, however, was still afraid of large numbers of Gentile settlers which might come in from California. He wrote President Young on August 21 and asked for more settlers. All those who had been sent out had good ranches and there was still room for a hundred more. If Mormons did not settle this valuable and vacant land then others from California would. A heavy immigration was expected into Salt Lake City that fall; Hyde suggested to Young that the surplus population be sent

48 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Washoe Valley, August 8, 1856.
49 Ibid.
to Carson County. Hyde felt that the more Mormons in Western Utah the less likely California Gentiles would come to his area.

Hyde was still troubled with his own people. The Reeses, because of their business transactions, were causing the Church some difficulties:

Col Reese and Enoch have been very kind and good to me but they are not good managers of their business. They manage to have a set round them who fleece and involve them all the time; and it does seem that fate has decreed against them. It seems necessary for us to carry out the laws and enforce them but their mill concern and other litigation of theirs is likely to cost them and us more than is worth. For their sake and ours I could wish things even different with them. I feel friendly to the Col & to Enoch, yet they are not popular with Jew or Gentile, whether deservedly unpopular, you can judge as well as I. I believe the cheapest method to this Church of getting along would be to have the mill burnt down. Yet such an affair will not do, for it would be a violation of honor, right, and law. 51

Elder Hyde hoped for some advice from President Young on the matter. However, even in the midst of all this turmoil, the mission continued to make some progress. Hyde kept the members busy securing hay, harvesting and packing supplies from California. Some were interested in the possibility of returning to Salt Lake City and bringing back their families. Judge Hyde was also doing quite well with his mill. James Townsend had just recently returned from his second trip to California bringing this time the saws and irons needed to complete the mill. Now with the dam built, the race dug, and timber for the wheel and the mill frame cut and worked, the sawmill was near completion. On top of this Hyde had sold to the Saints half of the area he had surveyed. This money he used to pay most of the cost of building the mill. He had

50 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Washoe Valley, August 21, 1856.
51 Ibid.
picked out a very good ranch with a spring on it and when the mill was in operation he would be able to pay off any bills or debts incurred in the process of building the sawmill.\textsuperscript{52}

Hyde realized his time in Carson County was shortly coming to an end; therefore, he suggested Abraham O. Smoot to Young as his replacement. Smoot would make a capable probate judge and presiding officer for the territory and Church in Western Utah. In preparation for the new appointee, Hyde planned to organize the Carson branch of the Church in about one month.\textsuperscript{53}

Even with the prospects of bringing what appeared to be the attributes of civilization to Carson County some of the members were still not satisfied.

Here we are in Carson Valley surrounded by high mountains and plenty of swering Jentiles some of them swere enough to sink the place. It sounds quite awfull to me to here men calling on God to d--n their souls. perhaps if God should take a few of them at their words the others might possibly have more fear and respect for his holy name. this is surely the most God forsaken place that I ever was in in all my life if we all live here two years and at the end of that time stay good mormons there will be no danger but what we will remain so for one while. but do not think that I have enny notion of denying the faith no indeed it makes me love it the better. I should like to here Brigham prach again but I fear it will be a long time before I shall have that privelag again enjoy your meetings while you can for if ever you live in such a place as this it will be impossable. . . . Sylvester thinks that I write as though I was very home-sick but he thinks of home often enough I guess. . . . I must not forget to tell you what kind of a house we are living in it is a nice cool one made of pine slabs it is amost too cool for these cold nights and fun of it is I am visited by company that I do not like very well one snake one toad one scorpion one lizard and plenty of flies.\textsuperscript{54}

\textsuperscript{52}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{53}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{54}Mary Jane and Sylvester S. Phippen to Mary's brother and sister, Genoa, August 26, 1856.
With all the disgust some of the Mormons held for Carson County the California newspapers continued to proclaim the many wonderful attributes of Western Utah:

For the most part these valleys are free to the world, and clothed with the riches verdure of indigenous grasses and clover of two or three varieties. Along these meadows, the Carson, clear, pure and cold from the mountains winds its way to its sink far into the desert below Ragtown, and most of the way lined with gigantic cottonwood trees, and all so large and old they seem like a patriarchal race destined to oblivion when the present shall have departed.55

Brigham Young also knew the value of Carson County. He sent Orson Hyde a blank appointment form for his replacement:

... We have had no opportunity of sending to you direct, since the missionaries left about the first of June, consequently have not since written.
... We also send you a blank appointment for a Judge of Probate, which you may fill out when you wish to come away. Of course who ever you select will qualify according to law before you give him the commission, God will be the best capable of selecting a suitable person to fill this office, owing to your acquaintance with the inhabitance and the peculiar circumstances which surround you. I would recommend some of our Brethren in preference of any outsider, no matter how professedly friendly he might appear. The rights of our brethren are too sacred to be entrusted in the hands of Sunlight friends.

As to returning act your judgement and wishes in relation thereto. The papers now forwarded to you will enable you to leave whenever you wish, and you can retain them if you choose until you do.56

Hyde was at liberty to return to Salt Lake City after the above letter was delivered to him. However, as President Young indicated, opportunity to send mail was very limited. There is no record that this letter was received except the circumstantial evidence that Judge Hyde left two months after the letter was written to him and the fact that


56 Brigham Young to Orson Hyde, Salt Lake City, September 1, 1856.
he appointed another to take his place in Carson County.  

In the meantime Hyde informed President Young that a number of the missionaries who had been sent to Carson Valley had gotten into trouble.

James Phelps and Justice Earl, two of the boys fined are hard cases. God pity the people to whom they are sent as missionaries. It did not used to be so when you and I were missionaries together.  

President Young indicated his opposition to those characters who got into trouble with the law and for that reason he decided to recall all missionaries who had conducted themselves in such an unchristian manner.

Such characters as have been appointed to missions, and have been guilty of crimes should be stopped preaching, and if they do not return be published in some paper to caution the public against them. We do not wish to have any such characters go to foreign counties under the garb of mormonism. The following list you are requested to write to and require them to not leave California on their missions as they have been released therefrom, A. P. Chesley, T. S. Johnson, James Phelps, Chapman Duncan, George Parish and others whom you know are guilty of crime. If they are all in California they have found their proper place, where it is to be hoped they will remain, and presume it will best suit them to do so if the Vigilance Committee do not interfere.  

This decision was designed to protect the reputation of the Church as well as others who might be led astray and caused more serious harm. The image of the Church was not faring very well in Carson Valley because of the action of some of the brethren.  

---

57 "Early History of Nevada," manuscript in the Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City. This record was written on April 27, 1881.  
58 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Washoe Valley, July 30, 1856.  
59 Brigham Young to Orson Hyde, Salt Lake City, September, 1856.  
60 Ibid.
Young thought that they should live in peace in Carson County and not cause any undue problems to come upon themselves. This was Judge Hyde's sentiment also; however, he was in a little different situation than the Governor—he had to see to it that there was peace because the likelihood of some real physical contact was very apparent otherwise. Hyde attempted to handle the problem from the Washoe Valley settlement which by this time he had named Franktown.\textsuperscript{61} The Saints were fairly well scattered out in that part of Western Utah\textsuperscript{62} and for this reason it was difficult to account for everyone all the time. It generally was not the little troubles that stirred the emotions of the community but the larger scale disturbances. The conflicts caused by Drummond and Hurt are good examples of major differences of interest.

Hyde knew that the Mormons must continue in the leadership role of that county. He therefore suggested to the Utah Governor that a good man be sent to take the position of probate judge or Richard Bentley, one of the Mormon missionaries already in that western region be appointed.\textsuperscript{63} Hyde also countered the bad news that James Townsend had reported to the Church leaders in Salt Lake City. He said "Send us just as many more men as you think wisdom. We can store away a

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{61}Kate B. Carter, "The Mormons In Nevada," Heart Throbs of the West, VII, pp. 456-457. In this article Miss Carter includes a two page entry from Richard Bentley's Autobiography. Bentley states, "On August 14, 1856, my son Frank was born, and being the first child born in the new colony, had the honor of having the new settlement named Franktown after him."
  \item \textsuperscript{62}Brooks, "Mormons in Carson County," pp. 19-20, citing the Daily Alta California, San Francisco, July 9, 1857. This newspaper article quotes the population of Carson County as being 1015.
  \item \textsuperscript{63}Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Franktown, September 12, 1856.
\end{itemize}
hundred more to good advantage, and then another hundred."

