

Canyon Legacy

A Journal of the Dan O'Laurie Museum - Moab, Utah

Number 17

\$6.00

"FLPMA" & The Sagebrush Rebellion
(Multiple Land Use Versus Wilderness)

"Chaining"

Forest Clearing for Grass Growth - A Good Practice?

Anasazi Violence and Cannibalism
The Rattlesnake Ruin Site

Were the Powell Men Really Killed by Indians?
(A Controversial Historical Letter)

CONTROVERSIES



Canyon Legacy

The Journal of the
Dan O'Laurie Museum of Moab

Managing Editor, Jean Akens
Editors and Contributors, Ber Knight, Paul
Cowan and Michaelene Pendleton

President, John Weisheit
Secretary, Vicki Webster
Treasurer, Mitch Williams
Curator/Director, Jean McDowell

Board of Directors, Keith Montgomery,
Bill Boulden, Merv Lawton, Mike Price
and Dennis Gardner.

Life Members, Allen Darby, Mrs. Leslie
W. Graves, Mrs. Carol Hines, Jim
Hudson, Mrs. Virginia Johnson, Col. and
Mrs. Carl Mikesell, Pete and Joyce Parry.

Canyon Legacy was established in 1989 to
publish articles on the history, prehistory
and natural history of the Colorado Plateau
in Southeastern Utah and the Four Corners
region.

Materials for possible publication should
be submitted to *Canyon Legacy*, 118 E.
Center Street, Moab, UT 84532, typed
double-spaced, with copies of all
appropriate graphics and sufficient return
postage. Writers guidelines upon request.
Canyon Legacy will assume no
responsibility for statements of fact or the
opinions published by contributors.

Copyright © by The Southeastern Utah
Society of Arts and Sciences, Inc.

ISSN: 0897-3423

Spring 1993

WITHIN...

This issue is devoted to the subject of controversies. And the
articles presented are indeed subject to debate. They touch on history,
prehistory or natural history, and as diversified as the topics are, some
concern all three at once. One thing the articles share in common; they
are interesting, thought-provoking, and timely.

As rivers swell with snow-melt and warm spring breezes sweep the
last of winter's chill from the red rocks of Canyon Country, I hope you will
enjoy the unusual theme of CONTROVERSIES.

Jean Akens



*Controversy over Multiple Land Use verses Bureau of Land Management Wilderness
Designation resulted in the symbolic re-opening of an old seismograph road in the Mill
Creek/Sand Flats area, during a July 4th celebration in 1980. Organized by county
commissioners and supported by a (mostly) enthusiastic audience of around 300
individuals, the county bulldozer takes part in making Sagebrush Rebellion history.
Courtesy of Ray Tibbetts.*

Canyon Legacy

Number 17

WITHIN.....Inside Front Cover

RATTLESNAKE RUIN:

The Question of Cannibalism and Violence in the Anasazi Culture
by Shane A. Baker..... 2

THE "LETTER"

Or Were the Powell Men Really Killed by Indians?
by Wesley P. Larsen..... 12

"FLPMA" AND THE SAGEBRUSH REBELLION

by Jean Akens..... 20

THE AMASA'S BACK CHAINING:

"Murder on the Mountain"

by Vicki Barker..... 26

THE PROBLEM WITH HISTORY - CONTINUED

A Response to the Law and the Lawless issue..... 32

NEXT ISSUE.....Inside Back Cover

RATTLESNAKE RUIN:

THE QUESTION OF CANNIBALISM AND VIOLENCE IN THE ANASAZI CULTURE

by Shane A. Baker

BACKGROUND

In late December 1986, a local rancher was using heavy equipment to clear an agricultural field on private property situated on Mustang Mesa, northeast of Blanding, Utah. Located immediately adjacent to the field being worked were the remains of a small, rather unremarkable prehistoric archaeological site, similar to hundreds of others that dot San Juan County. The site consisted of a small rubble mound representing the remains of a collapsed masonry structure, stained earth, and a light artifact scatter. Nothing on the surface distinguished the site from similar sites nearby or many others throughout much of southeastern Utah, an area known for its rich archaeological resources. However, the site was not typical, and in actuality contained unique information crucial to the perplexing question of violence and cannibalism among the prehistoric peoples of Utah.

After completing work on the field, the landowner, Mr. Kelly Laws, became curious and used the backhoe/front loader to excavate a portion of the site in an effort to see what was buried beneath the surface and to search for artifacts. About two-thirds of the rubble mound and most of the trash midden were destroyed by the bulldozer. In the course of this work, a subsurface pit was uncovered that contained a large quantity of broken mutilated human bones. The pit was described as about 4 feet (1.20 m) long east-west and somewhat narrower north-south, with a slightly oval shape. It was centered 9-12 feet (2.5-3.5 m) southwest of the structure, had a rounded bottom, and was about 18-24 inches (45-60 cm) deep.

The uncovered bones were well preserved, mostly unburned, and unarticulated. The majority showed evidence of having been broken prior to being placed in the burial pit. The pit was almost completely filled with bone material, which was packed so tightly that there was very little soil matrix between the bones. Near the bottom of the burial pit, according to the discoverer, were found several skulls without faces, stacked together like "nested bowls."

The skeletal material was removed from the pit by hand, and was examined by Mr. Laws and those working with him. No grave goods of any kind were found associated with the burial. The bones were then scooped up in the loader bucket, and were dumped into a depressed area south of the rubble mound and southwest of the burial pit, where the bulldozer had been used to explore for a possible buried kiva. Several loader buckets of backfill dirt were then dumped on top of the bones to cover them. Unfortunately, the burial pit and all its surrounding matrix were completely destroyed by the mechanized excavation, and part of the evidence the site once held was irrevocably lost. Mr. Laws later reported the find to professional archaeologists, and invited them to investigate the site more completely. It was by these somewhat serendipitous circumstances that the unusual site of Rattlesnake Ruin (42Sa 18434) came to light.

About six months later, the author and several volunteers began research at the site, which included recovering all the displaced remains from the burial pit, and excavating the remaining undisturbed

features and structure. Rattlesnake Ruin yielded clear evidence that 20 individuals had been violently killed, dismembered, mutilated, and possibly cannibalized. The victims appeared to be members of the prehistoric Anasazi population associated with the site and/or other larger sites in the immediate vicinity. Coincidentally, at almost the exact same time that Rattlesnake Ruin was being excavated, a similar find was made at the Yellow Jacket Site (5Mt 3), about 40 miles due east, just across the Utah-Colorado border. That two similar finds of an unusual character would occur at the same time was surprising, but even more fortuitously, the finds occurred at a time when several researchers were beginning to examine very closely the evidence for cannibalism in prehistoric cultures, both in the U.S. and abroad.

The general topic of cannibalism has been much debated in scientific circles for some time. Reports of cannibalism had been compiled for years by explorers, missionaries, travelers and ethnographers, who suggested that the practice occurred frequently in a number of societies around the world. Much of this casual "evidence" was dismissed by anthropologists conducting careful studies searching for indisputable proof of the true nature and extent of the practice. In his 1979 book, *Man Eating Myth*, William Arens argued that many of these alleged reports were hearsay at best, and complete fabrications at worst. He concluded that little evidence existed for the practice of cannibalism, except in rare cases of "emergency cannibalism," where starvation forced people to eat one another (such as the tragic case of the 1846 Donner Immigrant

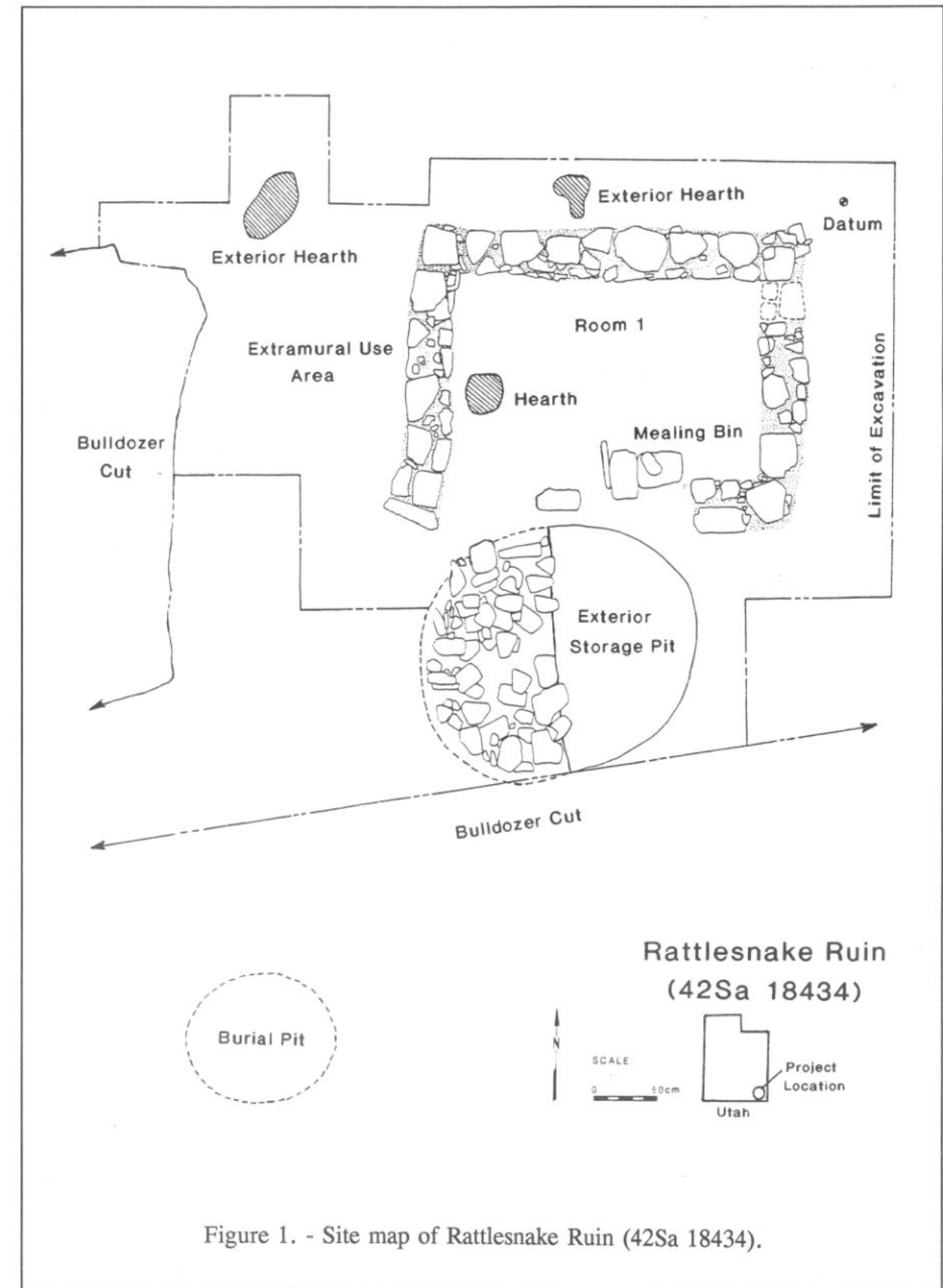


Figure 1. - Site map of Rattlesnake Ruin (42Sa 18434).

Party). This general dismissal was echoed by the respected anthropologist Lewis Binford, who felt that sloppy research had lead archaeologists in the past to suggest cannibalism had occurred among various prehistoric populations. Subsequent to these publications, any reports of evidence for cannibalism in the archaeological record were met with considerable skepticism.

Throughout the 1980s controversy over the subject continued, with particular emphasis on the question of whether the evidence from fossil man sites in Europe indicated the practice of cannibalism among very ancient prehistoric cultures. Two researchers in particular became interested in the question as it related to a number of sites from the southwestern United States. These scholars, Christy G. Turner II, of Arizona State University, and Tim D. White, of the University of California at Berkeley, felt that evidence from prehistoric sites in the southwestern United States might very well be able to shed light on the broader question of cannibalism in archaeological cultures throughout the world. Together these two archaeologists began assembling the evidence from a number of sites throughout the Four Corners Region that seemed to be painting a picture of violence and possible cannibalism. Rattlesnake Ruin and 5Mt 3 would become later



Figure 2. Photo of Rattlesnake Ruin looking south. Firehearth is at the right side of the room, the mealing bin complex is in the upper left-hand corner, and the unexcavated storage pit is indicated by the circular depression filled with rubble in front of the room. Courtesy of Shane Baker.

additions to this growing data set being compiled by Turner, White and other researchers.

In 1983, Turner published a list of 14 characteristics that he considered to be the hallmarks of this type of behavior as it was evidenced in human skeletal materials from the sites that he had studied (Turner 1983). The criteria that he suggested included: massive mutilation and damage to nearly every skeletal element, cut marks similar to those found on butchered animal bone, intentional splitting of long bones (bones of the arms and legs) to extract the marrow, massive breakage of the skull and face, some evidence of burning, an absence or scarcity of certain elements, and signs that most of the remains were buried soon after death and showed little evidence of weathering or scavenging by animals. These criteria presented a hypothetical test pattern against which the evidence from Rattlesnake Ruin could be examined.

RATTLESNAKE RUIN (42Sa 18434)

Site Description

Archaeological data recovery at Rattlesnake Ruin yielded a mass of disturbed human skeletal material representing the bones that Mr. Laws had discovered and moved, as well as intact

features and artifacts. Initial surface indications from the rubble mound suggested the possibility of two small rooms in a roughly east-west alignment, with the probability that the west room had been damaged by the bulldozer work. Excavation of the rubble mound uncovered only a single masonry structure (Room 1), and evidence that a second room to the west had been completely destroyed (Figure 1).

Room 1 consisted of a roughly rectangular shaped, coursed masonry structure measuring 3.4 meters (11') east-west by 2.4 meters (7'10") north-south. It was enclosed with masonry walls only on three sides, with the south facing wall being left open. The walls were made of a wet-laid masonry utilizing local sandstone and mud mortar. Only 1 to 2 basal courses of stone remained intact at the very bottom of the walls. The room included a small basin shaped circular hearth on the west side, and the remains of a small mealing bin complex located near the southeast corner of the room near the open side of the structure. The hearth was a very simple unlined pit about 37 cm (14") in diameter, and 9 cm (3 1/2") deep. It was filled with fine ash and charcoal. Not much was left intact of the mealing bin feature, but the evidence indicated that it originally consisted of two fixed slab metates and associated stone-slab and mud bins for catching the ground meal. The floor of the room was represented by a hard, well packed, and relatively level dirt surface (Figure 2).

Surrounding the structure was a well defined use-surface and several other features. These included two small open hearths and a single very large sub-surface storage pit. The storage pit was located immediately in front of the structure on its south side. Prehistorically the pit would have been covered over at the level of the ground surface with a flat roof of logs, brush, and mud, with a small hatchway in the center to allow the users to climb down into it. The pit was bell-shaped (narrower at the top than at the bottom), and surprisingly deep. The slightly oval opening measured about 1.8 meters (6') by 1.6 meters (5'3"). Near the bottom of the pit the feature measured over 2.0 meters (6'7") in diameter. The floor was 1.8 meters (6') below the use surface outside the structure. The walls were not rock lined, but in some spots show evidence of having been plastered.

When excavated, the pit was found to be essentially empty of cultural materials, but was filled from nearly top to bottom with a dense pile of stone rubble. It appears that prehistorically the surface structure (Room 1) was destroyed, and the walls were torn down. At the same time, the storage pit was collapsed and the rubble from the room walls was dumped into the pit. The evidence strikingly suggests that when the people were killed and their remains piled into the burial pit, the whole site was destroyed and almost completely obliterated.

The prehistoric burial pit itself could not be re-excavated, as it had been destroyed by the bulldozer activity. However, we do know that it was situated about 2.5 to 3.5 meters (9-12') southwest of the structure. The tragic loss of the pit and the associated layers of stratigraphic fill prohibited a clear association of the burial and all the other features, but there was evidence for only one period of use at the site, and the materials are all assumed to be contemporaneous.

Material Culture

The number of artifacts recovered at the site was relatively small. The cultural deposits were very shallow, not more than 25-35 cm (10-14") deep in most areas, and there was not a significant build up of discarded artifacts and trash midden material. The items recovered included groundstone, chipped stone, and a moderate quantity of ceramic sherds, but no whole vessels. Six animal bone awls (Figure 3) were recovered in a single pile on the floor of the room. They appear to have been in a bag or basket that was left lying on the floor when the structure was destroyed. Most of the awls are made from bird and deer bone, and show various degrees of use. The ceramics provide a useful way to comparatively cross-date the site. All of the pottery fits very nicely into an Anasazi Pueblo II assemblage, suggesting a date of A.D. 1050-1100. Only two very small pieces of human bone were recovered at the site outside the collection from the burial pit, a single toe bone and piece of cranial bone, both found close to the structure.