Judge Hyde was not sure how to respond to the question of his returning to Salt Lake City that season. He wanted to, of course, but he also was desirous to see his mill in operation. To do so he would not be able to return to the capital city until the spring of 1857. However, the only real factor keeping him in Carson was that he had not heard from Brigham Young on the subject for several months. As of September 12, 1856, he was not sure what he was going to do.65

Prior to this time President Young had given Elder Hyde instructions in a letter to organize a branch of the Church in Western Utah:

You are at liberty, and I think it would be an excellent plan to organize a branch of the Church in Carson County with presidency of stake, high council etc. I think it would give influence, moral tone and character, and be the means of restraining the wicked and ungodly.66

Hyde knew well that his mission in Carson County would not be complete until a branch of the Church was organized in that country. Therefore, on September 28, in Simon Baker's house in Carson Valley, the first conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was held.67 Naturally Orson Hyde as President in that area presided. Richard Bentley was called to act as the clerk and to compile the minutes of the conference so they could be transmitted to the Church

64Ibid.
65Ibid.
66Brigham Young to Orson Hyde, Salt Lake City, October 9, 1855.
67Richard Bentley, "Minutes of the Carson Conference held in Carson Valley September 28th, 1856, commencing at 10 O'clock A.M. at the house of Bro. Simon Baker." This record is in the letter file of Orson Hyde, 1856, Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City.
leaders in Salt Lake City. President Hyde gave a discourse on several subjects such as the assignment to the Carson Valley Mission, swearing, praying, grog shops and treatment of Gentiles. The stake was organized as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stake President</th>
<th>William Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President of the High Council</td>
<td>Chester Loveland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Councilmen</td>
<td>Aaron B. Cherry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Lytle Sr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thomas H. Parks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nelson Higgins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Simon Baker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>William Kay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Christopher Layton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>William Jennings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meltiah Hatch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seth Dustin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jared C. Roundy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Richard Bentley</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bishop of the Stake

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Branch Presidents and other officers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carson and Jack Valley Branch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branch Presidents and other officers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eagle Valley Branch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washoe Valley Branch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After the selection of officers for the Church in Western Utah a few other matters of business were considered then the conference was adjourned.

Hyde on the same day the conference was held wrote to President Young informing him regarding his action in delaying organizing the military:

You may think that I have not done right and you may think

68 Ibid.
correctly to for not using a stronger influence to have the
military organized and the laws carried out. But these are some
things to be considered. Our people have been in their tents and
wagons and with their hands full and more to of business and were
Illy prepared to engaged in an early war to carry out the laws by
a vexations hindrance and I have thought that an attempt to
organize the militia under present circumstances, would cause an
excitement that would greatly check our preparations for winter.
I have had and still have a desire to see the families settled and
in houses before we stir up the nest too much. There are probably
none that would turn out to muster except the brethren.69

In addition to the military problem, collecting the county
taxes was another critical situation. Hyde informed Young that the
citizens swore they would not pay. The Judge had not wished a war;
therefore, he did not force their hand.70

One week after the conference was held in Carson Valley the
members chosen for the High Council met at the home of Thomas H. Park
in Eagle Valley to organize. Chester Loveland presided and John E.
Frosengren was chosen as clerk. The members were ranked according to age,
except the president. Several talks were given before the meeting
adjourned until November.71

The Mormons, by October 4, were well organized as far as
their religious interest were concerned. However, a problem was in
the making which would require their organization on the civil level
to enforce the laws and rulings of the federal court. Judge Drummond
had ruled in July favoring John Reese in a suit against Richard D.
Sides and company. Sides had refused to pay his debt of $1,010. Reese

69 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young and Council, Genoa, September 28,
1856.

70 Ibid.

71 John Forsgen, "High Council Minutes of the Carson Valley
Stake." This record is located in the Church Historian's Office, Salt
Lake City.
got a judgement against Sides which authorized the sheriff to sell his ranch and other properties so Reese could collect his money. The sale was advertised for August 9, but when the sheriff and posse arrived Sides had rallied enough citizens from the Carson area to oppose the sheriff. The sale was postponed until September 9 in hopes that the matter could be better handled later. It did not take place on the scheduled date in September and was again delayed one more month. Reese and his California attorney W. H. Runfield came to Judge Hyde and Sheriff Kelley on October 7 and asked for a posse to aid in the sale of Sides' property which was to be held on the following Thursday. Elder Hyde opposed the move at that particular time.

I opposed the calling out of the posse upon the ground that it was asking too much of us at this particular crisis for one man's accommodation. Cold weather is fast approaching and our mill is almost ready to start. Our brethren have erected good hewed log houses, but without roofs, doors or windows, waiting for lumber; and to commence a fuss under these circumstances which might last a month, with some uncertainty what the final issue might be. I was not willing to embark in the war at this particular juncture of affairs by which operation all my mill hands would be taken away. The work staff and consequently their families remain without proper shelter, perhaps, for the winter. But by their strong legal position and urgent reasonings and appeal, I was at length induced to consent to it . . . .

A posse of forty men were told to rendezvous at Eagle Valley on October 10 armed and equipped. The force would have been greater had not many Mormons gone earlier to California for supplies. Only two or three of the old citizens joined the posse; most of the citizens opposed Col. Reese. When all arrived at the ranch they found the forces

---

72 Mary Jane and Sylvester Phippen to Mary Jane's brother and sister, Genoa, August 26, 1856.
73 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young and Council, Washoe Valley, October 12, 1856.
of Sides to be about equal in number to their own party, well armed and fortified behind the house and barn which had four inch planks installed to give added protection. Elder Hyde was with the sheriff but nevertheless was dissatisfied with the situation:

I was with the brethren at their place of rendezvous and stayed with them until a later hour at night--started three times to go home, but could not and went back to camp--had much conversation with the brethren, gave them all and the best instruction I could upon the order of camp and plan of operations--had a long talk with Col. Reese and told him that his family was in a good warm house, and he could be patriotic especially as he was in so much need of the thousand dollars. But that our families were not so situated, & I told him that I thought he asked too much of us. I told him that God was not with us and that I could get no favorable answer from him; but the want of the thousand dollars urged him to press his suit. I told him then that I should leave the matter with him and the sheriff in the hands of the law, and started for home.74

Amazingly the next morning the men in the Sheriff's posse rebelled against him and by noon they had returned to their homes and their jobs. Judge Hyde was very pleased with the outcome but commented to Governor Young that if they had a resident judge and not a transient one this problem would have been solved months before. The next federal judge, Hyde suggested, must possess more character than Drummond ever had for "... when a judge comes with a woman that is believed not his wife, but a common prostitute. ...", it is expected that he will receive little or no cooperation from the people.75

Along with these considerations Hyde persisted in requesting for the additional settlers he had asked for in previous letters. Since he had not heard from Young in four months, Hyde reported that he would not be back in Salt Lake City until the early spring of the

74 Ibid.
75 Ibid.
next year. By staying this extra time he would be able to start his mill in operation, see the Saints securely housed and pay off all his debts.

The likelihood of the need for those additional one hundred men looked to Judge Hyde on October 16 to be more pressing than before. The Gentiles had succeeded in their victory over Utah law at Sides' ranch and thereafter attempted to press the issue. Hyde reported to Young the actions of these citizens:

The old citizens, that is a portion of them have become highly mobocratic. They are going to regulate all matters. They are going to lynch the assessor and collector till he pays back any taxes that he may have collected and cost that have been paid in any law case must be refunded. No man that is a Mormon can live who has more than one wife, every thing must be regulated; and to this end they are said to be enlisting the Indians. They already have from six to ten, and they say they intend to bring 300. This is the talk.76

It was not Hyde's intention to stand by and be dictated to by this mob. He sent his plan to Brigham Young:

We intend to do our duty and meet what ever emergency that may arise like men. They say that they intend to run our mill when it is done. But they will have a warm time of it if they do. It is a noble mill and almost ready to run. It looks rich with the irons upon it. There is now no chance for us but victory or death; and in the name of the Lord, we are resolved to stand our ground and do our best.77

The Gentiles were determined they were not going to be ruled by Utah; therefore, when the assessor and collector from El Dorado County, California, came over to Carson Valley and assessed much of the property they received him with more harmony than had been the Utah assessor. After this event the old citizens declared they were in

---

76 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young and Council, Franktown, October 18, 1856.

77 Ibid.
California, not Utah, and they now planned to organize a precinct subject to California laws. Hyde reported it was for reasons like this that he needed the additional men. All those he presently had under his jurisdiction were more than busy trying to sustain themselves. The added burden of expecting them to enforce the civil law at a time like this was expecting too much. 78

The Gentiles, now, more than ever before, decided they were going to regulate their own affairs without the influence of the Utah Government. In opposition to this move Judge Hyde believed, if it came to a fight, the Mormons were willing to do their best, but at the same time he was confused because there had been no words of advice from Salt Lake City.