Analysis of the Site

The archaeological evidence from the excavation indicates that Rattlesnake Ruin was a small seasonally occupied structure of a type frequently referred to as a

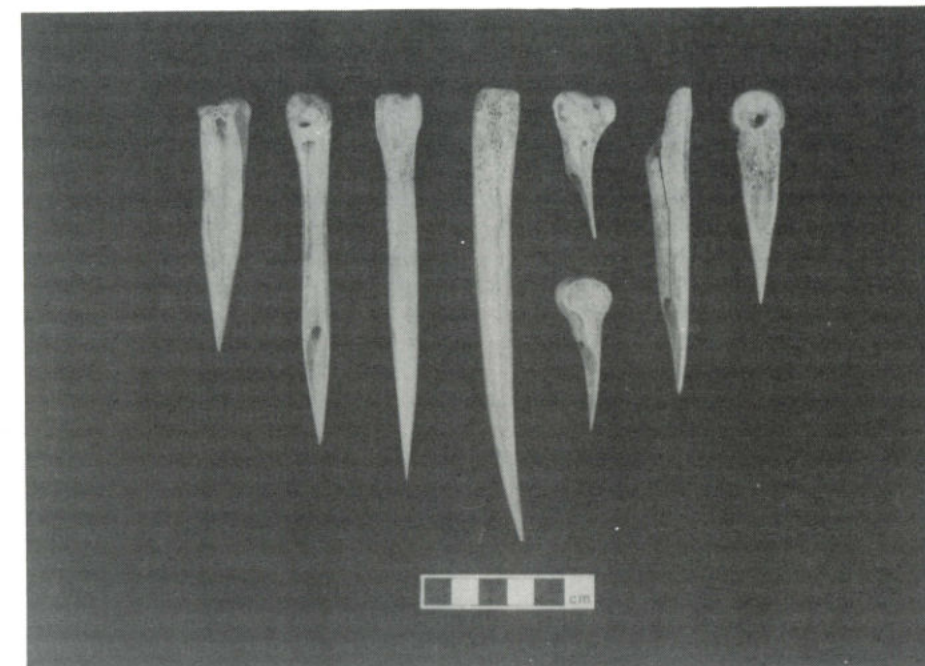


Figure 3. Bone awls recovered from the floor of Room 1. Courtesy of Shane Baker.

"fieldhouse." These are somewhat temporary sites located near agricultural fields and occupied by a limited number of people off and on during the growing season at times when it was necessary to be close to the fields to irrigate, tend, and protect the crops. They are not permanent habitation structures, and are utilized for only part of the year. Fieldhouses are directly associated with larger permanent settlements that are usually slightly removed from the immediate area where the crops were being grown.

The Rattlesnake Ruin site shows evidence of only a single relatively short period of use, with no reuse or re-occupation following the destruction of the building. A group of 20 people would not normally be expected to be present at such a site, so it seems probable that the individuals found in the burial pit may have been brought to the location from somewhere else. It is not possible to tell if they were killed at the spot or elsewhere, but the dismembering and mutilation of the bones left little evidence at the site outside of the burial pit. The number of individuals involved in the mass burial suggests that not all the victims were residents at the small fieldhouse, although it is not possible to discount some possible prehistoric association of the structure and the group. It is reasonable to assume that the site was systematically destroyed at the

time that the burial was made, although this can not be conclusively proven from the archaeological evidence alone.

The Human Skeletal Assemblage

The bulk of the crucial data from Rattlesnake Ruin is entailed in the large assemblage of human skeletal material that came from the burial pit. The bone preservation in the site assemblage is generally very good. The bone is dense, non-friable, shows little evidence of weathering, and was noted to have a light colored, distinct appearance. Both the color and good state of preservation is attributed to the fact that the soft tissues do not appear to have decayed in contact with the bone.

Fragmentation of the assemblage is massive and nearly complete. Virtually all of the bone, with a few exceptions, shows some evidence of perimortem (occurring at or around the time of death) damage. Out of a total of 5,015 specimens, there were only 388 (7.7%) whole or very nearly whole elements, and even most of these more complete elements exhibited some limited damage. Only 2,255 bones (45.0%) could be definitively identified as to element. The remainder of the sample consisted largely of generic long bone fragments, and small unidentifiable splinters and fragments.

The edges of the broken bone fragments are sharp, even, and not eroded. The breakage is characterized by sharply angled edges and fractures that run roughly parallel to the axes of the shafts. These are characteristics of "greenstick" or spiral fractures, which indicate that the bone was vital or fresh when broken. All evidence suggests that the bone mutilation took place at, or shortly after, the time of death.

All of the crania (skulls) exhibit extensive damage. None of the skulls are intact, and very few of the cranial elements are whole. Indications are that a series of heavy blunt blows were directed at the crania, fracturing the brain case, and the facial region. Many of the upper jaws show evidence of forceful removal of the front teeth but not the rear molars, suggesting that some soft tissues were in place and protected the rear teeth, while the front teeth were more exposed. Thin, multiple cut marks in the area of the forehead, lower back of the skull, and sides of the skull above the ears indicate that several, if not all, of the individuals were scalped (Figure 4).

Other cut marks occur at various places on the rest of the skeleton, most frequently around the areas of joints, indicating that the individuals were dismembered. Damage to the long bones of the arms and legs follows a very distinct pattern. Only three immature arm bones remain intact, while all the other long bones have been fractured. Typically, the joint region from each end of the bone remains intact, together with a short stub of shaft. The main body of the shaft is missing, and is represented by numerous shaft splinters. A number of elements exhibit damage indicating that the long bones were fractured by using an anvil and hammer technique, wherein the bone is placed over a rock or other hard object which serves as an anvil, and is then struck from above with a hammerstone. Following this, a twisting motion is then used to break open the shaft of the bone. This technique is a well noted method used by ethnohistorically documented hunters to break open long bones from game animals for marrow extraction. The particular type of damage that this technique produces is characteristic of modification by human agencies (Figures 5 and 6).

About 150 fragments of bone (3% of sample) showed evidence of having been burned to one degree or another. It is difficult to establish any pattern in the type

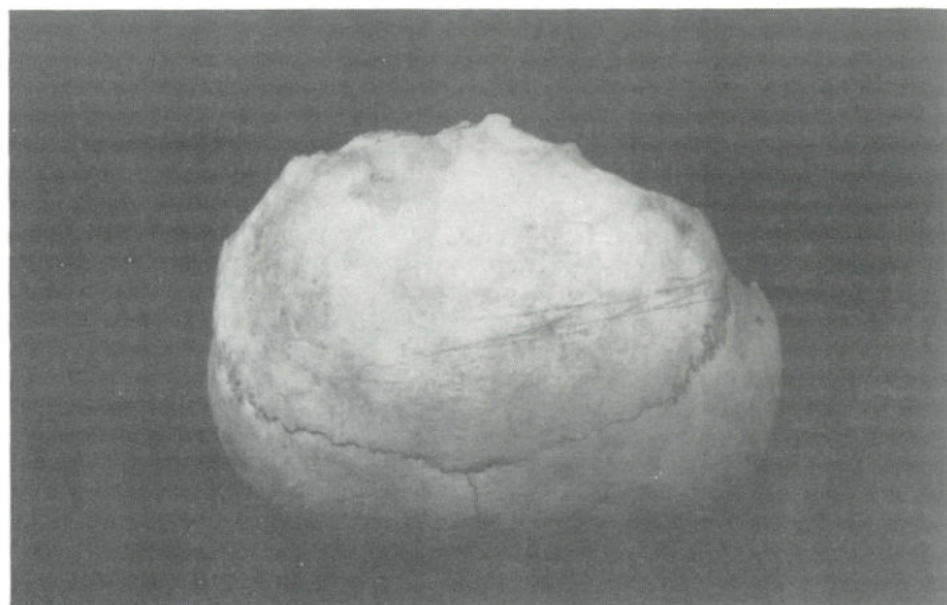


Figure 4. Front portion of skull showing cut marks from scalping. Courtesy of Shane Baker.

or location of elements that were burned, and it is not clear that this burning represents any kind of cooking or roasting. Also noteworthy was a general absence of any kind of chewing or damage from animals (less than 1% of all bones). One striking pattern is the under-representation of certain skeletal elements. The vertebrae from the spinal column, the small bones of the hands and feet, and the elements forming the breast bone are all scarce, and are represented by a far smaller number of bones than would be compatible with the rest of the skeletal elements. The unique pattern of destruction and damage to the skeletons is summarized in Figure 7.

It is possible from the skeletal materials to reconstruct the group of individuals that are represented in the mass grave at Rattlesnake Ruin. When dealing with such a large number of broken and commingled skeletal material it is sometimes impossible to ever know definitely how many people are represented, but a best estimate is possible. A minimum of 20 individuals were identified in the Rattlesnake Ruin assemblage. The overwhelming majority appear to be women and children. Five of the individuals were adult women, and 10 were adolescents or young children. Two possible adult males about 25 years of age are present, as well as three other adults for whom sex could not be determined. The oldest person was about 45-55 years in age, and the youngest was just a toddler about a year old or less. Prior to their

sudden and violent death, most appeared to have been in relatively good health. The direct cause of death could not be determined for any of the individuals, but any one of the traumatic injuries represented by the mutilated condition of the bone would have been fatal.

Regional Comparisons

The evidence for violence and possible cannibalism as a facet of Anasazi life has been steadily increasing. Rattlesnake Ruin became just one more example in a series of sites that suggest this unusual behavior. Christy and Jacqueline Turner (Turner and Turner 1992a), Tim White (White 1992), and the author (Baker 1990) have all made attempts to document the complete range of sites relevant to this question. Examples now include possibly as many as 30 sites scattered throughout New Mexico, Utah, Colorado and Arizona (Figure 8). Both Turner and White have done an excellent job of discussing these numerous other sites, and the degree to which each site appears to fit the basic patterns and criteria that suggest cannibalism.

The reader may wish to consult one of the above noted references for a more detailed consideration of these other numerous occurrences. The sites seem to cover almost all time periods and involve varying numbers of individuals, from as low as 1 or 2, to as many as 33 (Figure 9). The sites appear to vary considerably in

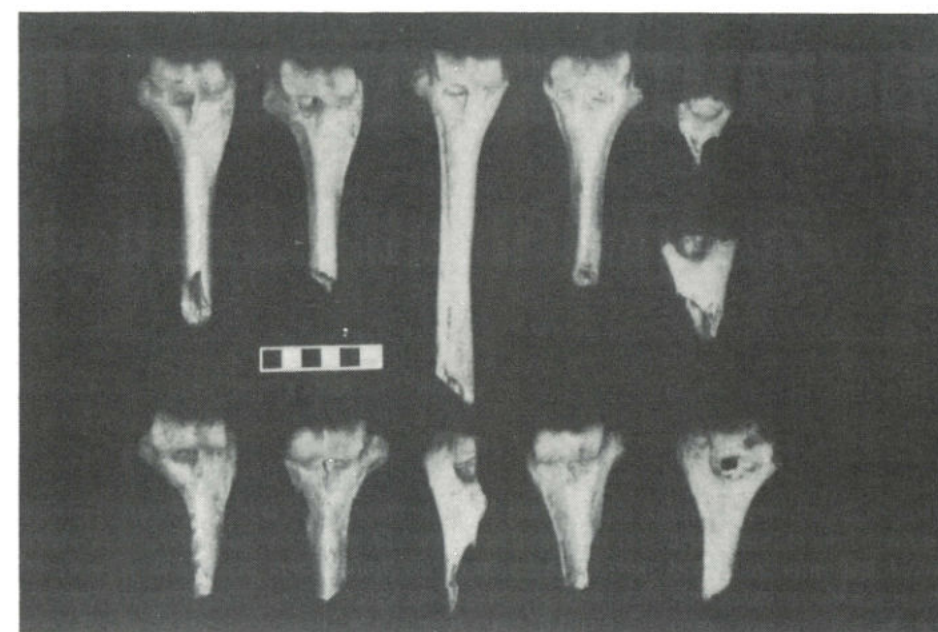


Figure 5. Fractured and mutilated fragments of human long bones from the arm. Courtesy of Shane Baker.

the exact nature of the mutilated human skeletal assemblages that they contain. In some cases the bones occur outside of structures, in others they are inside surface structures, or inside of pit houses or kivas. Sometimes the skeletal materials show some evidence of intentional burial, such as the case at Rattlesnake Ruin, and at other sites the bones appear to have been very unceremoniously and carelessly scattered.

Controversy continues to surround the explanation of this phenomenon. At least one scholar (Bullock 1991; 1992) has recently attacked Turner's interpretation that these sites represent cannibalism. The alternate interpretation was suggested that these unusual burials might be explained as mutilation associated with warfare. While this explanation does not seem to fit the evidence (see Turner and Turner 1992b), it does indicate the latitude present in the data, and the variety of interpretations that are possible. It is still impossible to completely explain the phenomenon. The diversity represented by the range in geographic location, number of victims, post-mortem disposition of remains, and chronological placement is probably crucial to explaining the behavior in question. It is obvious that the diversity in the archaeological appearance of these sites is probably due to a corresponding variation in the prehistoric set of circumstances that they represent. No one-case scenario can probably explain all of the site examples

which we are now aware of.

Discussion and Conclusions

The evidence from Rattlesnake Ruin suggests the following: A relatively large group of people were violently put to death concurrently, and were dismembered and butchered in much the same manner as the Anasazi processed game animals (such as deer, sheep and

antelope) for consumption. However, no other explicit evidence is available to prove that the individuals were actually eaten. The victims included both men, women and children, and therefore do not necessarily represent a select group such as warriors killed in battle, etc. Some unusual, perhaps ritual, treatment of the bone is evident, which can not be explained strictly in terms of bone breakage connected with flesh consumption or marrow extraction and consumption. An example of this is the uniform breakage pattern of the lower jaw in half for almost all of the Rattlesnake Ruin specimens (this is a very solid bone that would yield very little marrow).

As far as can be determined, the tragic events indicated at the site occurred during a time period of generally good environmental conditions and presumably good economic times. If starvation did cause cannibalism at Rattlesnake Ruin, it was precipitated by local events and conditions not yet detected in the archaeological record, and distinctively separate from the well documented periods of widespread drought and difficulty that have been described for the Anasazi culture. The human skeletal material was not randomly or haphazardly discarded, as is the case with animal bone waste products, but was in fact accorded a formal burial. All of these lines of evidence lead the author to question an interpretation that the site resulted from

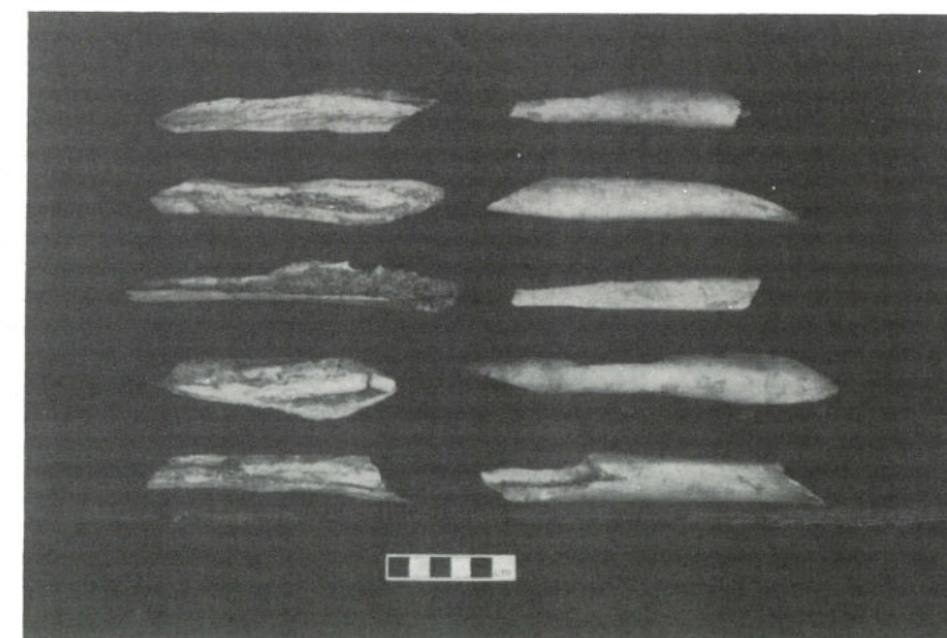


Figure 6. Typical human long bone shaft splinters. Courtesy of Shane Baker.

either warfare, or emergency cannibalism.