Should we get worsted we feel willing to become a sacrifice (if God will) that more righteous judgment come upon the ungodly, but we do not intend to be used up if we can avoid it. But things look rather merkey... The brethren of nearly all my letters have been asking for more numbers to be sent here--for them to come and keep coming and not stop, provided you thought it wisdom to send them. 79

Orson Hyde not only asked for the extra brethren to be sent to Carson County but he also had a plan to effect their transfer:

There is now a prospect of sending through to the Lake by Durfie, Carter & others, I let not the opportunity slip of respectfully suggesting to you the prospect of getting up a mission this winter of one hundred men with as good an outfit as can well be raised and give them to understand that they are going to Salmon River suppose that they start very early in the spring and move on to the north under sealed instruction to proceed direct to Wassau Valley in Carson County; and let them open the instruction and when they get near the sink of the Humboldt, let them take the Lucky route and come up on to the meadows. Then proceed twenty

78 Orson Hyde to Brigham Young and Council, Franktown, October 18, 1856.
79 Ibid.
miles south into this valley. It is necessary for a strong force to be here. The country is worthy, but Devils will reign unless we get in so thick that there is no chance for them.\textsuperscript{80}

It was because of the many unsettled problems like the one above in Carson County that influenced Judge Hyde to write Brigham Young and report he would not return until the spring. On November 4 Hyde met for the last time with the brethren in the monthly High Council meeting. It was held again in Thomas H. Park's house in Eagle Valley and there the able Church leader gave his last official words of advice and instruction to the leaders of the Carson Valley Mission.

Three days later President Young wrote to Orson Hyde but his letter reflects no knowledge of the many troubles the Saints were having in that region.\textsuperscript{81} He would not learn of the problems until three days before Elder Hyde arrived in Salt Lake City.

It appears that the evidence in favor of Hyde remaining in Carson County for another six months was overwhelming; however, the Judge must have received President Young's letter of September 1 which authorized him to select a replacement for the office of probate judge and gave him permission to return to Salt Lake City whenever he wished.\textsuperscript{82} Hyde hurriedly made an agreement to lease his sawmill which he valued at $10,000 including the property to Jacob Rose. Rose paid on his rent one span of small different mules, an old worn-out harness, two yokes of oxen, and an old wagon which Hyde used to convey himself.

\textsuperscript{80} Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, Franktown, October 22, 1856.
\textsuperscript{81} Brigham Young to Orson Hyde, Salt Lake City, November 4, 1856.
\textsuperscript{82} Brigham Young to Orson Hyde, Salt Lake City, September 1, 1856.
to Salt Lake City. 83 Before he left he also appointed Chester Loveland as the new probate judge. 84 After what he considered a completed assignment this pioneer organizer left Carson County rather hurriedly on November 6 with Simon Baker, James Kathall, John Vance, William Price and a number of others for Salt Lake City. 85 He never returned to Carson Valley again. 86

83 Orson Hyde to the people of Carson and Washoe Valley, Salt Lake City, January 27, 1862, in Thompson and West, Nevada, p. 40.
84 "Early History of Nevada," manuscript, April 27, 1881.
85 Ibid. Also see Thompson and West, Nevada, p. 40.
86 Thompson and West, Nevada, p. 40.
Chapter 5

ORSON HYDE'S SUCCESSOR: CHESTER LOVELAND

After the departure of Orson Hyde and William Price, Chester Loveland took over the leadership responsibilities in Western Utah on behalf of the Mormons.\(^1\) However, there was a period of about one month during which Brigham Young did not know of the changes in Carson County; therefore he continued during this time to write to Hyde, whom he expected was still in Franktown, giving him instructions as regarding the correspondence he had received from the Judge.

The exodus of Judge Hyde coincided with two factors which aided the mission immensely. First and probably least important of the two changes was that the missionaries were becoming better adjusted to their assignment. Some of the Saints who had just two or three months previously sent reports of homesickness to their friends and relatives in Salt Lake City now began to change their feelings. Most of the Mormons were by now working and earning a fair wage which gave them new confidence and a sense of security. Mary Phippen wrote to her parents, Alexander and Ann Brim, on November 13, expressing her new attitude: "... You say you hope we are in better spirits than we was I can truley say

\(^{1}\)Chester Loveland, by virtue of his office as the Probate Judge of Carson County, was the political leader of the Mormons; however, William Price was the spiritual leader because he was the stake president. Price returned to Salt Lake City with Orson Hyde on business and Loveland was chosen to act in behalf of Price until he returned to the county.
that we are and I hope that we shall continue so long as we stay here."\(^2\)

This alteration in attitudes was characteristic of the majority of the Latter-day Saints according to the reports of their leaders during this time.\(^3\)

The second and most important factor affecting the mission was the position the Mormons took regarding John Reese. Orson Hyde, during his stay in Carson County, had a change of attitude toward Reese. At first he thought him a very upright man but the more he learned about his business relations the more adverse his opinion became until he became reluctant to aid Reese in collecting his debts. When Hyde left, Loveland took the same position and refused to help Reese. Loveland felt this was one reason why the Gentiles had changed their feelings toward the Mormons.

In regard to the difficulty that existed between us as a people and the old settlers of Carson County; I am pleased to say has died a natural death, and I believe the course that was taken by our brethren in the matter between Reese and Sides, has been the means of establishing more friendly relations between us and our neighbors than otherwise, and I am happy to say that at present there does not appear to be any thing to prevent us from building up a permanent stake in this country, and carrying out the designs, the Servants of the Lord, had in view at the time we all feel to be subject to your council in all things.\(^4\)

After the Mormons stopped pressing the issue of collecting Reese's debts the Gentiles became much more hospitable. Now with the future looking so favorable for the Mormons, Loveland began to cultivate

\(^2\)Mary Jane Phippen to Alexander and Ann M. Brim, Genoa, November 13, 1856.


\(^4\)Chester Loveland to Brigham Young, Franktown, February 24, 1857.
better relations so the mission could live in harmony with the Gentiles. In the regularly monthly High Council meeting, Saturday, December 6, 1856, President Loveland advised the brethren to follow the counsel of Elder Hyde. By this policy the mission could expect rightful treatment from all. Loveland, also in order to assure the peace between the two groups, Gentiles and Mormons, "... suggested that the brethren on this mission to not go to Gold Canyon to work, whereby disturbances might be raised by intruding on those holding previous claims there."5

By adhering to this kind of instruction the Mormons would not cause addition ill feeling between themselves and their neighbors; therefore they could expect to live in peace in Carson County.

On the next day Brigham Young wrote to Orson Hyde, whom he thought to be in Carson County, concerning the problems in that area. By this time Young had received Hyde's letters informing him of the various conflicts in that region. Young gave instructions relating to the course of the mission:

In regard to your impending difficulties we should judge by the spirit and tenor of your letters that war was inevitable, and if it was so with you we should act upon your suggestions it would embroil not only you but the whole Territory therein, rather than this we should prefer to abandon our settlements in Carson and let all the brethren return which we some think of doing. We do not care a groat about maintaining the laws in that country at the expence of such a continual drain upon our best resources time and patience.

We wish that you was here and wish you to come the first opportunity. Do not carry things too far it is not all worth the sacrificial of any good man. We have plenty of good locations where we can live in peace and if the brethren cannot live there and maintain the laws without contention let them all sell out and come away. I wish that you and all the rest of our brethren were here

---

5John Forsgren, "Carson County High Council Minutes," December 6, 1856. This record is located in the Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City. Hereafter this record will be referred to as Forsgren, "CCHCM."
now. If you should have a hundred more it would only increase the trade of the settlement to such a degree as to entice still more the cupidity of our enemies. If the place is desirable, and one that is coveted by them of course they will not let you nor us rest in peace until they drive our people therefrom this our experience teaches us. Wherefore let them have it and let the brethren do the best they can in selling their claims and abandon the settlements to those who want them worse than we do let California enjoy her two or three precincts over there if they wish to, but don't you fight about it. If truth forbearance and genial influence of good society cannot maintain good order and supremacy of the laws, we shall not endeavor to sustain them at that distant point by force, neither shall we proceed to indict those men and send a posse to bring them here they are near enough now. Take heed therefore and govern yourself accordingly.  

The Carson Mission was certainly not worth a war that would involve the entire Territory. The expected future of the mission was very clearly spelled out by President Young. If the missionaries could get along, by all means do so. But if not, then they should return to Salt Lake City. The conditions in the area were clarified for Young three days later on December 9 when Orson Hyde and company arrived in the capital city after a rather tedious journey because of the deep snow.

The Carson Saints knew Elder Hyde would report their conditions without exaggerations; therefore, with satisfied minds, they pursued their responsibilities without fear of some unexpected change in their assignment. They organized the county into four school districts to promote better education. By March of the next year they added a fifth district to the organization. During December of 1856 a school house was built by the Mormons in Franktown, Washoe Valley, that cost about

6 Brigham Young to Orson Hyde, Salt Lake City, December 7, 1856.

7 Wilford Woodruff to George Q. Cannon, Salt Lake City, January 7, 1857, published in The Western Standard, February 21, 1857. Also see news item on page two of same edition relating to above subject.