One obvious obstacle inherent in the problem of establishing cannibalism in the archaeological record is the difficulty in proving that human flesh was actually consumed by other humans. Even in cases like Rattlesnake Ruin, where it is possible to substantiate that people were killed and essentially butchered and the flesh was removed from their bones, it is not possible to conclusively determine what happened to the flesh beyond that point. This may seem a minor issue, but it is clear that it is central to the question, for in fact, several possible behaviors could cause a pattern similar to that found at many of the sites in question, which are not connected to any form of cannibalism. These other types of behavior could include mutilation associated with warfare, mortuary practices associated with flesh removal and disarticulation prior to burial, and ritualized violence incorporating execution and dismemberment but no cannibalism, as well as several other possible scenarios.

One theoretical explanation for the mass burial at Rattlesnake Ruin is that the victims were ritually executed, dismembered and mutilated in punishment for some moral breach of law, ethic or social custom. Researchers studying simple, non-industrialized societies around the world have found that sometimes extremely violent punishments are dispensed when the well-being of the group is seriously threatened by socially unacceptable behavior on the part of an individual or group of individuals. Every human society, regardless of its position in time or space, is forced to deal with the issues of social control and maintenance of cohesive social structure and organization. In our own culture we see this daily struggle reflected in the operation of the judicial system, with its police officers, judges, prisons and jails, all functioning in the attempt to control inappropriate individual behavior for the well-being of the group as a whole.

Many non-industrialized societies, like the Anasazi and their ethnographically documented Pueblo descendants, are characterized by small-scale social organizations, which function in a more personal face-to-face manner than our own large modern techno-industrial society. These small-scale societies frequently have at their very core a highly prized set of norms, rules, and traditions that promote a belief in non-competitive

cooperation, peaceful interaction, and social harmony. They are frequently described using the term "egalitarian," which means that there is little variation in social status or wealth, and the members of the group cooperate closely to ensure the overall success of the society. Many of these groups have a strong aversion to anger, and negatively evaluate aggression and violent behavior.

Most of the members of these groups truly adhere to these values, which allows the societies to function successfully. However, the general adherence to these norms may obscure the fact that violence does take place. Studies of these kinds of groups in Africa, New Guinea, the Arctic, and elsewhere, have shown that violence does still occur, and in particular, lethal violence is sometimes used by the society as a whole to punish inappropriate behavior and safeguard the well-being of the group (Knauff 1987). Serious violations of social norms, laws, or rules can result in an individual or group of individuals being singled out for extreme punishment. The punishment serves to protect and preserve the society. It actually promotes a return to and even a renewed commitment to the values of sharing and cooperation. Lethal violence may therefore act in these cases as the ultimate means whereby the peaceful egalitarian and non-competitive basis of the society is preserved.

A possible historic example of this type of behavior occurred with the destruction of the Hopi pueblo of Awatobi in about A.D. 1700. Oral traditions state that the village had become corrupt, and its residents were guilty of murder, rape and witchcraft (Courlander 1971; Fewkes 1893). In response to this problem, the other nearby pueblos were forced to attack Awatobi and exact a punishment. Most, or all, of the men were killed, together with many of the women and children. Those not killed were taken away captive to the other pueblos. Some of the victims were killed, decapitated and dismembered as punishment (see Baker 1990 and Turner and Turner 1992 for a more complete discussion). This provides a strikingly powerful model for what may have happened at Rattlesnake Ruin. It explains not only how the social system may have functioned to bring about the events, but even what the archaeological evidence might look like. A convincing case has been made to suggest that the site of Polacca Wash, a mass burial excavated near the modern Hopi mesas, contains the

remains of some of the Awatobi victims (Turner and Morris 1970; Baker 1990).

It is possible that Rattlesnake Ruin represents a similar situation, where a group of individuals, for some reason, brought upon themselves the sternest social sanctions that their society was capable of. They may have been killed, and dismembered in a ritually prescribed manner, in order to exact the most severe of punishments. Cannibalism may not have necessarily been part of the punishment, but can also not be ruled out.

A consideration of all the cases of violent death and perimortem mutilation in the Anasazi culture of the southwest suggests that several causal explanations are probably necessary. It has been proposed that at Rattlesnake Ruin the phenomenon was associated with punitive sanctions carried out as part of the systematic functioning of the social system. However, at some other sites, emergency cannibalism may well be the explanation. It must be remembered that of the hundreds of Anasazi sites that have been excavated, only the small handful noted here exhibit this sort of phenomenon.

Given the extremely long period that the Anasazi culture existed, and its wide geographic distribution, it is not reasonable to assume that these sorts of events were commonplace. Indeed, the sites that we have now documented still must be considered to be the abnormal, rather than the rule. But whether common or not this phenomenon of violence, mutilation, and possible cannibalism is now a well documented part of the Anasazi culture. The challenge is to explain it within the broader context of the culture as a whole.

It is not enough to simply say whether cannibalism did or did not occur, we must explain how this perplexing behavior fits into what we understand about the culture as a dynamic human system. It must be determined whether the behavior was pathological or criminal in nature, or whether it was a routinized part of the religious or judicial system. It is also still unclear exactly how common it was, and what the pattern of occurrence is. Additional careful study of more sites, and an even better understanding of the complexities of Anasazi culture are necessary before any conclusive and final answers will be reached.

Summary of Skeletal Damage

Minimum Number of Individuals By Element

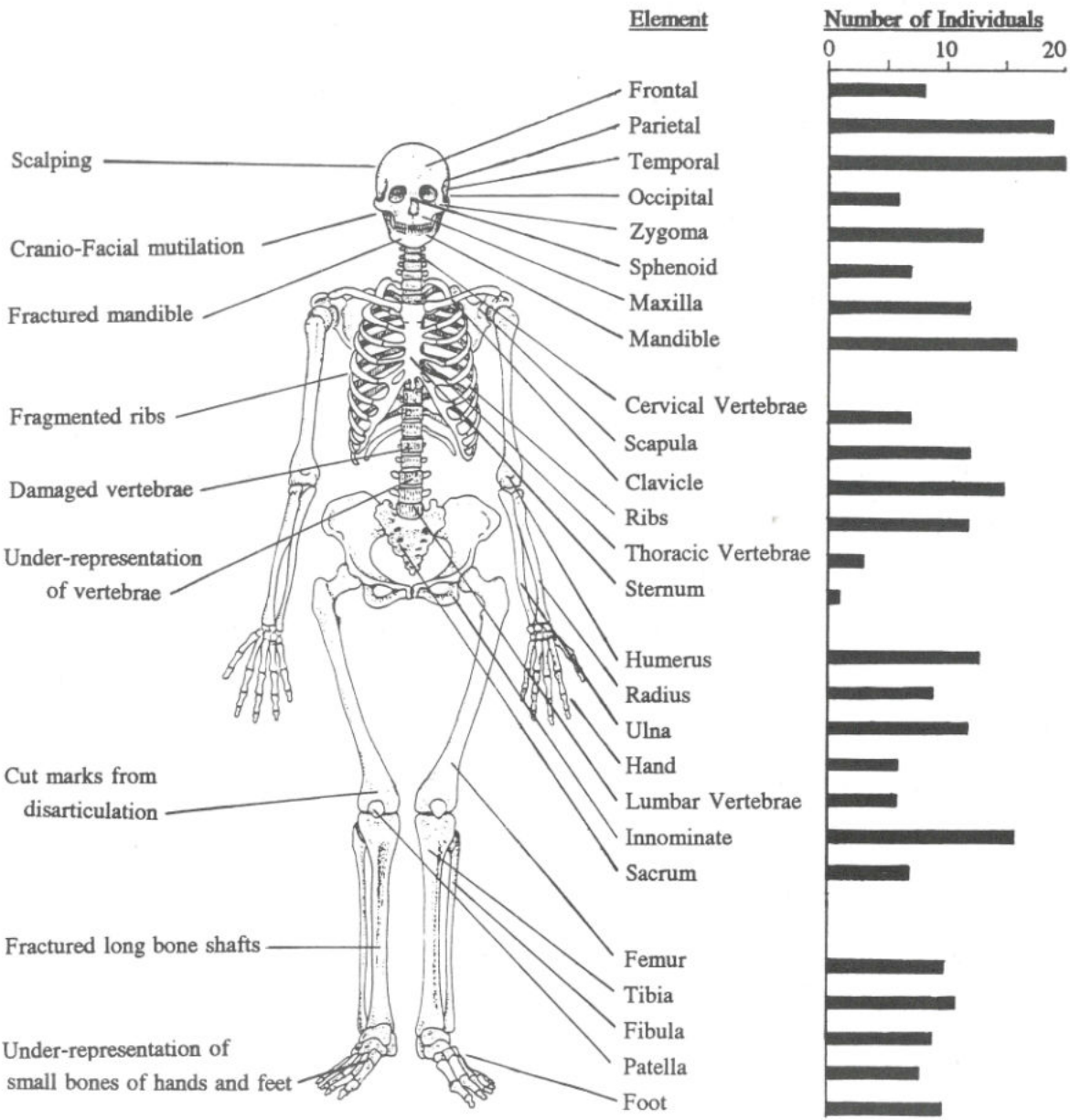


Figure 7. - Summary of pattern of bone mutilation and damage at Rattlesnake Ruin.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to express appreciation to the many people who have assisted with the research that is the basis for this article. Special gratitude is extended to Winston Hurst for his work on the project, and particularly to the owners, Kelly and Teri Laws and family, for granting access to the site, and for their continued enthusiastic support of my research.

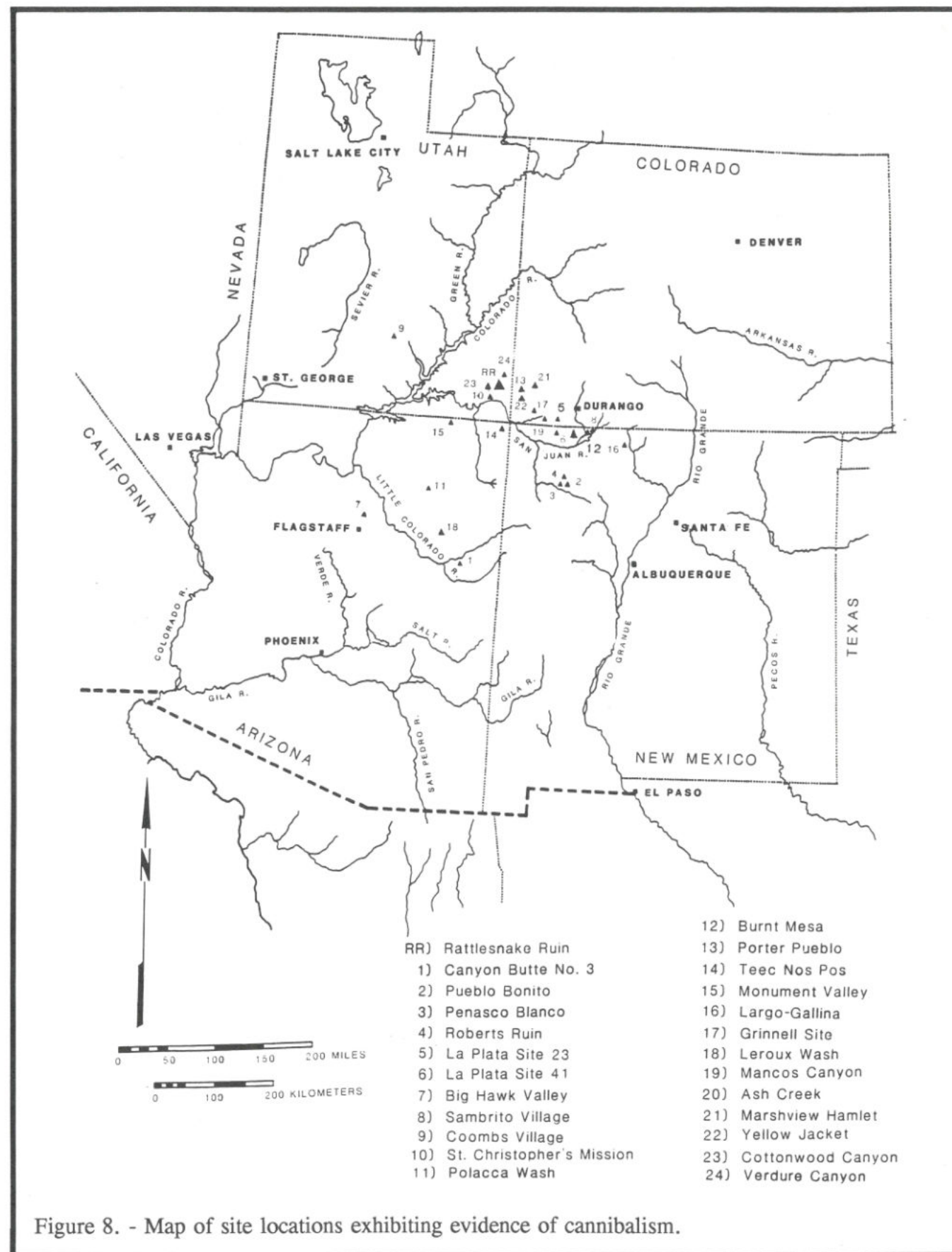
REFERENCES CITED

Arcus, William
1979
The Man-Eating Myth: Anthropology and Anthropophagy.
Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Baker, Shane A.
1990
Rattlesnake Ruin (42Sa 18434): A Case of Violent Death and Peri-

mortem Mutilation in the Anasazi Culture of San Juan County, Utah. Unpublished Master's thesis, Department of Anthropology, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

Bullock, Peter Y.
1991
A Reappraisal of Anasazi Cannibalism. *Kiva* 57(1):5-16.



1992

A Return to the Question of Cannibalism. *Kiva* 58(2):203-205.

Courlander, Harold
1971

The Fourth World of the Hopis: The Epic Story of the Hopi Indians as Preserved in their Legends and Traditions. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Fewkes, Jesse Walter
1893

A-WA-TO-BI: An Archaeological Verification of Tusayan Legend. *American Anthropologist* 6(4): 363-375.

Knauff, Bruce M.
1987

Reconsidering Violence in Simple Human Societies. *Current*

Anthropology 28(4):457-501.

Turner, Christy G., II
1983

Taphonomic Reconstructions of Human Violence and Cannibalism Based on Mass Burials in the American Southwest. In *Carnivores, Human Scavengers and Predators: A Question of Bone Technology*, edited by Genevieve M. LeMoine and A. Scott MacEachern. Proceedings of the 15th Annual Conference. The Archeological Association of the University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

Turner, Christy G., II, and Nancy T. Morris
1970

A Massacre at Hopi. *American Antiquity* 35:320-331.

Turner, Christy G., II, and Jacqueline A.

Turner
1992a

The First Claim for Cannibalism in the Southwest: Walter Hough's 1901 Discovery at Canyon Butte Ruin 3, Northeastern Arizona. *American Antiquity* 57(4): 661-682.

1992b

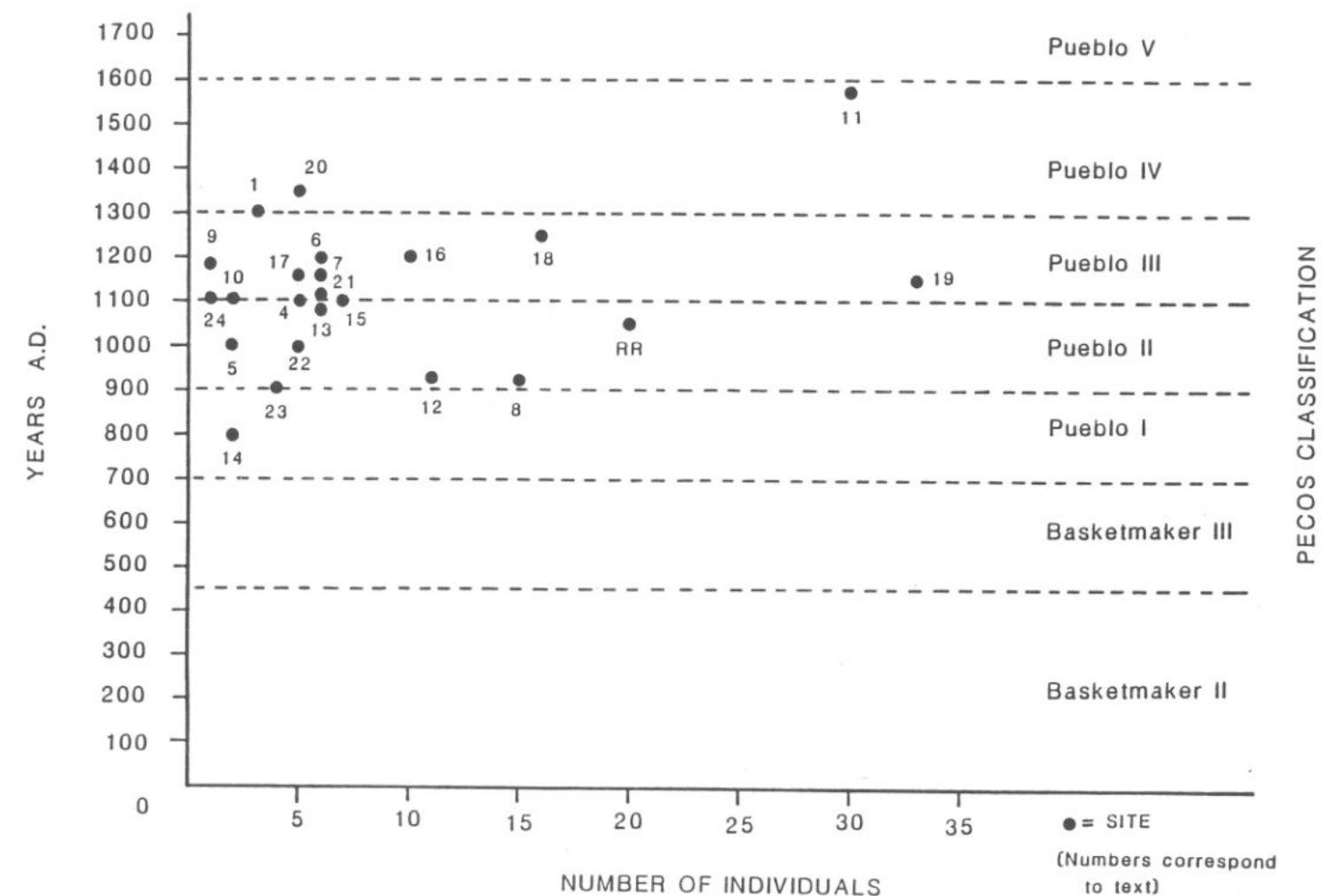
On Peter Y. Bullock's "A Reappraisal of Anasazi Cannibalism". *Kiva* 58(2): 189-201.

White, Tim D.
1992

Prehistoric Cannibalism at Mancos 5MTUMR-2346. Princeton University Press, Lawrenceville, New Jersey.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Shane A. Baker is an archaeologist with the Office of Public Archaeology, Museum of Peoples and Cultures, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.



The following historical letter is definitely controversial in nature. It presents a different explanation of the fate of the three men who left John Wesley Powell's 1869 Colorado River Expedition from what history has recorded. Although there is no way to establish authenticity, *Canyon Legacy* has determined that the letter and the supporting data do warrant publication.

The "Letter"

or

Were the Powell Men Really Killed by Indians?

by Wesley P. Larsen

INTRODUCTION

An amazing letter, hidden away in an old trunk for over one hundred years, throws new light on the one tragedy of the Powell Expedition and involves some principal participants in the lamentable Mountain Meadows Massacre. Both events are of national interest and remain steeped in controversy. This never-before-published letter was loaned to the author by Gary Callister of Hurricane, Utah, great-grandson of John Steele, recipient of the letter. The old trunk in Callister's possession contained hundreds of items of historical interest: letters, licenses, military orders, civil and church appointments, diaries, a few rare books, and a Paiute Indian dictionary. The contents have subsequently been donated to Brigham Young University.

One of the major exploratory feats of the last century was the John Wesley Powell Expedition down the Colorado River in 1869. The end of the river journey was marred when Seneca Howland, O.G. Howland, and William H. Dunn were separated from the original Powell party, climbed to the north rim of the Grand Canyon and were killed, supposedly by Indians. Details of their deaths are obscure and each account of the tragedy varies in the particulars of who, how, and why it happened.

Through the years there have been suggestions that the three men met their deaths by means other than an Indian ambush. One such assertion was made by one of Powell's crew members, Jack Sumner. More recently, Otis R. "Dock" Marston, Colorado River runner and River historian, discredits the Indian ambush version and gives good reason for his thinking. Now, a letter surfaces telling of the murders of three unknown men in a Mormon church house, the murders taking place in the same period of time as the demise of the Powell men. William Leany was the writer of the letter, John Steele, the recipient.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON LEANY AND STEELE

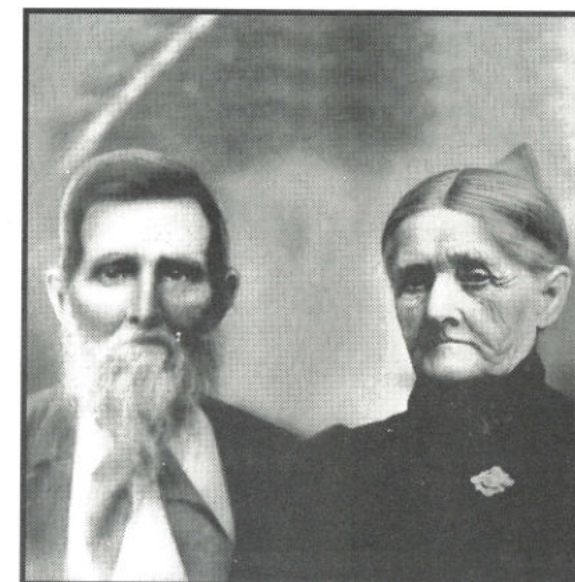
William Leany, born a twin in 1815, at Franklin, Kentucky, converted to Mormonism at the age of nineteen. He filled a short mission to Tennessee and Kentucky, followed by a political mission in Indiana. William and his wife, Elizabeth Searce, joined a wagon train and left for Utah in May, 1847, arriving at the Salt Lake City Fort in September.

As a volunteer for the Iron Mission of 1850, his duty was to open a winter mail route to California. While in Parowan he was elected to the first City Council and appointed Coroner of Iron County.

At the request of Apostle George A. Smith, Leany offered his services to grow indigo for the Cotton Mission in Harrisburg, Utah. When a branch of the L.D.S. Church was organized at Harrisburg, Leany was made Water Master. Pioneer Leany died on December 29, 1891 and was buried in the Harrisburg cemetery.

John Steele started life in Hollywood, Ireland, March 21, 1821. At twenty years of age he married Catherine Campbell and the couple removed to Glasgow, Scotland. There, he borrowed a copy of the Book of Mormon, read it through in two weeks, attended missionary meetings, and was baptized into the L.D.S. Church.

The Steele family migrated to America in 1845 and John found plenty of work as a boot maker. At Council Bluffs he enlisted in the Mormon Battalion, accompanied by Catherine and their five-year-old daughter, Mary. They mustered out of the Battalion in Santa Fe and arrived in Salt Lake Valley on July 30, 1847. Soon after, on August 9, Catherine delivered a little girl who was named Young Elizabeth, in honor of President Young and John's sister, Elizabeth. This daughter, born in an army tent in the southeast corner of Temple Square, was the first white child born in Utah.



William Leany and his wife, Elizabeth Searce Leany. William was a personal bodyguard to Brigham Young and later a member of the Iron Mission at Parowan and the Cotton Mission at Harrisburg. Photo courtesy of the DUP collection at the McQuarrie Museum in St. George.

Like the Leany family, the Steeles were part of the 1851 Iron Mission. As a leader of men, Steele was appointed Major of the Iron Battalion, ordained First Counselor to Stake President John Calvin Lazelle Smith, and served as Mayor of Parowan, Iron County Judge and County Recorder.

At the L.D.S. Conference of April, 1855, he received a call to take a mission to Las Vegas to help settle that place, make friends with the Indians, and have a fort built to protect travelers to and from San Bernardino.

Steele's leadership qualities show up again where, after moving to Toquerville in 1861, he was elected as Kane County Assessor and Collector, as well as Probate Judge. He was called by Erastus Snow to take a mission with Jacob Hamblin to the Hopi Indians in Arizona, and served in the Blackhawk Indian War as Major of the Tenth Regiment of Infantry under Colonel McArthur and General Snow. His life of service ended at the age of 82.

THE LETTER

(The letter, as well as all excerpts from historical documents that follow, have been shortened and edited for clarity.)

"Harrisburg, Utah, Feb. 17th, 1883
Mr. J. Steele

Dear Bro(ther).

After my love & a thousand thanks for your kind letter of Dec. 11th, allow me to say that (relative to) your first statement...we had been acquainted for over thirty-seven years and not one jar between us tells the whole story... I might say the Berrys, the Adamses, the Meekses, the Hendricks, the Lewises & others have known me much longer...and it all shows that if Pres. Snow had been an honest, fair man, that would hear both sides, the same might be said of he & I, but all this and all other proof shows that he has been led by Bill Smith's (William Joseph Smith?) dog & a few other drunken, adulterous, murderous wretches. As to your idea of my repenting & confessing all to get those blessings in the house of God we so much value, I must say that I think that would wholly unfit me...for God shall bear me witness that I am clean of all of which they accuse me & they guilty of all that I accuse them & much more.



John and Catherine Campbell Steele, April 4, 1873, Toquerville. Original photo owned by Josephine Kay Garfield, courtesy of Wes Larsen.

Here let me ask you to join me & let us sanction, ratify and confirm that unholy and ungodly curse² of Pres. Snow with two or three provisos, first that the innocent go free & the curse fall on the guilty though it be I and mine, he & his...even Lewis³ & all the dogs wherewith he has dogged me & mine for the last thirty years. And I cannot see that for me to confess to a lie would make me more worthy or they less guilty...My object is & has been to stay the overwhelming tide of thieving, whoredom, murder...& like wickedness...that threaten to desolate the land...

You are far from ignorant of those deeds of blood from the day the picket fence was broke on my head⁴ to the day those three were murdered in our ward⁵ & the murderer killed⁶ to stop the shedding of more blood. And you know too much of the raising of those tax bills⁷ & the deal with Capt. Hooper⁸...

But it has long been in my mind, aside from these deeds of blood, that my life would be well spent if laid down to establish one or all of the principles that no court, Quorum, Council, or conference is fit to hear any case unless they have the power & the will to fetch in the witnesses & protect them from insult, instead of making parties into charges & through mock trials, without the shadow of preparation as the records & all other proof show has been done with me... If you had heard the Prophet Joseph tell as I did how Uriah would get even with David and how many of the crushed of our day would get even with their oppressors, I think you side with me.

As you speak of my often use of hard words, I will refer you to the fact that I only recently told you of Jim Lewises career with G.P. Adams & Bill Smith, though I had known it for thirty years. If this is not enough proof of my reserve in connection with our long intimacy & uniform peace, please name one time or place that I spoke out of place or out of season, for I think I can endure the rebuke of a friend. But here let me say that the fact of my hard speeches being so true...that none dare deal with me notwithstanding their high positions...& then bulldoze out of my witnesses, promising me a transcript, & the council gilding & lying over it, for what I knew for over a year, & then denying my right to call for the transcript⁹ all show just what I knew for years...

Many of my friends have hinted to me that I must be sacrificed to maintain the dignity of the priesthood, but remember Br. Taylor's promise that he would cleanse the inside of the platter if he began at the Quorum of Twelve, & his career certainly gives hope, though Pres. Young said he could not touch the big lions, for the less(er) lions that surround them, & many old prophets said the shepherds would not judge between fat and lean cattle.

If Br. Taylor will only allow their own records, the lions are all so much worse than Judges A.A. King, Turman. Black and Mann¹⁰, (are) worse...for their meanness, & until we right up these wrongs we may lay hands on our mouths & cease to bray about Gentile courts, committees, and congresses, for God would cease to be God, unless he made good the saying(s) of Moses and Jesus, that if you devour one another you will be devoured...& Jesus said the measure you mete shall be meted unto you...

The old Prophets said of the blood and violence in the city...and...if that was not fulfilled in the killing (of) the three in one room in our own ward¹¹, please say what it was... For all this & much more unrighteous dominion shall we be cast out of the land, unless we arise, cleanse the inside of the platter, & then it will rest from its blood & have its sabbaths, which I, you, and God knows it does not enjoy now. And though I have not hinted at half your points (previous letter?), or half the points on my mind yet, I must close hoping you will be good as to carefully scan & note on the back any faults you may find in it. But be assured that I will, God being my helper, clear my skirts of the mobbing, raking, stealing, whoredom, murder, suicide, infanticide, lying, slander & all wickedness & abominations even in high places.

So, no more, but remain your Bro. in the Gospel
Wm. Leany Sr."

ANNOTATED NOTES OF THE LETTER

1. There may have been a number of undocumented accusations against William Leany, but the most notable recorded episode can be found in James G. Bleak's *Annals of Southern Utah*, Book B, 1869.

As Home Teacher and Water Master of

Harrisburg, Leany felt that Bishop Robert D. Covington of Washington Ward and President Elder James Lewis were cheating some of the people of the Harrisburg Branch. Among other things, he was quite vociferous in charging the pair with stealing water from some of the widows. Also, he manifested a strong spirit of accusation against the course and policies of President Erastus Snow of the Cotton Mission. His allegations caused the following charge to be presented at the High Council at its June session:

"Harrisburg April 23, '69. We prefer against William Leany the following charges to wit: -1st, Wicked and malicious conduct; 2nd, Slander; 3rd, Lying and false representation.
(Signed) James Lewis, R.D. Covington"

Leany's counter-charge reads:

"St. George, Sept. 15th, 1869.

Bro. R. Gardner, Foreman of the High Council of the Southern Mission: I prefer a charge against Bro. James Lewis for unchristianlike conduct, in reviling the priesthood, in stealing water from Sisters Meeks and Hamilton; lying, malfeasance in office as postmaster, in stopping the due course of the mails.

(Signed) Wm. Leany"

President Snow decided that Leany either acknowledge that he misrepresented his leaders' actions or that he be disfellowshipped from the Church. He chose the former and attached his signature to the following letter:

"St. George, Sept. 15th, 1869.

President B. Young:

After having made use of the privilege you granted me of a rehearing before the High Council at St. George, I feel it to be my duty to acknowledge to you that under the influence of an evil spirit I misrepresented the course of the High Council in stating to you that I was denied the privilege of introducing my witnesses to said Council. I acknowledge to you that I had as full an opportunity to introduce my testimony as I have since had. I further wish to acknowledge to you that I wickedly and maliciously traduced the characters of Bp. (Bishop) R.D. Covington of Washington, and James Lewis of Harrisburg, and to some extent that of Bp. R. Gardner of St. George, for all of which

Harrisburg Utah, Dec. 17th 1868

Mr. J. Steele Secy Bro.

After my love & a thousand thanks for your kind letter of Dec. 11th allow me to say that your first statement that we had heard acquainted for over thirty years & not one jaw between us till the whole story and here I might say the Berger, the Adams, the Meekes, the Hendricks, the Lewis, ^{other} have known me much longer than of them or over sixty five years & not a jaw & it all shows that if Pres. Snow had heard and heard fair men that could both sides the same might be said of him & I but all this & all other proof shows that he has been led by bill-swallower dog & a few other drunken adulterous murderers scoundrels

Part of the first page of the original William Leany letter. Courtesy of Wes Larsen.

I feel heartily sorry, and feel by the help of the Lord, to build up, instead of taking a course to pull down.

For my misrepresentations to you, I ask your forgiveness. I have asked forgiveness of Brothers Covington, Lewis, and Gardner, also of President Snow and the High Council. I will seek forgiveness of the Lord and try to live the life of a Latter-day Saint.

(Signed) Wm. Leany"

2. Continual trouble in Harrisburg caused Erastus Snow to put a curse on William Leany.

3. Leany hated James Lewis with a passion. While both were members of the Iron Mission in Parowan, Lewis informed on Leany for breaking a covenant to the Priesthood during the Utah War. Thereafter, in his journal, Leany always referred to Lewis as the "snitcher" or the "slanderer."

"I have often thought I may have

weltered 19 years under his (Apostle G.A. Smith) displeasure by the foul tongue of Judge James Lewis, who seems to me a natural tattler & slanderer... But I know the judge done all he could to make strife there and with presidents J.C.L. Smith and many others, E. Snow and Bp. J.T. Willis." (*Journal of William Leany*, Typescript of unpublished manuscript written in January, 1888.)

Also he writes:

"And in the year 1856 I took to wife (a second plural wife) Miss Barbra Kelly, a Scotch Sister who crossed the plains in the hand cart companies, and a good woman though she, too, was misled (by) this tattling and slander...and left me in the year 1858, though had a dream in which she saw herself identified with a flock of sheep and Bishop Lewis as shepherd, and wolves after the flock, saying they were determined to have two sheep, and finally got her and her sister... (They) went to Camp Floyd, though cried like a babe at Beaver, 55 miles away, and always said

she left a good man and a good name and always was in favor of Pres. Young and plural marriage." (*Leany Journal*)

4. Leany, while on a mission to Tennessee, was threatened with death by a mob because he was a Mormon preacher. Dr. S.R. Aiden saved Leany from the mob and took him into his own house for safety. The missionary stayed at the home long enough to become very well acquainted with the family.