8 Thompson and West, Nevada, p. 40.
$1,000. They had from twenty to twenty-five scholars attend the classes taught by Leonard Wines. 9

The mission had decided on several other courses of action to strengthen its ties with the Church and to live peaceably in Carson County. William Nixon reported in The Western Standard that the mission had agreed whole heartedly to participate in the reformation of the Church 10 by having each member rebaptized before the next conference. He also mentioned that the Saint's relation in regard to the Gentiles was to live their religion and mind their own business. As soon as the old settlers came to believe that the Mormons were not a threat, their conduct changed more in favor of the Saints. 11

As the year of 1856 ended, the Carson Valley area was visited by very cold weather. More snow fell in December than had fallen in the previous three years. In addition to this the Valley was hit by hurricane winds and heavy rains on the twenty-ninth of the month which caused some damage to a few houses. 12 Bad as the weather was it would take more than such an obstacle to dampen the spirits of the mission in Richard

9Madison D. Hambleton to Brigham Young, (no month nor date), 1857. See also Chester Loveland to Orson Hyde, Washoe Valley, January 21, 1857.

10The Reformation was a reform movement in the Mormon Church during 1856 and 1857. Because of increased political opposition and growing numbers of non-Mormons invading Zion the Church leaders felt the need for greater unity among the Saints. All members were asked to purge their souls by repentence and to be rebaptized in order to rededicate themselves to the Church. Those who refused were cut off from the Church.


12"Late From Carson Valley," The Western Standard, January 17, 1857.
Bentley's opinion.

We have built up quite a little town in Wassau. This valley seems more like home in the Salt Lake valleys than any other in this part of the country, as here we are not mixed up with the world; we are all of one faith, and having one great object in view, (that is the building up of the Kingdom of God on the earth).

The brethren generally are alive to their duty, and manifest a spirit and disposition to live their religion and carry out the plans and designs of the first Presidency of the Church.\(^{13}\)

Since the Mormons had made a home out of Carson County their duties seemed not to weigh so heavily on their minds. On January 3, Brigham Young wrote to Chester Loveland informing him just exactly what the responsibilities of the mission were. He said:

Be wise and prudent in your movement. We shall not recruit that place from here. That is a subsidiary gathering place to collect the Saints to from California and Oregon and if there are not enough there now for those purposes, then all had better come here.

It is not our wish for you to sacrifice your property, nor yet for you to abandon the place unless it becomes so bad that you cannot live there in peace and without contention but if you cannot it is our counsel for you to dispose of your property to the best advantage and return to this place. Be not in haste, but do all things in wisdom. You will know what is best to do, and act according to the circumstances which surround you. Get together those who are true and faithful and seek unto the Lord for wisdom, and he will guide you aright.\(^{14}\)

On receipt of this letter Loveland knew that the mission would not be reenforced from Salt Lake City and if it received additional settlers from the California area they would only be in Carson Valley temporarily. Their ultimate destination would sooner or later be Salt Lake City. However, new settlers were not needed because conditions were very peaceable. This information Loveland conveyed to Orson Hyde


\(^{14}\)Brigham Young to Chester Loveland, Salt Lake City, January 3, 1857.
in a letter on January 21. He also reported to the former Carson leader that his mill was doing well and in a short while would soon fill all the needs of the brethren.  

About this same time Madison D. Hambleton wrote to President Young indicating that the people had received word by way of the Reeses, Enoch and John, that the mission would be called home in the spring. Since no one placed too much confidence in John Reese, the missionaries were not sure how to take the information.  

Brigham Young, having not received this letter yet, wrote again to Chester Loveland on January 31, reenforcing his instructions of the third of the month. The Carson Mission was instructed to use wisdom in all its moves. This course the brethren were following according to Leonard Wines; the members were doing fine and were already preparing for the upcoming farming season.  

On February 24, Loveland wrote again to Young informing him of the action taken in response to the letter of January 3 which instructed him to act according to the needs of the mission. 

On receipt of your letter I called the brethren together, and laid it before them, and desired each one to express his feelings freely on the subject, which was done. The mind of every one present was, that we stay and fill our mission unless called to some other field of labor, and that we take part in the reformation going

---

15 Chester Loveland to Orson Hyde, Franktown, January 21, 1857.  
16 Madison D. Hambleton to Brigham Young, (no month nor date), 1857.  
17 Brigham Young to Chester Loveland, Salt Lake City, January 21, 1857.  
on in Great Salt Lake and surrounding settlements, and live our holy religion which may Israel's God assist us to do is my prayer.

I can say in behalf of the Saints that have been sent on this mission; that generally they manifest a disposition to serve God and the interest of his kingdom, the spirit of union prevails among us and the people with whom we are surrounded appear to desire to be on friendly terms with us, we find it is best to mind our own business, and have as little to do with them as circumstances will admit of, they carry an influence around them that is not congenial with the spirit of any Latter-day Saints. 19

It appears that the Church members in Carson County were faithful to their calling. However, the rumor that the mission was going to be called home in six months or so excited the Saints to the point that Loveland felt the need also to ask for instruction from Brigham Young on the subject:

The news that the brethren have received from their friends in Salt Lake City by the last mail stating that the Carson Mission was called home has caused quite an excitement among us, but from the reading of your letter, I cannot see any thing in it that would justify us in breaking up the mission and returning home under our present circumstances, and the present peaceable disposition of our neighbors. I understand that there are some four or five of them that refuse to pay their tax until the line is established between us and California this appears to be the only thing that is likely to make us any trouble, which we intend to get along with according to the wisdom that may be given to us. I will again state that we are all on hand to return or stay just as the servants of the Lord shall say.

We will be happy to hear from you again as circumstances will permit with any counsel and advise you may have for us. 20

Chester Loveland, being the obedient servant he was, tried to solve the mission's problems as best he could. He took Brigham Young's advise literally and proceeded to visit all the Church leaders in the different branches. He invited them to the March 7 High Council meeting to be held in the Franktown school house to discuss the problem

---

19 Chester Loveland to Brigham Young, Franktown, February 24, 1857.

20 Ibid.
of the continued existence of the mission. President Loveland explained to the leaders the reason for their being called together. Some had written to relatives and friends in Salt Lake City reporting that the mission was in danger and in return had received encouragement to come home. One of the reasons for the conference of the Church leaders was to find out what dangers existed which might adversely affect the Carson Mission's existence. He attempted to settle the question concerning the future of that branch of the Church by reading to the group President Young's letter of January 3, which in his opinion was opposed to the termination of the settlement. Loveland, after reading the letter, asked the members present to express their feelings on the subject whether to stay or leave their assignment.

John Lyttle Sr. said in substance: We stand as the true representatives of affairs here and ought to know what will be best for the saints to do. The report has spread for us to come home and those who are not of us believe we are going. Their wishes toward us are now good, and they like to have us stay. We should go to work with our might, and carry out our mission, and do our duty. Our former enemies are peaceable now, so there is nothing to hinder us in staying, but when we go, let us all go together. Bro. Wm. Kay, in substance, said that he had no doubt in his mind but what the mission could carry out the designed will of the presidency to make this a gathering place for the saints from California and Oregon. He was willing to do what wisdom would dictate through the council. Bro. Nelson Higgins remarked that no mobs could drive us, as Bro. Joseph Smith had said in his time, that this people could not be driven out. He was in favor of staying. All the rest of the counselors gave their testimony in a similar strain, and so also other presiding Elders and counselors of branches of the Church in Carson Mission. They were all of the same mind and feeling. On motion of President Loveland, the brethren voted unanimously to stay. Pres. Loveland then expressed his heartfelt gratitude for the good spirit of the Lord manifested by the Council and the brethren present.21

After the vote was cast in favor of staying, the members returned to their farms and worked very diligently in order to produce

an abundant crop during the coming season. The missionaries were not sure how long they would be in Western Utah even though it was understood they were to finish out their assignment there. The matter seemed to be settled, on the surface at least. But there was still an air of uneasiness about the permanence of the mission.