Fourteen years later, William Aiden, son of Dr. Aiden, joined an Arkansas-Missouri wagon train (the ill-fated Fancher Party of Mountain Meadows Massacre fame) in Salt Lake City, in order to cross the desert safely into California. Unable to purchase supplies from the Mormons, the Fancher group was disgruntled and, reportedly, antagonized the local inhabitants as they made their way through the territory on their journey to Los Angeles. Priesthood holders in Parowan, because of the threat of the federal army, had made a covenant that

they would give no aid to Gentile emigrants, and especially to this group, under pain of death.

When the Fancher train reached Parowan, William Leany recognized William Aiden as the son of the man who saved his life. Young Aiden said he was tired and hungry and had been unable to buy supplies. Brother Leany took Aiden to his house, gave him supper and let him sleep there that night. The next morning, his host gave young Aiden some fresh vegetables and sent him on his way.

That day, a neighbor, Judge James Lewis, turned Leany in for being unfaithful to his obligation and rendering "aid and comfort to the enemy." Leany was accused of supporting the enemies of the church whose hands were still red with the blood of the Prophet, as one Fancher wagoner bragged of having the pistol that "killed old Joe Smith." Some members of the priesthood were ordered by Stake President William H. Dame to kill Leany, to save him from his sins. A few nights later, the men called Leany out of his house, saying that President Dame wanted to see him. As Leany passed through the gates into the street, he was struck across the back of the head with a club by Barnabas Carter, a brother-in-law of Dame. His skull was fractured and he was left for dead. Leany lived, but took years to recover from the assault.

5. Could "those three murdered in our ward" have been William H. Dunn, Seneca Howland, and O.G. Howland, members of John Wesley Powell's 1869 expedition down the Colorado River?

On September 7, 1869 at 5:15 p.m. the following telegram was received at St. George:

"Prest. E. Snow: Powell's three men killed by three She-bits, five days ago, one Indian's day journey from Washington. Indians report that they were found in an exhausted state, fed by the She-bits, and put on the trail leading to Washington; after which they saw a squaw gathering seed and shot her, whereupon, the She-bits followed up and killed all three. Two of the She-bits who killed the men are in the Washington Indian camp with two of the guns. Indian George has gone to secure what papers and property there is left. Operator." (Bleak's *Annals of So. Utah*, book B, op. cited)



The Toquerville L.D.S. chapel built in 1866 served as ward house for Virgin, Leeds, Harrisburg and Silver Reef, as well as Toquerville. There are gun ports on either side of the building in the basement area. This is the ward house where the killing of Dunn and the Howlands could have taken place. Photo by Wes Larsen

There are many unanswered questions.

a. How did the telegraph operator know they were the Powell men when he had never seen the bodies?

b. Why were the She-bits (Shivwits) who killed the men not arrested?

c. Why were the papers and property never secured? There is no evidence that papers and instruments were retrieved. Also, why wasn't a white man sent to secure the remains?

d. Could the men have been murdered in the Toquerville Ward House? A point-of-origin of the telegram was not given. Toquerville Wardhouse had a telegraph office. The Indian trail out of Toroweap (where the three men left the expedition) leads to Toquerville. There had been so much trouble in Harrisburg that the Harrisburg Branch had been attached to Toquerville Ward during the summer of 1869. That was the only period of time that Leany could have said "our ward."

6. Was "the murderer killed to stop the shedding of more blood" an act of blood atonement? Could the murderer have been Eli N. Pace, son-in-law of John D. Lee, his motive to protect Lee from three armed federal men coming out of "nowhere?" Pace died on January 29, 1870 under very mysterious cir-

cumstances. The inquest rendered the verdict that "he came to his death through a shot by his own hands with a Remington revolver." This was disputed. "Another jury was impounded from Toker, Cedar and Bellevue (Pintura), Judge Snow presiding. I.C. Haight, O. Root and J. Bay comprised the jury. Every nerve was strained to make it appear that he did not commit suicide, but in vain. This last investigation and decision corroborated the first and exposed the prosecuting party to infamy and shame." (Cleland, Robert Glass, and Juanita Brooks, *A Mormon Chronicle: The Diaries of John D. Lee, 1846-1876*. University of Utah Press, 1983, volume 2).

7. James Lewis became the Kane County Assessor and Collector of Taxes. There were many in the county who gossiped that he raised property owner's taxes above the regulated rate and then "skimmed" the top off to put in his own pocket. It led to a confrontation between Lewis and Bishop Stewart of Kanab. (From James Lewis letters to John Steele, the Steele letter now housed at Brigham Young University.)

8. The allegation is that Issac Haight and John D. Lee sold cattle from the massacred Fancher party to W.H. Hooper, Utah delegate to Congress. An implied understanding after the massacre was that the cattle would not be used for personal

use, but that they would be managed for the Indians by Lee in his role as Indian Farmer. (Brooks, Juanita; *The Mountain Meadows Massacre*. University of Oklahoma Press, 1962.)

9. Leany says that in his High Council trial of 1869 that he was denied the opportunity to present his own witnesses, and that the Council refused to give him a transcript of the trial (Journal, op. cit.).

10. Judges King, Turman, Black and Mann were federal appointees to the District Courts of Utah Territory.

11. This is the second time that Leany mentions the "three killed in one room in our own ward." The murdered men must have been highly important if the killer was executed. As in the case of the Mountain Meadows Massacre, the people involved may have made a 'covenant of silence'. There is nothing in the literature or local diaries about three men being murdered in a ward house. When John Steele, in his letter of Dec. 11, called on William Leany to repent and confess (to his crimes against the church), it triggered such indignation that Leany "spilled his guts" as it were. It is regrettable that the Steele letter does not exist.

OTHER SUPPORTING OPINIONS

Jack Sumner, Major Powell's right hand man on the river in 1869, gave his opinion to Robert Brewster Stanton in 1907, when Stanton questioned him about his account of the expedition and the fate of the three boatmen at Separation Rapid:

"Before starting, I tried the little Emma Dean (one of Powell's boats) at the head of the rapid. Here we cached two barometers and a bunch of beaver traps. Everything was probably washed into the river at the next flood, as the rise in the river at that point is very great. We saw drift wood in the cracks of the cliffs seventy feet above the river, and we were then in a pretty high stage of water. We ran a short distance and camped for the night. While we repaired the boats, the boys discussed the conduct and the fate of the three men left above. They all seemed to think the red bellies would get them. But I could not believe that...as I had trained Dunn for two years in how to avoid a surprise, and I did not think the red devils would make open attack on armed men. But I did have some misgiving that they would not escape the double-dyed white devils that

infested that part of the country. Grapevine reports convinced me later that that was their fate..."

On May 28, 1976, Jay M. Hammond and John F. Hoffman taped an interview with Otis R. Marston, for many years the foremost authority on river running in the Grand Canyon. Marston's opinion concerning the Howlands and Dunn is very similar to that of Sumner's. From the interview:

ORM: Now there have been some very serious debacles or accidents in connection with the river. We can go back to Powell. Take the...Separation affair, when the three men left at what is now known as Separation Rapid... That was August 28, 1869. Why those men left still is an open argument and the information about it is very lacking. But certainly the statements that were made in Powell's official reports are far different than what one discovers after making an intensive study of this. Those three men were killed after they reached the rim and were walking toward the Mormon towns. Why they were killed and how they were killed and who killed them...these are still points around which there is feuding...

JFH: Let me ask you to back up one on Powell. You said that there was a mystery about the separation of the party and their subsequent death, the ones who left. Why did they leave, do you think, and who do you think killed them?

ORM: Why they left remains considerably a mystery. Here these fellows had gone hundreds of miles and here is a rapid, admitted it was rather tough looking, but it was not as tough as some...that they had already been through. Now there had been a number of reports of friction, Powell being dictatorial and so forth. There was no question about it; Powell was dictatorial... He felt the importance of his position, as an army officer... Obviously his handling of many of the situations on the river was inadequate. Then his later reporting, of course, on the Separation affair...how all he said was, "Boys left us," and that was it. But you read his report to the Smithsonian and it runs three pages...

Now these men went out and, according to the various stories about them, they said, "Oh, the Shivwits Indians, they camped with them one night and then they went on the next day. A runner from across the river came and said that some

white men had gotten mixed up with a squaw across the river, and so in revenge for this they killed these three men." What runner was coming across the river at that point to meet with the Shivwits? There was no association between those Indians like that. So this is fiction. It was constantly built up that the Indians killed them. Those Shivwits down there weren't the Noble Nation. You read about them, they were Southern Paiutes, and among...the least praiseworthy tribes.

In other words...the northern part of the reservation up there where the trail went through, a lot of horse thieves were constantly bringing horses through there. They were the kind of Indians, they would trade a wife or a daughter for a worn-out horse, then the factors would go on. The wife and daughter, they would get sold in the slave market in Santa Fe, and then the Indians that were around there, they would kill the horse and sit down around it and eat it...they never rode horses, you see, they ate them. They would sit around and eat it until it was all gone and then they would move on. In general, they were seed gatherers and bug eaters... They were certainly not the Noble Indian that would revenge some poor little squaw that got raped over across the river. This is obviously fiction that was built up.

Now lets look at another side of the picture. There was this little affair down in the general area of St. George...called the Mountain Meadows Massacre. The people that participated in that are all well-known. There were...127 men of militia... Occasionally there would be a government agent start down into that area and all of those fellows, they had hideouts in caves and so forth. If you were around St. George and you were a militia man, one of your best hideouts would be across those mountains there to the other side of the river. Then you would get down into the Shivwits Plateau. Obviously no government agent would ever think of following down there. So no question about it, a lot of these militia men were hiding in that area. Here is one militia man or two down there and he sees three white men, armed, walking up through that country. What would he do? He would shoot first and ask questions afterwards. Now I only offer this as a rationalization based upon the standards of these Indians and the standards of the militia men. Draw your own conclusions.

The other thing that I point out, Toab,

which everybody...would agree was a bad Indian...he admitted killing these people, but I never heard of any legal action taken against him...to punish him for the murder of three men.

JFH: Dock, didn't you once tell me, without mentioning any names, some Mormon person down in the St. George area more or less admitted that, sure, it was the Mormons that shot these men?

ORM: Yeah, I got a suggestion that it could well have been, let's put it that way.

CONCLUSIONS

All of the events mentioned in the Leany letter, other than the murders, can be verified. Thus, there is no reason for Leany to tell Steele, his close friend for over thirty years, of a murderous calamity where the murderer was then killed, if they both knew that such an incident did not occur. So, three men were killed in "our ward house" and the murderer executed. However, there are no known historical references of such an occurrence taking place. These killings could have been stonewalled as happened in the case of the Mountain Meadows Massacre.

The only time it was "our ward house" (Toquerville) was in 1869, the same year that Dunn and the Howlands disappeared.

It seems unlikely that the three Powell men could have been ambushed by the Shivwits. They were experienced frontiersmen, trained and prepared for just such an eventuality. The sequence of their separation from the main boat party and their emergence into unknown territory would sharpen their sensitivity to a possible surprise by Indians. They were well armed white men against three Indians with bows and arrows, according to the standard interpretation.

Further, the Shivwits were a rather docile and friendly people. These same Indians were most helpful and cooperative with the subsequent 1870 Powell Expedition, although the Shivwits chief confessed that some of his band did the killing. It must be remembered that this "confession" was given to Powell through Indian language interpreter Jacob Hamblin, a devout Mormon. Hamblin could have told Powell anything he wanted to in the interpretation. John D. Lee claims that Hamblin perjured himself at the Lee trial in Beaver, Utah. Lee

always later referred to Jacob as "Dirty Fingered Jake." Perhaps Hamblin lied to Powell to protect his friends and his church.

As incriminating as the Leany letter, is the September 7th telegram sent to Erastus Snow, Apostle of the L.D.S. Church. It almost appears to be a "plant," conveniently transmitted after Major Powell had left the area, carefully timed and dated, but omitting a point-of-origin for the message. By 1869, a civil government had been established and it would have been more appropriate to send a telegram to the Sheriff, rather than to the Mormon authority. Or, why send a telegram at all? A good jogger could run the distance between Washington and St. George in a half hour, and give more comprehensive information on the so-called Shivwit killers.

It is inconceivable that two of the Indians participating in the murders would voluntarily come to a Mormon village with the murder weapons, confess to the



Baptism of Shivwits Indians by David Cannon, St. George, Utah. About 1862 James H. Pearce brought from Arizona to St. George a band of 300 Indians, believed to comprise the entire tribe. All were duly baptized into the Mormon church and given clothing and food by Bishop Erastus Snow. It is difficult to believe that seven years later these friendly Indians would murder three white men in cold blood. Photo courtesy of Utah State Historical Society.

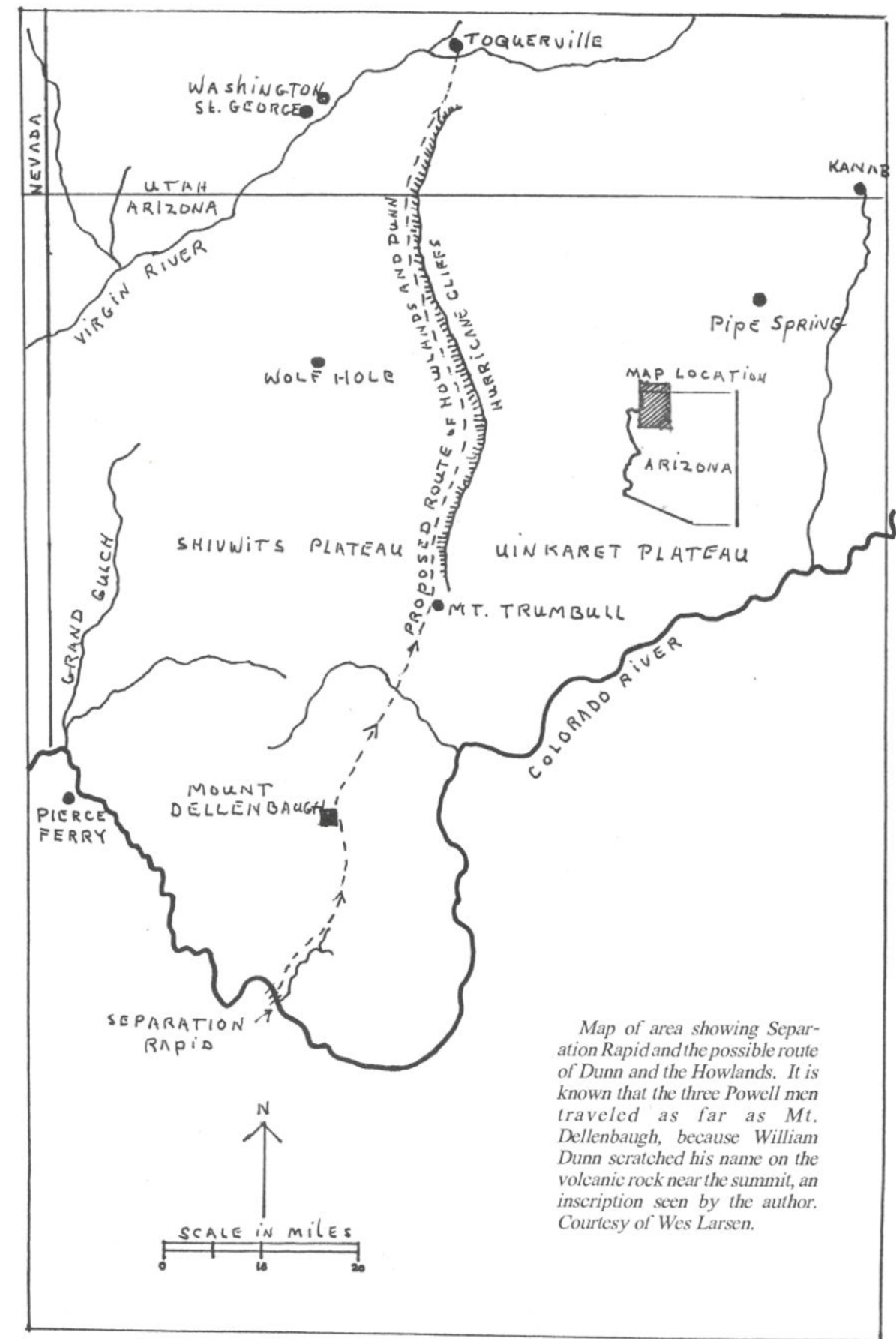
killings - and not be arrested!

Further information? Blank! It is almost as if there was a conspiracy of silence. For example, Charles Lowell Walker left Kanab on Sunday, September 7 - almost the exact time that the telegram was sent to Erastus Snow. But, not a word about the killings in his diary (Larson, A. Karl and Katherine, *Diary of Charles Lowell Walker, Vol. 1*, U.S.U. Press, Logan, Utah, 1980.) Yet, if anyone burped in Washington County during the Walker years, it was in his diary. Neither can the author find any word of the Powell Expedition in other pioneer journals and very, very little in Utah newspapers.

There are so many unanswered questions and, although the telegram and the letter are circumstantial indicators only, what more can be expected after one hundred plus years have passed. Perhaps some investigators may find the graves, or the duplicate set of Powell papers carried by the doomed men.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Wesley P. Larsen, Ph.D., is a Professor Emeritus from Southern Utah University, where he served as Dean of the College of Science. During his time at S.U.U., Larsen received the Distinguished Service Award, Teacher of the Year Award, and Educator of the Year award. The positions he held, both regional and national, and areas of accomplishments, are too numerous to mention in their entirety, but include Associate Program Director for the National Science Foundation and Past President of the Utah Nature Study Society, Zion Natural History Association, Iron County Historical Society and the S.U.U. Emeritus Club.



Map of area showing Separation Rapid and the possible route of Dunn and the Howlands. It is known that the three Powell men traveled as far as Mt. Dellenbaugh, because William Dunn scratched his name on the volcanic rock near the summit, an inscription seen by the author. Courtesy of Wes Larsen.

"FLPMA" & The Sagebrush Rebellion

by Jean Akens

One of the most controversial - and on-going - issues in the west during the past two decades has been that involving use of public lands. Unfortunately, for many people this controversy has resulted in a "them or us," attitude, often pitting advocates of Multiple Use against those favoring Wilderness - and both against federal agencies, mainly the Bureau of Land Management. When and why did the problem begin? How did the BLM's Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) affect millions of acres of public land in the West, and the people who live here? Did the "Sagebrush Rebellion," that grass-roots effort that garnered national attention in Nevada during the 1970s and 80s, begin in Moab? This article will focus on the historical aspect, through written accounts and the remembrances of some of those involved.

BLM AND FLPMA - A Background

(The following information was condensed from a two-part article that appeared in *American Forests* magazine in 1978. Titled "Genesis of a Law," it was written by Irving Senzel, who served 30-plus years as a Washington BLM executive.)

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (also called the Organic Act, which originated with the Forest Service) was signed into law on October 21, 1976 by President Gerald Ford. It changed how government viewed and handled millions of acres of public land.

The BLM was created in 1946 by consolidating the General Land Office and the Grazing Service of the Department of the Interior. Its original legislative missions were: a) disposal of lands and

minerals; b) grazing management; c) western Oregon forest management; d) control of fires in Alaska; and e) survey of public lands.

Slowly, over the succeeding years, the Bureau formulated programs and legislation was passed. With the election of President Kennedy came the feeling within the Bureau that it was time for fundamental changes with far-reaching possibilities and lasting effects. It was a tentative beginning toward the BLM organic act. Stewart Udall was Secretary of the Interior, Karl Landstrom Director of the BLM, Harold Hochmuth was Associate Director, and Irving Senzel served as Lands Staff Director and later Chief of Lands and Recreation. Together, they set out to change the direction of the BLM, but slowly, taking a practical approach.

A series of laws were suggested, and bills were written that addressed what were considered the major problems within the system. The first bill chosen was a proposal to modernize the Bureau's authority to sell public lands, to ease pressures resulting from speculation in public lands through the old disposal laws. The final version of the bill consisted of legislation to, among other proposals: "Revise and extend the basic authority of the BLM to manage public lands."

Progress was slow, and eventually came to a halt when Congress decided to look elsewhere for recommendations on modernization of public land laws. Over the next few years, initiatives were introduced, hearings held, some measures passed and, finally, President Johnson signed three bills that became known as the Public Land Review Commission Act,

the Classification and Multiple Use Act and the Public Land Sales Act.

Conservation groups were important in securing passage of the Classification and Multiple Use Act and, after certain safeguards were added, they supported the Public Land Sales Act, also. Conservationists' main interest lay in the classification and multiple-use measure, which represented a major advance in the drive for proper care and management of BLM lands.

Problems continued, factions divided, but the Bureau became convinced that adequate permanent management of public lands was essential. By the time the Classification and Multiple Use Act had expired, about 200 million acres had been identified for retention and multiple-use management.

The Public Land Law Review Commission proceeded with its work. Among the material prepared by this commission were a brief overall evaluation of public land laws and general recommendations for new public land legislation, and an outline of a comprehensive land law covering all federal resource management procedures. The Commission's report, "One-Third of the Nation's Land" - was published in June of 1970. It was the basis for BLM's post-Commission drive for an organic act.

The House Interior Committee began to follow through on the report, but made little progress. BLM eventually decided to take the initiative. A bill was drafted which was called the "Natural Resource Lands Management Act." Its major objectives were: 1) Directive for management of BLM lands for multiple-

use and sustained yield; 2) Disposal of lands only on a highly selective basis consistent with statutory goals; 3) Sufficient administrative authority for carrying out programs; 4) Sale and exchange of lands at fair market value as the principle means of disposal; 5) Repeal of a large number of old disposal and housekeeping laws; and 6) A general right-of-way law.

The proposal was presented to Congress in 1971, but changes in administration in 1972 impeded progress. The bill went through numerous revisions and many details were eliminated, but the broad public policy declarations were retained. Public hearings were held, more changes made, and work continued. Other similar bills were introduced in both the House and Senate during these years, new subcommittees were formed, and the idea was worked and re-worked, through each session of Congress.

A loose-leaf, notebook-style draft, called "Print No. 1" was prepared by the BLM and a mark-up period begun. Four mark-up periods produced no definitive results. Outside voices of discontent grew louder. Departments of Interior and Agriculture, along with some conservation groups, were unhappy with the way things were going. Mark-up sessions for 1975 ended in October with many feeling that the organic act was dead.

The year 1976 did not begin with much more promise. In Congressional subcommittees, outside interests such as grazing and conservation groups, all had their own opinions of how the bill should be written. When the full committee began consideration, the voices in favor of an organic act were not united in their comments, but were split into a number of different points of view, none having majority allegiance. Surprisingly, the bill managed to squeak through 20 to 16, with seven members not voting.

The bill reached the House floor in August, where it passed by a narrow margin. Prospects for a law were now good, but time was short, the end of the 94th Congress a month and a half away. A conference was called with representatives of both Houses. By September 22, with adjournment only days away, an agreement was reached on all but four issues: the House grazing-fee formula, terms of years for grazing leases and permits, House provision for grazing advisory boards, and the Senate time

limitation on applications for mining-claim patents. Disagreements among House and Senate members continued, conferees divided among themselves as much - if not more - than with each other. Votes were split, the major stumbling block the grazing-fee formula, and observers again openly predicted the demise of the bill.

Friday and the weekend gave time for reflection, contacts, conferences and negotiation. Conferees were called back into session late Tuesday afternoon and bargaining resumed. After much discussion, a "final offer" was made: A one-year moratorium on grazing-fee increases, requirement of a one-year study of grazing fees, 10-year terms for grazing leases and permits, the creation of a limited-purpose grazing advisory board, and no limits on applications for mining claims. Both sides agreed and voted the bill as amended.

Rumors that opponents would attempt to kill the bill on the floor provoked a flurry of activity, but fears proved groundless. The bill passed the House and, with only hours remaining in the session, FLPMA completed its long legislative journey through Congress. Although there was some rumor of a possible veto, President Ford signed it into law on October 21.

THE REBELLION BEGINS

JIMMIE WALKER:

In the early seventies it became quite evident that the federal government was trying to control lands that we had free access to historically. It all came to a head on October 21, 1976, when Congress, through a last minute effort...passed legislation that changed the West forever. FLPMA changed the whole direction on public lands.

As I was growing up, we always called the land "public," because that is what it was. After they passed the legislation, the lands were more or less identified as "federal." The thing that bothered me is that it changed the direction and the use of those lands a hundred and eighty degrees. The philosophy of the federal government up to that point had been the disposition of federal lands. After the legislation was passed, it was "retention" of those lands. That bothered me for a lot of different reasons; one of the biggest problems was that people who historically used those lands to make a living were in essence told they couldn't do that any more.

When you really checked into it, you found you could still use the lands, but it became mind boggling to go through the hoops to operate whatever you were doing



The Sagebrush Rebellion, July 4th celebration, 1980. Participants follow the dozer as it reopens an old seismograph road in the Mill Creek area. Courtesy of Ray Tibbetts.

at the time (mining, grazing, etc.) It is confusing and awfully hard to explain. The point is, the people were suddenly put into a position of strong bureaucratic control out of Washington. This opened the door for all the arguments and problems that have since confronted the West on federal lands.

I became involved early in the game because myself, Delbert Oliver, Ray Tibbetts and Joe Stocks met in a coffee shop one morning and conceived the idea of the Western Association of Land Users. We set up that organization, with Ray Tibbetts as chairman, and he came up with a wonderful idea. He designed a poster, a great big poster, and on it he had "Endangered Species," where he listed the traditional activities on public lands. Then he had drawn a circle with a slash through it, symbolizing (that) those traditional uses were going to be endangered. That idea caught on pretty well and we circulated a lot of those (posters) in Nevada and other places. We started getting a lot of correspondence, and I think this is what probably led to what later became known as the "Sagebrush Rebellion."

The big leadership movement of the Rebellion came out of Nevada. But this was the beginning of my association with politics. Ray (Tibbetts), probably for the same reasons I had - strong interest in public lands - became County Commissioner, replacing Jim McPherson upon his death. Tibbetts had a strong philosophy about county government. He believed that in order for people to have a say in their future and their destiny, they had to have a good understanding of what you could - and couldn't - do on public lands. When he went in as County Commissioner, I became chairman of the Western Association of Land Users.

My interest in politics came because of a lot of problems that were associated with the Organic Act. Mainly at that time it was a wilderness issue. We were caught flat-footed (trying) to learn how to communicate with the federal government. They came up with a whole new system of "public involvement."

The thing that bothered me then, and still does, is that at the local level, county governments should be concerned with issues that deal with the county - government at the county level.

The federal government came in with the philosophy that their concern is

watching over and protecting the lands for everyone in the United States - all the citizens. This line of authority really runs in conflict with local government. Who has the real authority and responsibility? Authority is one thing and responsibility is something else. People that are involved with county government are always involved with responsibility, with little recognized authority. Federal government, on the other hand, has little responsibility and a lot of authority. That is what starts a lot of problems. It went on then, (historically), it's going on now, and it will go on tomorrow.

RAY TIBBETTS:

I was raised in Moab. From the early 1930s I was used to the freedoms we had enjoyed on public lands for many years. The FLPMA act brought in a lot of new regulations, making it very tough for a lot of people here in the west, and mainly in Grand County. FLPMA made it almost totally impossible for a piece of land to be transferred to private enterprise and put on the tax rolls.

Grand County is very much public land. We have 3 - 5% private land, and that's very little to provide the necessary services for the people - hospitals, police protection, or anything else. FLPMA also called for a federal police force, and that was scary.

The Western Association of Land Users was formed to incorporate all the land users, whether they were river runners, tree huggers, stock growers, miners - anybody who used the land was welcome. We became very vocal, writing letters to Washington. We started becoming known all over the country. Poor speakers as some of us were, we went to other towns trying to sell the "product" that we needed to return the land to the states, on equal footing as the other states when they came into the Union.

A lot of people were frightened, that bringing the land back to the states was almost as big a monster as the federal government. We still pursued that idea.

A little later - I was still Chairman of the Land Users - we encouraged Grand County to take a strong stand on keeping the old road open into Negro Bill Canyon. We encouraged Mike Shumway to take his dozer in there and open the road with the support of Grand County, the Land Users, and many of the people. The cat went in

and cleared the road. A lot of people were disturbed by this - and not all in support of this action - but the road was opened and it was probably the first "shot" that was fired. There was a lot of controversy associated with it.

DEL BACKUS - BLM

What concerned the people after the passage of FLPMA was the fear that a lot of country was going to be locked up. The controversy did not really develop until we began the wilderness inventory process. Controversy resulted over what was a road, and what wasn't. People became concerned. Incidents started to occur, here in Moab and elsewhere.

Negro Bill Canyon kind of caught us by surprise. The year previous, the mining claimant had gone into the canyon and bladed a road further up than it had been in the past. We contacted the claimant and asked him if it would be okay for us to go back in and block off the road. He didn't have any problem with us doing that. We went out and bladed up a berm. The next thing that we knew of was the confrontation when the county went back in and opened the road.

We (the BLM) were not there. In fact, we heard about it after the fact, and then there was the newspaper article. The BLM District Manager at that time was on vacation. The acting manager wasn't sure what action to take, if any, on the issue. Things snowballed from there. A "rock-pushing" contest, you could call it. We would close the road, they would open it. We even got to the point where we put up a cable, further up the canyon, and it was also taken down. Both sides of the issue were represented during this time, but the environmentalists were not as active or organized as they are now.

Discussion over what were "roads" continued at the BLM. The state had come up with Class D designation for roads, as an attempt to identify some of the two-tracks as county roads. In our wilderness inventory, we were looking for roadless areas, and that's why the issue came up. We were not recognizing some of the tracks as roads, merely "ways." We didn't have that many conflicts with the county, however, when we really got down to looking at them. Part of the controversy was personality conflicts, between the District Manager and the County Commissioners.

SAGEBRUSH REBELLION

THE PROBLEMS ARE POLITICAL
AND LEGAL — NOT ECONOMIC

MOUNTAIN MINER



SERVING MOAB AND
SOUTHEASTERN UTAH SINCE 1896

The Times-Independent

Volume 86 Number 28



Moab, Grand County, Utah 84532
Thursday, July 10, 1980

County opens road in protest over B.L.M. land classification

Land use in US West: beauty vs. bounty

THE OREGONIAN, SATURDAY, JULY 5, 1980

Utah fires rebellion's 'first shot'

MOAB, Utah (AP) — A Grand County bulldozer flying a U.S. flag roared 100 yards into a proposed wilderness study area Friday, the symbolic "first shot" in Utah's sagebrush rebellion against federal ownership of much of the state's land.

Cheered on by the county commission and about 300 local residents, county roads superintendent Bob Westwood lowered the bulldozer's blade and pushed onto land 15 miles east of here that is administered by the Bureau of Land Management. County officials later described the act as an attempt to prevent the area from being closed off to mining activity.

Early in the 1990s the US government will decide how much of millions of acres of public land in 11 Western states should be designated as 'wilderness.' A colossal debate is emerging between people who would develop and those who would preserve areas that are both rich in resources and spectacularly scenic.

By Scott Armstrong
Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

JIMMIE Walker slides into a vinyl booth at the Golden Stake restaurant here and begins to explain why he gets as prickly as a saguaro over mention of the word wilderness.

"Environmentalists are not going to be happy until everything in the United States is run their way," says Mr. Walker, a county commissioner and uranium prospector, shooting a glare over his wire-rim glasses. All

they are interested in doing, he says, is "locking up our lands."

A few miles away, Ken Sleight sits down at a plywood picnic table outside the main lodge of his Pack Creek Ranch, 6,000 feet up among piñon-dabbed sandstone cliffs. A river runner and trail guide, Mr. Sleight harbors a Thoreau-like attachment to the land — and wants to see more of it protected.

"We have set aside areas for oil and gas development. Why not set aside more areas for wilderness? It is not a lockup. It is preservation."

The whole question was over what the federal government could and couldn't do with the land in Utah. FLPMA had been enacted, and more restrictions were coming out of it. Resource Management Plans came into being. Planning became important, and the citizens were worried; they wanted more involvement. Prior to FLPMA, the way things had been managed, even though there was no mandate to maintain in public ownership, there weren't a lot of sales, or land being transferred. It really didn't have that much affect, and has been implemented gradually over the years since that time. Some portions of it are still being implemented. Until we started the Wilderness Inventory portion of FLPMA, there was no controversy.

RAY TIBBETTS:

As time went on, we kept reacting. My life changed when I was appointed to fill the balance of Jim McPherson's term as County Commissioner. I became a lot more vocal. All the commissioners felt pretty much the same about it. The BLM was taking an inventory of all the lands, trying to decide if they fit Wilderness Area designation. Every one of those areas had roads, put in by the miners, the oil and cattle people, but put in by mechanical equipment. We were very upset that the government was not following their own



guidelines. We felt that if certain areas truly met wilderness classification, then let's study them; if they didn't - get them out of the inventory. We went to all the public hearings, but the BLM was not paying attention.