Loveland received another letter from Brigham Young in time to read parts of it to the April High Council meeting. Young advised the brethren to continue in their duties and remain faithful to their cause. Members of the group again voiced their intention to persist in their responsibilities in Carson County. The meeting adjourned and the brethren prepared for the semi-annual Carson County Stake Church Conference to be held two days later on the sixth.22

The second Carson Conference held in Western Utah meet on April 6 in the Franktown school, Washoe Valley. Chester Loveland was unanimously chosen as president of the conference and William Nixon was selected as the clerk. Loveland and Richard Bentley spoke briefly to the members present before the following stake officers were chosen and sustained.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stake President</th>
<th>William Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stake President pro tem.</td>
<td>Chester Loveland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President of the High Council</td>
<td>Chester Loveland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Councilmen</td>
<td>Aaron Benjamin Cherry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Lytle Sr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thomas H. Parks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nelson Higgins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Simon Baker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>William Kay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Christopher Layton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>William Jennings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meltia Hatch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seth Dustin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jared C. Roundy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

22Ibid., April 4, 1857.
After the stake was staffed with officers the different branches were called upon to report the number and standing of their members. The Washoe Branch had 111 members which included twelve high priests, nine seventies and one elder. The Carson Valley Branch had 116 members including five high priests, twenty-two seventies, nine elders, three priests and one teacher. The members of the branch were all faithful to the interest of the mission. The Eagle Valley Branch membership was reported to be sixty of which four were high priests, two seventies, five elders and one priest. All members, with few exceptions, were living their religion. With this business concluded the conference undertook to review the conduct of several of its members. H. B. Taylor's rebaptism was declared void because he misrepresented certain facts; Mary Harper was cut off from the Church because of her unchristian like conduct; finally the case of the disfellowshipped Col. John Reese was reviewed. It was held that Reese had brought the trouble on himself by unbelief and unchristian like conduct. Testimony was taken and Reese publicly confessed his guilt but refused to repent.

---

After a few remarks by Loveland and others, Reese was also cut off from the Church. When all the business of the conference was concluded Loveland adjourned the meeting until the sixth of October, 1857.  

Loveland wrote to Brigham Young the next day reporting the success of the conference and he also informed him that a number of the brethren, whose families were in Salt Lake City, would return to that city this spring. Others would do likewise also if this was Young's desire. However, until word came from the Church headquarters they would be busy fencing, putting in crops and generally improving the country.

It is evident Loveland was not sure what course to take in order to advise the Saints in that mission. Mary Jane Phippen also was aware of the confused state of the missionaries.

... If they call us home as some think they have undoutedly you will see us before fall, I realey wish that we could find out some thing desicive about our returnin home. every thing is in confusion here some think that we are called home and some say we are not and the thing of it is we cant tell what to do. Sylvester endtends to get redy to go and at the same time make preperations for staying so that if they word comes fore us to return he is off at once. but if they say stay then he is prepared to stay.

The mission needed a strong conformation on its status from Brigham Young one way or the other. If anything could have settled the missionaries down this would. But instructions relating to the problem would not be forth coming for several months. Therefore the Saints would have to remain in their confused state until Young acted.

---

24 Ibid.

25 Chester Loveland to Brigham Young, Franktown, April 7, 1857.

26 Mary Jane Phippen to Alexander and Ann M. Brim, Genoa, May 6, 1857.
In the meantime economic developments occupied the interest of the Mormons as well as the Gentiles in Carson County. The gold discoveries in Gold Canyon and along the Walker River were stimulating the economy. Also there was much recent excitement over the building of a wagon road between Carson Valley and Placerville. Up until such a road was completed people of Carson County had had to pack all their supplies over the mountains from California. Mormons and Gentiles got together on April 25 in a convention to consider and adopt the most feasible route from their area to California. John Reese was chosen president of the organization. Hiram Mott, Dr. Charles D. Daggett and James McMarlin were selected as vice-presidents. William Nixon was called as secretary and Stephen A. Kinsey as vice-secretary. Mott, Richard D. Sides, Dr. B. L. King, Moses Job and Judge Loveland were appointed to the finance committee to collect funds to construct the road. The convention chose the Big Tree route and assigned William B. Thorrington and M. W. Wheeler as representatives to the California Wagon Road convention to be held at Mokelumen Hill, California on May 2. The citizens of Carson County looked forward to the establishment of a lucrative trade with California. They knew it would reduce the cost of goods in their area and also minimize the effort required to haul needed supplies from California. In addition to the already mentioned advantages the road would bring the people of Western Utah stage service

by the end of August or September. The possibilities which the wagon road would make available to the people of Carson County aroused much interest but not so much as that of the California people. Merchants in California were very concerned about the trade with Western Utah but they had greater visions than the Carson citizens. California foresaw the possibility of trading with Salt Lake City, trade made possible by a good road between Western Utah and California. It would be cheaper for Utah to buy their supplies from the Golden State rather than from the Missouri area.

The Wagon Road Convention was held on Sunday May 2 with a large number of people present. A. C. Baine was elected president. It was decided to expend $30,000 to make the Big Tree route a good stage and wagon road. Committees were organized to raise the money to develop the road. Both California and Western Utah looked forward to a brighter economic future.

In another attempt to make life more liveable in Carson County Brigham Young gave instructions to Chester Loveland on June 3 concerning the future of the mission.

To your favor of 24 February 1857 I reply. I am happy that peace is restored, and it will continue with all who mind their own business, go quietly along attending to the same, and leave their brother and neighbor alone.

You were not and are not recalled from your mission, only as in all places and at all times if there by any, who would rather not stay let them return to this place.

30 Brigham Young to Chester Loveland, Salt Lake City, June 3, 1857.
Unfortunately this letter did not arrive in Carson for nearly two months and for that reason the mission continued in its unstable state.

At the June High Council Meeting Chester Loveland, grasping for aid to help him direct the mission, read parts of a letter written to Madison D. Hambleton by President Young regarding the mission. The letter indicated that the mission was designed as a permanent settlement and the missionaries should establish schools with that objective in mind.31

It was hard for Loveland to control all the members under the circumstances that existed in Carson County because they had not received absolute word from President Young concerning the duration of the mission. Many felt their role in the settlement was only temporary. Loveland complained in the July High Council meeting that a number of brethren had returned to Salt Lake City without seeking advice. They had used the excuse that permission had come from Heber C. Kimball authorizing them to leave.32 With the expected routine emigration of Mormons from California to Salt Lake City, which would travel through Carson Valley, Loveland anticipated additional trouble from the restless Saints.33 Because of the lack of advice from Mormon

31 Forsgren, "CCHCM," June 6, 1857.
32 Ibid., July 7, 1857.
33 Some historians have reported that Brigham Young encouraged this emigration by anticipating trouble from the Federal Government at this early date. The author finds this interpretation totally irrelevant. The Western Standard regularly published information to encourage Mormons to move to one of the colonies or to Salt Lake City. On August 14 the newspaper published a letter from Young which was typical of the Church's attitude as late as July 4, 1857. In relation to the immigration from California; do not advise persons to emigrate who would not serve God when they get here;
headquarters he knew others would use the opportunity to return to the capital city.

In the meantime William Nixon, Christopher Layton, William Jennings, President Loveland, Seth Dustin, A. B. Cherry, Leonard Wines, and Ebenezer Brown went over to California to trade and bring back supplies for the Saints. While in California Loveland learned more about the emigration train which was to travel to Salt Lake City. He advised the Carson Mormons who were planning to return to their Salt Lake Valley families shortly thereafter to defer their departure from the first of July until the tenth. They could then travel with the California Mormons which would offer both parties more protection from the Indians.

Loveland, realizing the problems the mission was having, again wrote Brigham Young explaining the troubles he was presently working under.

We have been for some time anxiously looking for a letter from you, in a letter to Bro. M. D. Hambleton you had written to me,

as such are only a drag to those who are faithful, and the more we have of them the poorer we are. You had better, as I have no doubt you have done and will do, tell the Saints what they may expect when they get here; that is, to hold themselves and all that they possess in readiness to forward the interests of God's kingdom, even to the laying down of their lives, should the exigencies of time require it.

Chapters 5 and 6 of this thesis presents information which proves that President Young did not call the Mormons home until August 15, 1857. The July and August immigration therefore were only a continuation of the routine.

34 "Arrivals from Carson," The Western Standard, June 19, 1857.


36 Ibid.
with instructions in regard to the Carson Mission. That communication has never reached us, and I must confess that we need some instruction from you in order to allay the excitement that has, and does to some extent exist in this country on account of the reports that almost every individual has received from their friends in Salt Lake, that Bro. Kimbal had called the Carson Mission home, myself with Bishop Bentley and some others have traveled from one end of the settlement to the other several times and requested the brethren to hold on until we received instructions from you, but with all that could be done the generality of them felt that the mission was broken up, and would have been on their way home before this time, had we not received a few lines from you to Bro. Hambleton stating that you did not wish a man to leave the Mission that would live his religion etc. This had the effect of making the people more settled. As a general thing the brethren are ready and willing to do what you want them to.

A small company of those who have their families in Salt Lake Country, will start in, a few days to attend to business, and then be subject to your disposal either to stay or return.

I should be extremely glad, if it would be consistant, that you would write to us, with instructions that will settle the minds of the brethren, as there does still exist a doubt with some whether or not you wish to hold possession of this country; and with that doubt upon their minds they do not feel like spreading out and building up as they would do, under other circumstances.37

In two weeks Loveland would have his written instructions but for the time being he had to contend with the problem of losing some of his missionaries. On July 15 the California Company under the leadership of Hezekiah Thatcher and those Carson County citizens intending on leaving met at Eagle Valley to organize for the journey to Salt Lake City. Chester Loveland presided at the meeting in which P. G. Sessions was elected captain of the entire company, Hezekiah Thatcher sergeant of the guard, Theodore Curtis chaplin and W. F. Anderson clerk. President Loveland and Captain Sessions spoke to the group giving them advice and instruction. Next morning the company of sixty-five people started on their journey to Zion. President Loveland lost some of his ablest assistants when A. B. Cherry, Leonard Wines, William Price

37 Chester Loveland to Brigham Young, Franktown, July 13, 1857.
William Jennings, Simon Baker and others left.38

During the last of July Loveland finally received President Young's June letter informing them that the mission was not called home. He read the message to the High Councilmen in their August meeting. Now satisfied that the mission was to be permanent he chose three new men to replace those on the High Council who had left for Salt Lake City. Ebenezer Brown, John D. Chase and George Nebeker were chosen, ordained and set apart by Loveland and Lytle. Loveland informed the men present that he planned to attend the October Conference in Salt Lake City; therefore, John Lytle was appointed to act in his place until he returned. Before the meeting adjourned the men were ranked according to age as was the custom of the group.39

Chester Loveland planned to return to Salt Lake City with the August Company of California Saints now making plans to leave their state.40 The Californians originally planned to depart on August 21 but they were delayed for five days. They were all instructed to rendezvous at Zacheus Cheney's ranch near Centerville, California, on August 26. They then slowly crossed the Sierra Nevada for Carson Valley in Western Utah. There they were to join those interested travelers who might be heading east.41 Unknown to them at the time the whole Carson Mission would travel east with them.

38 W. F. Anderson to Editors of the News, Bear River Ferry, August 12, 1857. Parts of this letter were published in the Deseret News on August 19, 1857.
39 Forsgren, "CCHCM," August 1, 1857.
41 Ibid.
Chapter 6

TERMINATION OF THE MORMON COLONY 1857

By the end of August, 1857, the Carson Saints had observed several additional changes which affected their status in Western Utah. First, for at least the last month, the Mormons in Carson County had read strange reports from the California newspapers concerning Governor Young and Utah. The papers reported that Utah was under military rule and that Young as governor had been replaced by a Gentile.¹ The Carson missionaries watched with a yearning desire to join the emigrants who passed through their region traveling toward Salt Lake City. However, they realized reluctantly, for the moment, that their assignment was to remain in the distant Carson County. Also at this time, just as had been predicted, the Carson area received stage service from California over the recently completed wagon road. Richard Sanders had placed a line of stages on the Big Tree route between Genoa and Mokelumne Hill, California, which offered the citizens of that area a comfortable and convenient means of transportation.² During August the Gentile population again attempted to stimulate interest in the possibility of getting the United States Congress to recognize their area as a separate territory. The first assembly of the Gentiles met in Genoa on August 3


²"New Line of Stages," The Western Standard, August 28, 1857.

112
to organize a mass meeting of all the interested citizens of the county on the eighth day of the same month.\(^3\) The mass meeting was successfully held with many attending the convention but Mormons were conspicuously absent. They took no part for or against the proceedings.\(^4\) It seems, though, that consistent with their interest they would have been opposed to the move. However, there is a very good possibility that the supposed military government in Salt Lake City might have occupied their interest more closely than the latest civic movement.\(^5\)

This is evident in the commotion caused by the arrival in the Carson area about September 1 of the August Company from California.\(^6\) A few of the Carson Saints, including President Loveland who had

\(^3\)Thompson and West, *Nevada*, p. 42.


\(^5\)Eighteen months earlier Brigham Young had given instructions to Orson Hyde concerning territorial movements in Carson County:

As regards a new territory at present it appears to me to be more talk than anything else although it may occur sometime, but there are other divisions than that are also talked of and which will also be made when that is I consider that our application for a State Government will properly settle the matter for a time if not why let matters take their course. We could not feel to divide at present. Yet if they divide us contrary to our wishes it will be their fault, if they throw into our hands two, three or more territories instead of one.

We are here in the mountains, and here are not many other than our people who desire here to live; all we want is more inhabitants but we are fast filling up. It will make but little difference soon how the Government slices up Utah, and this mountain country, it will be Mormondom all over. (Brigham Young to Orson Hyde, Salt Lake City, January 30, 1856.)

This instruction plus the problems in the Utah capital probably influenced the Mormons reaction to this latest territorial movement. As the facts indicate they had very little interest in the proceedings.

intended on going to Salt Lake City for the fall conference made preparations to leave with the eastward bound Mormons on September 5.

Chester Loveland got up on September 5 for a 6 o'clock breakfast preparatory to leaving. Just then a knock was heard at his front door. When he opened it there stood Peter W. Conover, Oliver B. Huntington and Samuel Dalton bringing an express message from Brigham Young. Conover reported that they had been sent by President Young to Carson Valley for the purpose of calling the brethren home. He and Huntington had rendezvoused in Rush Valley on August 18 and had departed from there eighteen days previously. They were right on schedule. Huntington reported to Daniel H. Wells prior to his leaving Salt Lake City that it would take them from sixteen to eighteen days to make the journey. But the only thing right about the trip was the time involved in getting to their destination. The sixteen men almost died of thirst and starvation enroute to Washoe Valley. But thanks to a few breaks, some helpful Indians and a good citizen in Ragtown they made it without one human death. Just a short distance beyond Ragtown on August 31, the group met a man from Washoe Valley who informed them that a company including President Loveland was preparing to leave that settlement on September 5. Carson was still eighty miles away and there seemed not enough time to inform the settlers before they left for conference. Conover, Huntington and Dalton decided to go ahead of the other men in hopes they would reach the Washoe Valley before the

---

7 Oliver B. Huntington, "Diary of Oliver B. Huntington, Part II, 1947-1900," p. 113. A typescript of the original is located in the Brigham Young University Library, Provo, Utah.
Saints departed. As is evident the men were successful.\textsuperscript{8}

Brigham Young's message was delivered to the Carson Church leader on the arrival of the Salt Lake City messengers.

We have concluded that it is wisdom that you should dispose of your property as well as you can and come home. If you cannot sell to advantage lease your places, and get your pay in advance.

We send this counsel to you by Express that you may avail yourselves of the present emigration to dispose of your property. We want you to secure as much ammunition as you can. Be wise, 'and not let the right hand know what the left hand doeth.' 'A hint to the wise is sufficient.' Make no noise about your business, but let all things be done quietly and in order. You are aware that you sell at better advantage if you can keep your own counsel.

The express party will remain and assist you in fitting up and return with you on the Northern route. Brother W. R. Smith, who went to California with Capt'n Hooper's stock, will it is presumed be ready to come with you.

Come in one company, and keep together so that you can protect yourselves against all foes, both white and red.

We learn there is an army of from twenty five to thirty five hundred men now enroute for this Territory, besides some ten or twelve hundred teamsters &c. seven hundred wagons with ox teams loaded with supplies; and about four hundred more mules and horse teams loaded with personal effects, camp equipage, &c, seven thousand beef cattle. The supplies are designed to last them fifteen months after they arrive in this Territory. We do not expect them to come here, although the last we heard of them, 100 of the wagons were 180 miles on the way, and a train of 30 wagons were starting out every other day, and the troops were to start off the 15th of the month; they are to march on foot.

My counsel is for you to leave your farms with as good gentiles as you can, if you cannot sell to advantage, for we would just as soon own the property as not. Buy all the powder, Lead, and Caps you possibly can, but do not tarry to go over into California, or at least to detain you any length of time.\textsuperscript{9}

The President furnished Conover with $5,000 tithing money to buy ammunition. He had originally intended on turning the money in

\textsuperscript{8}Peter Wilson Conover, "Autobiography of Peter Wilson Conover," dictated to D. Conover Kelly, pp. 44-45. A typescript of the original is located in the Brigham Young University Library, Provo, Utah.