Finally, we met with State BLM Director, Gary Wicks, and told him the guidelines were not being followed and we had to do something about it. We told Gary that we were deliberately going to re-open one of the roads, to show there really was a road there. We made him think we were going back into Negro Bill Canyon, but our target was the Sand Flats. It had a very definite road into it. We had a large gathering of people for a July 4th Celebration. This turned the BLM on the back of its head. They were going to sue us and send federal marshals in, but we were in close contact with Orrin Hatch at that time, and he was very much in support of us.

MILL CREEK WILDERNESS STUDY AREA ENCOUNTER

RAY TIBBETTS:

We went in twice to the Mill Creek Unit of the WSA. On the July 4th Celebration, we went in and graded the road, but the feds told us later, "You didn't even get in to the unit," so we took the grader and

went back in farther. It was symbolic, what we were trying to prove. At the end of the road, there was an old dozer lying at the bottom of the canyon, probably left over from when they put the road in originally. It definitely showed that the road had been put in there by machinery.

DEL BACKUS:

The BLM was not represented at the Mill Creek incident. We thought of having a federal marshal there, but decided again that the best action was no action. We stayed out of the picture. As it turned out, they never did get into the Wilderness Study Area. It was a symbolic gesture. They bladed an old seismograph trail that was already there, so we took no action.

RAY TIBBETTS:

These were states rights issues, and our concern was the health, safety and welfare of the people. I always felt that if a certain amount of rights were given to a county, from federal to state to county, it was the commissioners duty to see that it was enforced. Bob Westwood was the road supervisor at the time we went into Mill Creek. He was the one who ran the dozer. It was a joyous turnout, with lots of people. We got into a "push and shove," and threatened with federal marshals coming to arrest us - I was personally called a "civil disobedient" - but we had our Washington support that kept them off our backs.

Then, Ron Steele and myself, through the Association of Land Users, met with the state affairs committee. This was chaired by Ivan Matheson of Cedar City. We presented a Utah Wilderness Bill, and encouraged them to support it. We didn't believe that the people in Salt Lake even understood what the problem was, but we met, and it seemed as if they all were waiting for someone to do something at the state level.

Sometime, during all this, Ron Steele and myself - as County Commissioners this time - made another trip to Salt Lake to meet with Cecil Andrus, then Secretary of the Interior. We told Cecil that we wanted the BLM to play the game fair and follow the same rules. He said he would send an undercover person to our area to study the problem. We never knew if he did or didn't.

That was the generating of the Sagebrush Rebellion in Utah. The name, itself, came out of Nevada; somebody over there came up with the name, and we all used it. It became a united front. The State Legislature passed the Sagebrush Rebellion Bill, but the governor wouldn't sign it, and it had to be tried in court before it was enacted in the state. This kind of rolled around, however, and got left on the shelf. The Republicans came into office and brought James Watt - probably the worst thing that could have happened to the Sagebrush Rebellion. He ended up short-circuiting the Rebellion by going the other way. The Rebellion died for lack of support. Watt didn't last very long because he was abrasive to a lot of people. Consequently, we fell back into the trenches.

The things that are happening now...maybe it's time for the Sagebrush Rebellion to start up again. Awhile back, Orrin Hatch kind of concurred that that might be the case. You either use it or you lose it, and I'm afraid we've almost lost it.

DEL BACKUS:

As we got more into the inventory process, the concerns and fears of the people lessened, because they realized that it wasn't going to be as severe a problem as they thought. Things cooled off. The District Manager was transferred and the new manager was able to alleviate some of the fears of the people. This change might have had its start at that meeting in Salt Lake between the commissioners and Secretary Andrus. The BLM state director was adamant about improving relations in our district.

IN RETROSPECT

In his book, *"It's Your Misfortune, and None of My Own" - A New History of the American West* (1991), author Richard White has this to say about the Sagebrush Rebellion:

The Sagebrush Rebellion was...yet another attempt to get the federal government to cede public lands to the states. For a time in the late 1970s and early 1980s it seemed to be on the verge of success. The rebels argued that extensive landholdings put the West at a competitive disadvantage with the East.

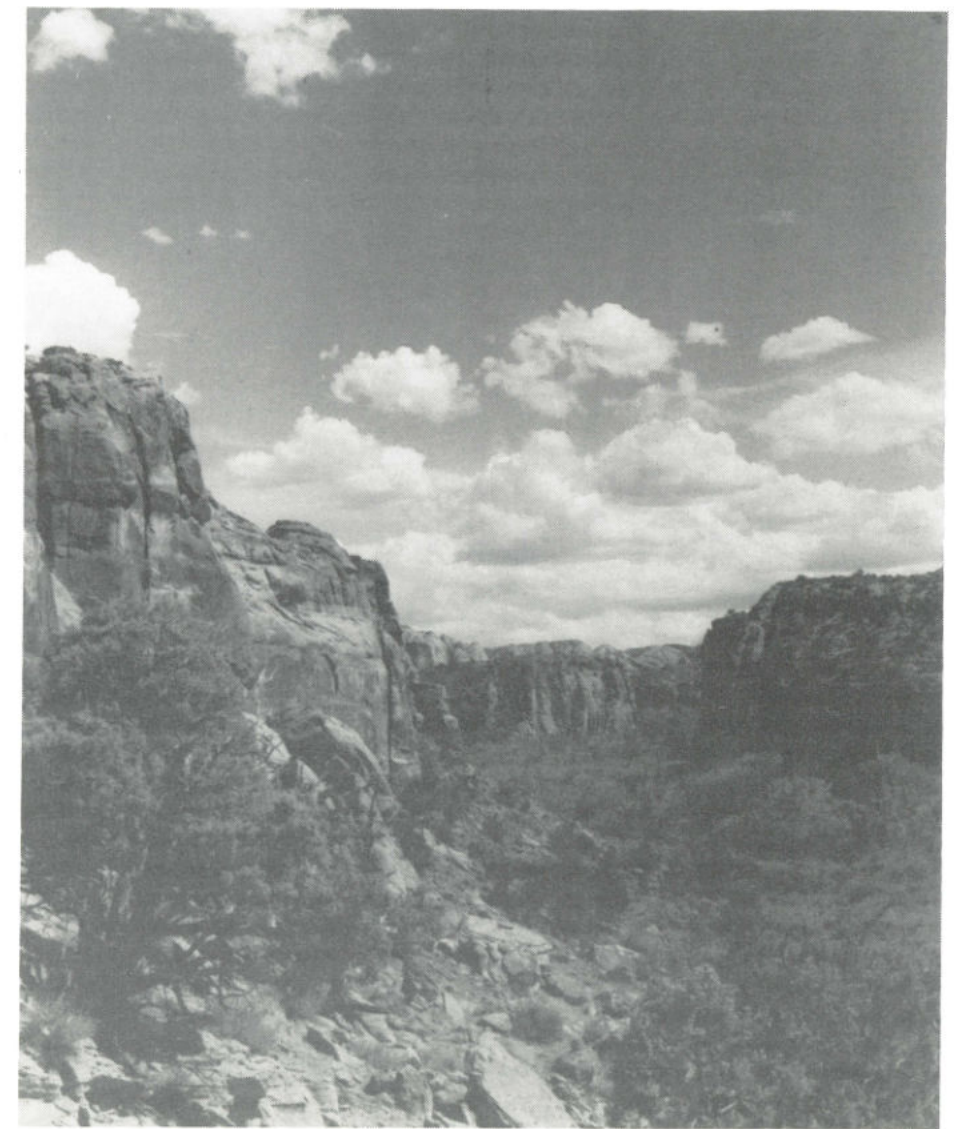
The Sagebrush Rebellion stirred up

passionate enthusiasm among conservative state legislatures in the Rocky Mountain West...(but) found far less support among western governors and in the Metropolitan West. Two state legislatures went so far as to pass acts claiming public lands for their states, but the laws were meaningless.

Governors realized that federal holdings were not a dead loss... State and county governments, for example, obtained a share of the revenues from mineral royalties and timber licenses. They then used this money to pay for schools, highways, and irrigation projects. In 1976, Congress had passed the Payment in Lieu of Taxes Act (PILT) under which the federal government had agreed to make additional payments to the counties in

lieu of taxes on federal lands within their boundaries. The Sagebrush Rebellion would have eliminated all these payments.

The governors and their urban constituents were also unwilling to see public lands that they wanted for watersheds and recreation pass into private hands. Many urban dwellers in the West regarded the Sagebrush Rebellion...as an ill-disguised land grab designed to give resource users title to public lands. The Sagebrush Rebellion in the end fizzled as much because of opposition within the West as from opposition elsewhere in the country.



The Battleground - Mill Creek Wilderness Study Area. Photo by Jean Akens.

THE AMASA'S BACK CHAINING

"Murder on the Mountain"

by Vicki Barker

When environmentalists threatened civil disobedience to save trees from being bulldozed in a bench area of the La Sal mountains in April of 1990, the seeds were planted for the most emotional encounter many public-land management officials had dealt with in Utah. Three years after the occasion, the Amasa's Back chaining is still remembered as the most controversial and highly publicized government tree-removal project in the state's history. By the time it was over, one man had filed a complaint of assault against a government agent, school-children were organizing a protest to the President of the United States, and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management was forced to declare a temporary moratorium on chaining to give the federal agency time to reassess the practice as a means of erosion control and forage improvement in the West.

"Emotions were fairly high," recalled Ken Boyer, state range conservationist at the Salt Lake City office of the BLM. "I guess we never had an issue that got so heated and hostile." Boyer and other BLM officials pray it will never happen that way again. Officials at the local, district and state level all say they learned from Amasa's Back that they must give the public considerably more "lead time" to digest and comment on any proposed chaining. Boyer said the incident at Amasa's Back, San Juan County, might have gone unnoticed had it occurred two months later. But at the time, many factors beyond the BLM's control were coming together almost uncannily to create an unusually volatile situation.

The razing of ancient trees on Amasa's Back occurred, coincidentally, at a time the entire world was preparing to plant trees in celebration of the 20th anniversary

of the first Earth Day. Global warming was a growing issue, and the nation's President had called for huge sums of money to plant millions of trees across America in an effort to ease the impending crisis. The week the chaining happened, then-President George Bush had traveled to Indiana and demonstrated his commitment to trees by planting saplings in a ceremony in Indianapolis. Utah organizations were publicizing plans for massive tree plantings in the Salt Lake area to promote civic pride and foster public awareness of the value of trees.

In southeastern Utah, environmental activist Ken Sleight, a Democrat of San Juan County, was campaigning for a seat in the Utah Legislature. The Moab Ranger District of the Manti-La Sal National Forest was planning a pinyon and juniper tree giveaway on Earth Day. The anti-ranching "No More Moo By '92" and "Cattle-Free By '93" movements to kick livestock off public lands were making headlines, and reports of cattle killings in neighboring counties had government officials on pins and needles. Last, but not least, the BLM had just entered the public comment phase on draft environmental studies that would decide the future use of "land and vegetation treatment" programs such as chaining on all BLM lands in the West.

The objective of chaining and reseeded is diversity in vegetation. At Amasa's Back, as in other characteristic pinyon-juniper woodland areas, the trees had taken over and created a thick canopy that inhibited growth of other plant species, said Gregg Dawson, BLM Grand Resource Area range conservationist.

The battle over the proposed chaining of 390 acres of pinyon-juniper trees on Amasa's Back brewed quite silently until

opponents snared prime time on television with threats and actions of civil disobedience intended to halt the project. News reports showing trees being yanked from the ground by snarling, smoke-spewing bulldozers and protesters pleading for the trees' lives and accusing government officials of being murderers and land rapists profoundly affected viewers.

"And then the college professors are always looking for issues, to assign term papers," Boyer said. "That gets folks probing, and folks looking into it, and there's a lot of opinions expressed."

The incident at Amasa's Back ended up giving vicarious vent to a lot of people fearful about the fate of their ailing planet and frustrated over a seemingly arrogant government out-of-touch with Nature. The public furor in Moab began after news media in Salt Lake City were tipped off that a group of environmentalists led by Ken Sleight, a Democratic candidate for the Utah House of Representatives, planned to resort to a bodily standoff with bulldozers if a last-minute appeal to the state office of the BLM failed to delay the planned chaining on the Blue Ridge allotment of the La Sals.

The civil disobedience was discussed at a meeting of the so-called "Monkey Wrench Gang" on April Fool's Day at Pack Creek Ranch and Inn. Protesters were summoned by Sleight, the lodge owner, about a week after chaining opponents unsuccessfully challenged the proposed chaining project at a public meeting in Moab with officials of the BLM's Grand Resource Area.

That meeting was the BLM's response to letters of appeal the local and state BLM offices received from a number of

people, including Sleight, who took his cue from San Juan County resident Owen Severance. In the previous six months, Severance had complained repeatedly to the BLM that, in its enthusiasm for chaining, the federal agency ignores federal laws protecting archaeological remains and refuses to make cultural resources a planning issue in land-management decisions. Severance's complaint that significant archaeological sites were desecrated in a roller-chop operation the BLM ordered to maintain a 400-acre area previously chained in the 1960s in the Brushy Basin area alarmed opponents of the Amasa's Back chaining, who believed the federal agency failed to do a complete inventory of potentially significant archaeological sites before deciding in favor of the project.

At least 70 acres marked for chaining had not been inventoried in time for the decision on the environmental assessment, according to the document. The BLM was to check the area prior to the chaining, to be sure no significant sites were chained. "Everything was done, as far as I know," said Del Backus, assistant manager for resources in the Moab BLM District.

Sleight still maintains the BLM failed to follow proper procedure to allow public comment on the Amasa's Back chaining, and he is adamant that the project should have been stopped. "The big thing is, it wasn't properly monitored by the BLM during the chaining, to prevent damage to archaeological sites."

In the record-of-decision Sept. 15, 1989, Grand Resource Area manager Brad Palmer concluded that removing the closed canopy of pinyon-juniper trees on Amasa's Back would allow a more diverse growth of forage plants more desirable to livestock and mule deer. Providing more forage in the Blue Ridge allotment, he wrote, would lessen pressures deer were placing on existing winter foraging areas and help their populations grow. The Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance filed an appeal, claiming the decision to chain was not valid because it did not follow proper procedure. The appeal was rejected.

On April 3, 1990 two bulldozers were hauled 12 miles southeast of Moab, then driven about six miles up to the woodlands of Amasa's Back. The following day, the dozers revved up about 7 a.m. to begin the grueling process of ripping up nearly 400 acres of pinyon-juniper trees, some

estimated to be as old as 300 years. The dozers accomplished the task by stretching a 210-foot anchor chain (made up of 90-pound links) between them and, spaced about 100 feet apart, advancing into and toppling the trees by uprooting them.

The BLM issued free firewood permits to the public to pick through the carnage left behind. Remains from that were burned in the fall, and the ground sprinkled with seed. A second chaining to bury the seeds followed. Backus said all the steps occurred as planned, "and things are coming along well." Two growing

seasons have passed, and this year up to 50 head of cattle per month could be allowed to graze the newly created pasture for the first time. Worries that the drought would render the seeding project a failure were unfounded, Backus says. "We did have a fairly good winter after we reseeded, and the precipitation's been improving since then. We happened to hit it at the tail end of the drought." Backus said transect studies on birds show the chaining had no impact on the types and numbers of bird species using the area. "In fact, at times they are more numerous than in areas with trees."



Amasa's Back, April 3, 1990. All photos by Vicki Barker.

Opponents at the special meeting with the BLM March 22, 1990 identified 31 issues they believed were not addressed in the environmental assessment on Amasa's Back, besides the drought and impacts to birds and other non-big game wildlife. They grilled BLM officials for hours on those issues, reiterating concerns about impacts to the watershed, aesthetics, cultural resources and wildlife habitat. In particular, they worried about destruction of old trees that might be home to the rare, and possibly endangered, Mexican Spotted Owl, which the U.S. Forest Service had reportedly spotted in the mountain area.

Opponents wanted a cost-benefit analysis that weighed such things as the aesthetic value of intact trees and "non-consumptive" activities like animal-watching against benefits to deer, big-game hunters and the grazing permittee. And they wondered how objectively the BLM could consider appeals when the grazing permittee and the co-sponsoring government agency, the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, had already committed funds to the project.

Sleight told the group at his ranch the following week that livestock operator George White complained that holding off the chaining any longer could cost him \$15,000 in fees to the bulldozer operator. White was also sharing costs with the government agencies for reseeding the area at \$10 an acre. BLM officials wondered where Sleight felt he had room to criticize when his subdivision developments in a valley north of Amasa's Back were displacing deer in search of forage.