\textsuperscript{9}Brigham Young to Chester Loveland, and the Brethren in Carson County, Salt Lake City, August 15, 1857.
upon reaching Salt Lake City. After breakfast the Washoe citizens were called to a meeting held in the Franktown school house at nine o'clock. There Conover read the letter and instructed the Saints to sell their property and prepare to leave as quickly as possible. After talking with the Washoe brethren Loveland and Conover traveled to Eagle Valley and there at two o'clock they gave the same message as had been given earlier in the day to the Washoe Branch. Because this was not a large branch Conover was only able to collect $2,000 for ammunition. From Eagle Valley they rode on to Genoa and the Carson Valley. By ten o'clock the Carson Valley Branch members were informed regarding the call home. They furnished $5,000 also and the total sum of $12,000 in gold was given to Bob Walker, who was known around San Francisco as a buyer, to purchase powder, lead and caps as Brigham Young had instructed. The supplies were to be delivered by boat to Stockton and from there it was to be freighted by wagon to Carson Valley and then on to Salt Lake City. Four days after Walker left Genoa, Conover, Huntington, Nelson Hollingshead and one other traveled to Murphy's Camp, California, in order to meet Walker on his return trip.\footnote{Conover, "Autobiography," pp. 45-47.}

In the absence of those men who had gone to California for supplies and ammunition the Carson missionaries were busy trying to make the best deal they could for their property.\footnote{When the Mormons decided to sell their property there were not nearly enough people to respond to the sale; therefore, a majority had to either abandon or dispense of their farms at great loses. Also see Haws and Hunsaker, Abraham Hunsaker, pp. 90-91; Jennings, "Carson Valley," p. 179; Neff, \textit{Utah}, p. 227; and Mack, \textit{Nevada}, pp. 169-171.} They were also busy packing their wagons because they expected to leave the area in
about two weeks.

Conover, after waiting several days in Murphy's Camp, received his cargo on September 15. While trying to load up he had some trouble with about fifty miners over the ammunition. However, it was not more than he could handle. After the two wagons were loaded the Mormons left except Conover, Huntington and Walker who remained to settle their bills the morning of the sixteenth. Conover and company caught up with the wagons and by the twentieth all arrived in Genoa safely. There they found out that the Mormons had moved out on the road about four miles and camped. After they arrived in the camp the leaders decided to organize the big company into two smaller divisions.

Chester Loveland was the captain over the entire company. William R. Smith and John Lytle were chosen as captains of the two smaller units. Conover was assigned the responsibility as captain of the guard.\footnote{Madison D. Hambleton, "Account of the Return of the Carson Mission," November 2, 1857. This statement is in the Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City. See also Conover, "Autobiography," p. 51.}

They all started for home on September 26.\footnote{It should be pointed out here that it is hard to tell just how many people left Carson County on September 26 because of the many conflicting reports on the exodus. For instance Madison D. Hambleton on November 2, 1857, (Footnote 12, supra) wrote a statement regarding the combined company's organization and travels from Carson Valley to Salt Lake City. In this letter he reported that 450 people were in the movement. The Sacramento Daily Union indicated on October 5, 1857, that the company was comprised of 985 people. William Jennings stated years later in his "Carson Valley," p. 180, that there were no more than 150 to 200 people in the wagon train. The April Conference report "Minutes of the Annual Conference of the Church in Carson County, U.T.," The Western Standard, April 24, 1857, stated that there were only 287 members in the entire stake. Three months after the above report appeared the Daily Alta California on July 9, 1857, printed the information that both Gentiles and Mormons in Carson Valley numbered only 600. The August Company which came into Carson Valley about the First of September consisted of only thirty-eight people destined for}
the road for about three weeks six of the men including Conover, Huntington, Evert Orser, Wesley Wheeler, Gilbert Webb and William Hopps decided to go ahead as an advanced guard to inform President Young regarding the location and safety of the company. The group arrived in the city on October 25 after seven days of hard riding. One week later part of the main company came into Salt Lake City. The remainder was looked for the next day, the third of November. The only mishaps the company had had was the death of three children enroute. However, most were more fortunate and as a matter of fact six families received new additions while on the trail.

With the arrival in Salt Lake City of the last wagons of this combined company the missionary assignment, the Carson Valley Mission and the Mormon settlement in Carson County ended. The Utah Government continued to be responsible for the county for another four years but this is beyond the scope of this study. Suffice it to say Utah never again had the influence in Carson County that she had while the Carson Valley Mission existed.

Salt Lake City. ("The August Emigrants," The Western Standard, September 4, 1857.) It does not seem possible that the Carson Valley Mission, considering the April Conference report, could have supplied more than 300 people. Therefore, the figure that Hambleton quoted is probably very close, if not the exact count, of those Mormons who left Western Utah and arrived in Salt Lake City during the first few days of November, 1857.

Chapter 7

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

SUMMARY

In almost every book written on Mormon history the initial Carson Valley settlement of 1850 has been credited as being part of the Latter-day Saint colonial system.\(^1\) It is true Mormons were constant travelers through the valley beginning in 1847 and that they were probably more familiar with it than most people. However, familiarity does not equal possession.

Neither can credit be given to the Mormon Church when Captain Joseph DeMont and six others in 1850 settled temporarily in the Carson Valley. They were there in opposition to Church policy. There is no indication that the seven men who remained in the valley as traders were Mormons. Beatie stated he was not a Mormon\(^2\) and there is a good possibility that the Blackburn brothers were not. No evidence has been found that confirms the membership of Captain DeMont, a Mr. Kimball, a Mr. Carter and the seventh man whose name is unrecorded. This group represented a non-Mormon movement and in no way was under authority of

---


\(^2\) Beatie, "First In Nevada," p. 168.
the Latter-day Saint Church. Therefore what they achieved cannot be attributed or credited to that institution.

During the same summer of 1850 James Henry Rollins, Dan Clark and Frank Dewey, all members of one of the gold missionary expeditions, decided to trade supplies for a short period in Carson Valley while waiting for Amasa Lyman, a Mormon apostle who was returning from his appointed mission to organize the Church members in California. After a few weeks Lyman and thirty-four missionaries passed through the valley on their way east. Rollins, Clark and Dewey, after a successful trading period, joined the company and all departed for Salt Lake City. This enterprise was stimulated by private initiative and the only association with the Church was the tithing from the few weeks work.

The movement of Colonel John Reese in 1851 was not inspired by the Church in a positive manner. If anything this move had the overtones of antagonism. No evidence linked Reese with the Church officially; his actions were stimulated by private motives only. This factor more than anything else contributed to the growth of the settlement in Carson Valley until the arrival of the Saints in June of 1856.

Between 1850 and 1855 the Church had no connection with the development of the Carson Valley. However, Leonard Arrington implied that this settlement in Western Utah was part of the conscious system of strategic outposts to defend the central core of Utah settlements.

---


4 Neff, Utah, p. 224. Neff makes this suggestion: "Initial settlement there seems to have been on private initiative in 1849-50-51." The author agrees but would like to extend the time period through 1855.

5 Arrington, Great Basin, pp. 84-85.
This implication is inaccurate.

The development in Carson Valley was carried on by private individuals, some of them Mormons, but none acting in official capacity for the Latter-day Saint Church. Their settlement initially developed due to trade. When the market fell off they were able to support themselves and in a few years to be moderately self-sufficient with no trade connections in Salt Lake City.

During these early years the citizens of that far Western Utah community were developing an anti-Mormon attitude and interest. Because of the constant antagonism from that area Brigham Young decided to organize the region into a county and send official representatives there in hopes of countering the anti-Mormon feelings. After the organization Young hesitated for a number of months before appointing any officials. When a year of their influence in the county had not changed conditions in favor of the Mormons, Young resolved to send a colony there hoping this move would counteract most of the opposition.

If there had been no political trouble in Western Utah Brigham Young would probably have not sent the colony there. Not until the arrival of the official representatives did the Mormons have some influence over the area. By the election in October, 1855, the Mormons were in control politically but not spiritually. The people were opposed to Mormon rule before Orson Hyde arrived and they remained that way during and after his tenure in Carson County. Up to 1855 the Mormons had no control over Western Utah; therefore, it is a mistake to conclude that the settlement was part of the colonial empire of the Mormon Church previous to this time. The Church did not have control until the arrival of the Carson Valley missionaries, 250 strong, on June 24,
But even at best, this control was no more than marginal.

The Carson colony was different from the other Mormon settlements in the West. It was established in the midst of a hostile group of people like those the Saints had previously faced in the East. In the light of these circumstances it should have been considered as a questionable move, but the Mormon Church leaders appeared to be more concerned with their desire to control the area than they were with learning a lesson from history.

One of the main purposes for going to that area was to control the county. Even though they succeeded in getting their candidates elected they never really controlled the Gentiles politically or spiritually. On the surface they were in charge but beyond that superficial position the non-Mormons continued in their own ways.

In approximately seventy-five letters concerning the settlement, there was not the slightest indication that the Mormons ever intended to control the route between Carson and Salt Lake City. Such an intention was the creation of some historian's imagination.

It is true that Brigham Young's advice was requested on all important matters by Orson Hyde. But it was Hyde who had to implement programs in the settlement. Hyde was the final authority and, if the situation warranted it according to his evaluation, Young's policies were carried out. This was his commission from Young. Hyde was requested to organize a military force in Carson County but he was too

---

6 See page 65, footnote three.

7 Neff, Utah, pp. 223-224. Here Neff states that the Mormons had gone to that country with the intent to control the county.

8 Ibid., p. 223.
much of a diplomat to further jeopardize the position of the settlement by fulfilling this request.

Another original objective of the Mormons in Carson Valley was to organize an Indian mission in that area. Hyde and Young wrote letters several times to each other concerning this subject but beyond this stage nothing more was seriously attempted.

President Young also instructed Judge Hyde that another purpose for the mission was to make it a subsidiary gathering place for Mormons coming from California to Utah. However, this role for the mission was never utilized to any great extent. As Hyde reported this was partly because the Saints in California were seemingly very satisfied with their location. The only notable use of the mission as a gathering place was in July and September of 1857, just prior to the abandonment of the settlement.

The author, after studying the material on the Carson settlement, must completely disagree with Nels Anderson's opinion that "... Hyde was not tactful or tolerant..." and for that reason caused added trouble for the mission. Without bias John Hyde vouches for Judge Hyde's character:

The course pursued by Elder Hyde during his twelve month's stay here, has been marked with great wisdom; and now his counsel is to the brethren here, to labor hard, settle up, mind their own business, to be slow of speech, and to live their religion; to fear God and work righteousness; if they obey it there can be but one result. At a minimum the above statement confirms the fact that Hyde was a man

---


who worked hard to make the mission a success although confronting a difficult environment.

In order to be successful as a Mormon colony in Western Utah the Carson Valley Mission should have continued as a permanent settlement. Orson Hyde was convinced of this fact as was Chester Loveland. It was not until the very day Loveland was planning to leave for the October conference in Salt Lake City that he learned the colony had been called home. The Utah War caused the close of the mission and not internal problems nor the pressure of the non-Mormons in the area. The Saints were having some of the troubles mentioned above, but these problems did not cause the termination of the colony. Had not problems developed between Utah and the Federal Government the settlement would have continued.11

When the role of the Carson Valley settlement is evaluated in the Mormon colonial system it appears to the author that it played a very minor part. Since the colony had little success in achieving its own objectives the conclusion is that it had no great role in the larger program of settlement.

CONCLUSION

In a general evaluation of the effectiveness of the Carson Valley Mission the settlement must be considered almost a total colonial failure because of a combination of many circumstances. Brigham Young was responsible as Governor and Church leader for creating the county

---

11 It seems very likely however, that if the Utah War had not terminated the Carson Valley Mission the colony probably would not have survived the great gold and silver boom of the Comstock Lode in the Washoe mining district beginning in 1859.
and sending officials to that western area. After Orson Hyde's arrival in Carson Valley he became directly responsible for the indepth development by the Mormon Church. After a years existence of the colony, Young had to restrain Hyde because his intentions were bordering the extreme. Hyde wanted more settlers to insure their hold on the county. Young well understood that a crisis could develop there which would involve the whole territory. After his decision not to reinforce the mission it was just a matter of time before the Mormons lost all influence in that valley. The Utah War interrupted this situation and brought the Mormon settlement and mission to a close during these trying times. Nevertheless both Young and Hyde should have had foresight enough to have not involved the Mormons in this wasteful experience which cost the Saints much time, labor and money. Outside of the success in establishing their own community--an accomplishment at which the Mormons were expert--little else can be credited to the mission. However, it should be recognized that the effort of those involved stands as a monument to their faithfulness and obedience to both Church and State.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. PRIMARY SOURCES

1. Unpublished Papers and Letters

Anderson, Dr. W. F. Name File. Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Beatie, Hampton S. "The First In Nevada." Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley.

Call, Anson. Name File. Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Call, Murray. Personal papers and letters in the possession of Schuyler Call, Murray, Utah.

Duncan, Chapman. Name File. Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah.

"First Records of Carson Valley, Utah Territory, 1851." The whereabouts of the original record is unknown; however, a photostat of the book is in the Effie Mona Mack Collection, Nevada Historical Society, Reno, Nevada.

Forsgren, John E. Name File. Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Forsgren. "Record of High Council of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Organized in Carson Mission October the 4th, 1856," Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Hambleton, Madison Daniel. Name File. Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah.

"History of Brigham Young," Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Hyde, Orson. Letters, 1855-1856. Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Jenson, Andrew. "Carson Valley," Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah.

"Early History of Nevada," Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah.

"Nevada, 1850-1880," Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah.

"Journal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1847-1857," Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Kimball, Heber C. Papers. Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Loveland, Chester. Letters. Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Phippen, Mary Jane and Sylvester S. Letters. Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah.


"Sketch of Life of Anson Call," Brigham Young University Library, Provo, Utah.

"Utah Early Records," Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley.

"Utah Sketches," Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley.

Young, Brigham. Letterbook, 1855-1857. Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah.

2. Diaries and Journals

Bentley, Richard. "Autobiography of Richard Bentley." This record is in the possession of the Bentley Family Organization, Salt Lake City, Utah.


Branch, William Henry Sr. "Diary of William Henry Branch, Sr." Brigham Young University Library, Provo, Utah.
Call, Anson. "The Life and Record of Anson Call." Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah.


Hogan, Goudy E. "History of Goudy E. Hogan." Brigham Young University Library, Provo, Utah.

Hunsaker, Abraham. "Short History of Abraham Hunsaker." The original journal is in the possession of the Hunsaker Family Organization, Honeyville, Utah.

Huntington, Oliver B. "Diary of Oliver B. Huntington, 1847-1900, Part II." Brigham Young University Library, Provo, Utah.


Stewart, Eunice P. "A Record Kept by Eunice P. Stewart during Andrew J. Stewart's Mission with Br. Orson Hyde, one of the Twelve Apostles, to Carson Valley or elsewhere from May 1855 to April 1858." Brigham Young University Library, Provo, Utah.


3. Newspapers

The California Star (San Francisco), 1847.

Daily Alta California (San Francisco), 1855, 1857.

Deseret News (Salt Lake City), 1850-1857.

The Western Standard (San Francisco), 1856-1857.

Millennial Star (London), 1847, 1858.
The Pony Express (Placerville, California), 1942-1952.
Sacramento Daily Union, 1855-1857.

4. Public Documents


5. Interviews

Personal interview with Orson A. Hyde, grandson of Orson Hyde, August 17, 1969, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Personal interview with Fauntleroy Hunsaker, great-grandson of Abraham Hunsaker, September 12, 1969, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Personal interview with Leo Hunsaker, son of Abraham Hunsaker, September 12, 1969, Salt Lake City, Utah.

B. SECONDARY WORKS

1. Books, Periodicals and Theses


________. "Pioneers of 1849," *Heart Throbs of the West X* (1949), 443-444.


Ellis, Charles. Utah, 1847 to 1870. Salt Lake City: by author, 1891.


———. The Utah Story. Salt Lake City: Wheelwright Lithographing,


Welliver, Mrs. Andy (ed.). "First Records of Carson Valley, Utah Territory, 1851," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly,* IX (Summer-Fall, 1966).

--- *History of Utah.* Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon and Sons Company, 1892.


ORSON HYDE AND THE CARSON VALLEY MISSION, 1855-1857

Albert Ray Page
Department of History
M. A. Degree, May 1970

ABSTRACT

The Mormon Church has for years been given credit by historians for the settlement of Carson Valley. Prior to 1854 the L.D.S. Church actually had no connection with that valley except that it was part of the Utah Territory, which the Church controlled. When political dissension against the Mormons developed in Carson Valley, Brigham Young decided to organize the area into a county in 1854. The following year he sent Orson Hyde and other officials there to organize the county government. Within a year Hyde so influenced Young that he agreed to send 250 colonists to Carson Valley in order to bring that area under the control of the Mormon Church.

During the next eighteen months the colony failed to live up to its several objectives. When the Utah War broke out the Mormon leaders decided to abandon the colonial effort and instructed the missionaries to return to Salt Lake City. This hardship Hyde and Young could have spared the Saints had they foreseen the difficulties of establishing the colony in the midst of non-Mormons, an experience the Church had previously undergone in the East.

COMMITTEE APPROVAL:  

LeRoy P. Hafen  
(LeRoy R. Hafen, Committee Chairman)

Eugene E. Campbell  
(Eugene E. Campbell, Committee Member)

(DeLamar Jensen, Department Chairman)