Sleight countered that the BLM failed to take into consideration the visual impact a chained area would have on his horse pack trips and other recreational activities originating from his ranch. He contended the BLM's decision to chain was made "in-house," without sufficient opportunity for public input, and complained that his letters of appeal and requests for information from state BLM director James Parker went unanswered. "We have not been heard...and I say it's criminal," he told protesters attending the organizational meeting at his ranch April 1, 1990.

Sleight said the state BLM director finally met with him after the chaining. Right after that, Parker declared a temporary moratorium on scheduled chainings of an additional 1,400 acres in other parts of the state. No chainings on BLM lands have occurred since Amasa's

Back, according to state BLM officials.

In southeast Utah, opponents felt that civil disobedience - laying down in front of bulldozers or chaining themselves to trees - was about the only option left to them with only a few days to go until the bulldozers were scheduled to chain. Sleight urged his followers to "head them off at the pass. We have to bring it to a head and lay down in front of the bulldozers," Sleight said. "I'm hoping they will cite me before the tractor runs over me. I don't want to be like that turtle in 'Hayduke Lives.' He didn't come up for a long time." Sleight predicted "a lot of friction" if the BLM proceeded with its "violence against the earth...the landscape and the trees. The next step," he said, "is who of us is going to be knocked down."

Naturalist-writer Terry Tempest-Williams said the group needed to buy time but also force the BLM to publicly account for the philosophy that supports chaining. "It's a perception problem," she said. "In the desert southwest, they do not view the pinyon-juniper as a forest. It's 'rangeland.' To go up there and see how beautiful it is! ...It's a thriving eco-system and I think we forget that."

The threats of civil disobedience lured all the Salt Lake television stations to Moab for live coverage of what looked like a potentially bloody battle over trees. The BLM and state wildlife officials called a news "rally" April 2 in Moab, where Sleight and Gene Nodine, then director of the Moab BLM District, argued heatedly on-camera. "I was pretty mad, very angry" Sleight said. "He didn't acknowledge that there was not enough dialogue, not enough study, when all the evidence shows the environmental assessment was so devoid of information and the process wasn't correct."

After the news conference, Nodine led a caravan of officials, media and members of the public into the hills to observe a chained area in the national forest contiguous to the Blue Ridge site. The Forest Service area had been chained 18 years earlier. Brad Palmer, Grand Resource Area manager, said the idea was to relieve the public's anxiety - based on misconception - that the chaining would result in "total obliteration" of 390 acres of vegetation.

While the group congregated on the hill, the contractor in charge of the chaining operation was on his way to Moab to

begin the chaining project. Nodine told one group pleading for delay that day on the hill overlooking Pack Creek Ranch that the project was going to proceed regardless.

"The BLM is out of step with public sentiment here," Jay Nethercott told Nodine. A Moab resident, Nethercott was one of only three men who showed up to protest the Amasa's Back chaining the day the bulldozers arrived. The chaining was scheduled over a three-day period, beginning April 3, but protesters were told one of the bulldozers was inoperative and the chaining was delayed the first day. The organized protest was called off until the next day.

When a second machine was hauled in the afternoon of April 3 after all, and appeared to be preparing to lug the giant chain up a dirt road three miles to Amasa's back, Nethercott raced off to alert whoever he could find at Pack Creek Ranch. Only one man, a ranchhand, returned with him. They headed into the mountains with various media vehicles close behind to wait for the bulldozers - and a large vanguard of law enforcement officials - at the top. Already waiting was Vaughn Lovejoy, who had traveled down from Salt Lake City the night before to participate in the protest.

Nethercott was helpless to block the first bulldozer as it chugged into sight, but he tried anyway by jumping onto the slow-moving machine and commanding the driver to stop. The operator continued forward, and Nethercott became upset when the machine began mowing down shrubs and trees to make space to park for the night. Nethercott feared he was about to be pinned between the machine and a tree at one point and, obviously shaken, he began screaming at operator Richard Smith to stop the machine.

"I was so mad and upset they had to drive over those trees," he said later. "They couldn't wait till morning. They ran over and murdered a tree that 30 seconds before was a living thing generating oxygen."

Early the next morning, Vaughn Lovejoy was the only protester present when the bulldozers headed for the chaining area. The moment affected him deeply, he recalled. He was trying to sort out his feelings when he saw a chance to step in front of one of the machines. "Sixty seconds, and there were guys there



Vaughn Lovejoy beneath one of the ancient junipers due to be razed on Amasa's Back.

with guns strapped to their sides, saying, "Move!" he said. He made a brief statement to television media, then stepped aside at the request of state wildlife officer Miles Moretti. "I said, 'We have to stop this.'"

Other protesters arrived later, including Nethercott. He later filed a complaint with the BLM that government officials, including two special law-enforcement agents from the state BLM office, encircled him. One of the plainclothes agents verbally abused him and then shoved him, Nethercott said. He was unable to identify who the government official was because there was no badge on the man's uniform, and he refused three times to identify himself. The BLM later denied anyone had assaulted Nethercott.

The day of the chaining, protests were mostly exchanged between individuals as they walked among uprooted trees. Others argued merits of the project with anti-environmentalists who had also shown up to show support for the chaining. "We just wanted to see what the environmentalists were going to do," said Johnie Adams, a Moab miner and member of the Western Association of Land Users. "It seems the media are leaning towards them - they're more vocal than we are - so we came up to give our point of view. I think they're being ridiculous."

"In my opinion," said Ann Adams, "they don't have any business voicing their opinion. This is public land. Nobody's hurting anybody. They would rather see a tree live and a person die." Said protester Andrew Riley, "We're saying, consider global warming. This is to awaken people to the fact that what horrifies us about (destruction of the rainforests in) Brazil is going on in our own back yard."

Public opportunity to fight the Amasa's Back chaining on paper had begun in 1983 when an environmental assessment of the project was started. No comments were received during the planning process, Palmer noted. Yet, the whole mood changed over the next five years, and suddenly people were clamoring for a voice in the decision. Palmer said the change in public mood prompted him to delay the chaining schedule a week to allow the public an opportunity to air their concerns at the special meeting March 1990 with the BLM.

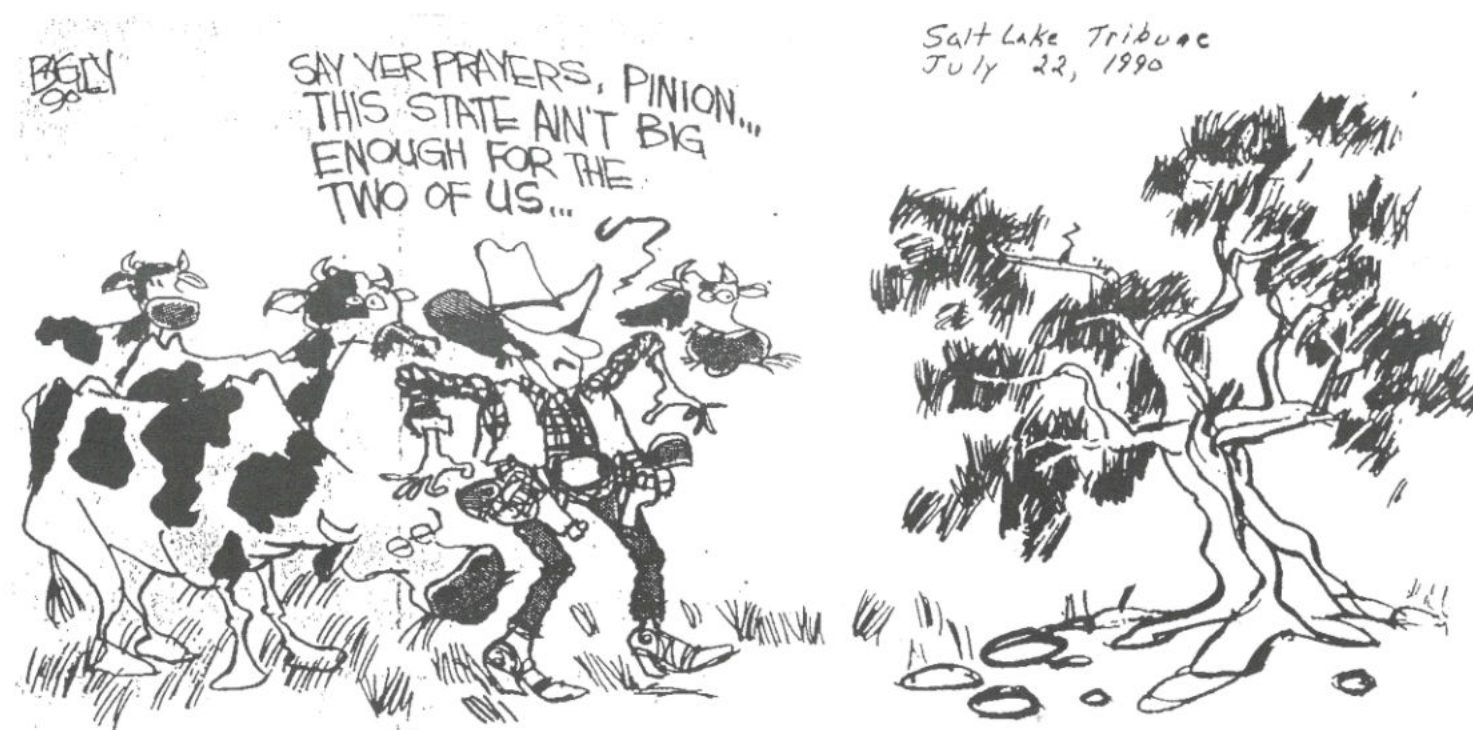
After that, the BLM made a commitment to proceed on two counts, he said:

First, because of the involvement of two other parties besides the BLM, and the ongoing personal and financial commitment of the state and livestock operator. "And Gene felt we'd adequately addressed the issues and that what we're doing is supportable and in the public's best interest." Palmer added, "What we also realized is, when the next one comes up, there will be more public involvement. In fact, Gene said that's a mandate."

Of an estimated 40 million-70 million acres of pinyon-juniper forest in the Four Corners states and Nevada, about three million acres may have been chained from 1950 to 1964 primarily to eradicate trees and open pasture areas for livestock,

according to BLM information. Of more than 550,000 acres of pinyon-juniper on BLM lands in the Grand Resource Area, 32,000 had been identified in the area-wide resource management plan for possible chaining and reseeding. Since that management plan was completed in 1985, about 720 acres have been chained, including Amasa's Back.

Ken Boyer, range conservationist at the state BLM office, said no matter what size an area is that may be targeted for chaining, he would expect that, because of how the public perceived the Amasa's Back chaining, "it will be an issue for a long time." Boyer said he figured that when the BLM put out the EIS on land



Bulldozers rumble in Grand despite protest against tree-removal project

By Vicki J. Barker
Deseret News correspondent

MOAB — Protesters against a government tree-removal project were helpless in attempts to block bulldozers en route to the targeted site Tuesday, but one man tried anyway by jumping onto the machines and commanding that they stop.

treatment of all BLM lands in the west, there would be a lot more public opposition to chemical treatment than chaining as a management tool. "But the only flak drawn West-wide was from Utah, and it was on the chaining." He said the phone at the state BLM director's office rang off the hook for three weeks straight after the Amasa's Back incident, and university students submitted petitions with 2,500 signatures of people wanting the practice stopped.

One classroom of schoolchildren in Salt Lake City was so disturbed by television coverage of the bulldozers toppling trees that they wrote letters of protest to then-President George Bush, the governor of Utah, and the U.S. Secretary of the Interior. "We had a public hearing on the EIS, and all kinds of school kids came in," said Boyer. "Those kids would make tears

come to your eyes. They'd equate chaining with killing the rainforests."

Boyer said large-scale chainings are no longer proposed, but the final EIS on land and vegetative treatment programs did not exclude chaining as an acceptable practice on BLM lands in the West. The final plan proposes chaining for vegetative treatment on a maximum 4,900 acres of BLM lands per year in Utah. "But we don't expect to ever approach that level," Boyer said. "I think everybody's pretty sensitive...we'll all be pretty cautious how we do things in the future."

The Grand Resource Area Management plan is now being reopened for revision. Five scoping meetings to take comment from the public on issues the management plan should address were scheduled throughout March 1993. Del Backus,

■ **Forest controversy:**
Environmentalist says he was shoved by a government agent.

By Vicki J. Barker
Deseret News correspondent

assistant manager for resources in the Moab District office, said he expects some areas identified for chaining in the 1985 document to be carried over to the revised management plan. "But," he said, "I suspect the 32,000 acres will be considerably less."

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Vicki Barker is a freelance writer and photo-journalist based in Moab, Utah, her hometown. She is a correspondent for the Salt Lake Tribune, and also files reports with the Moab Times-Independent and San Juan Record. An award-winning reporter, Ms. Barker has worked as a staff writer at newspapers in Ogden, Provo, and Logan, Utah, and in Grand Junction, Colo. She also reported for radio stations in Logan and Moab.

The Problem With History - Continued

The following is a letter from Michael Milligan, subscriber and past contributor to this journal:

As usual I enjoyed the Fall issue of *Canyon Legacy* (*The Law and The Lawless*). I found it interesting to read about the Sheriffs I briefly encounter in my research of Colorado and Green River histories. Enclosed you will find another version of the story of the killing of (Moab's) Sheriff Tyler. Unfortunately I do not have the date the article appeared in the *Vernal Express* (newspaper). A grandson of (Vernal) Sheriff William Preece made me a copy when he learned of my interest in Green River history. His family contends they were glad their grandfather did not take credit for killing Curry, otherwise he would have met the same fate as Sheriff Tyler.

Regarding Sheriffs, there are two others I can add to your list, although they were prior to 1896. Sheriff M.H. Darrow in 1894 and Sheriff William Sommerville in 1895 were mentioned in Salt Lake and Provo newspapers because of their not imprisoning a sentenced killer.

Captain Wilson Ellis Davis was sentenced to eight months imprisonment in Grand County's jail on October 19, 1894. Davis had killed three men at Westwater in August of 1892, but roamed free until January of 1895 when the court was informed that Sheriff Darrow had not incarcerated him. When the court was making out commitment papers for Sheriff Darrow, they made a mistake and the words "Utah Penitentiary" were replaced with "Grand County."

Sheriff Darrow, after consultation with various officials, reached the conclusion that it was not intended that Davis be kept in the jail, and therefore placed him in confinement at his (the sheriff's) house. Later, Sheriff Darrow presented a bill for the prisoner's board to the County. The county refused to pay and, until the matter was cleared up, newly-elected Sheriff Sommerville also refused to incarcerate Davis. The order was then clarified and Captain Wilson Davis served his time at the State Penitentiary.

(The following is a condensed and occasionally edited version of the story on

Sheriff William Preece that appeared in the *Vernal Express*, as that story related to Sheriff Tyler and the killing of Flat Nose George Curry.)

There were few lawmen of the Old West as fearless and respected as Sheriff William Preece, yet he has gone unnoticed by history for the most part, due primarily to his own modesty. His modesty saved his life on one occasion.

George Sutherland Curry was born in Canada but...moved to Nebraska where he took up rustling. He took a bar into Hole-in-the-Wall to supply the many outlaws there with whiskey, and soon organized a gang of his own. He became known, because of his unusual features, as "Flat Nose" George Curry. His protege, Harvey Logan, adopted the alias, Kid Curry.

Flat Nose George lived at Rattlesnake Cave above the Green River during the winter of 1899-1900. In the spring he was joined by an acquaintance, Tom Dilly, who had killed a man at the Pleasant Valley Coal Company near Price. There were warrants for Dilly's arrest. Word was wired to Sheriff Preece of Uintah County and Tyler of Moab that these men were operating in their region. Both sheriffs set out on the trail.

Sheriff Preece encountered the man believed to be Dilly, but he escaped. Later, the sheriff again encountered the outlaw on a sandbar on the west side of the Green River. When the outlaw saw Preece and (deputy) King, he picked up his hat, coat and gun and ran up the river bank. Preece shouted for him to lay down his guns but the outlaw shouted curses back and fired at the lawmen. Preece took refuge behind a rock and fired at the outlaw, bringing him down just as Sheriff Tyler and his posse appeared on the west side of the river.

Preece had fired from across the river. The bullet entered the outlaw's

head at the temple about one inch above the left corner of the left eye. R.D. Westwood, a member of Sheriff Tyler's posse, who knew Dilly on sight, said that this man was not Dilly. Later the dead man was identified as the notorious Flat Nose George Curry.

The shooting occurred on April 17, 1900. At a Thompson, Utah inquest, Sheriff Tyler maintained that it was his bullet that killed Curry. Preece, as usual, did not claim credit for his deeds; he made his statement and returned to Vernal. Tyler bragged to anyone who would listen that he was the man who killed Flat Nose George Curry.

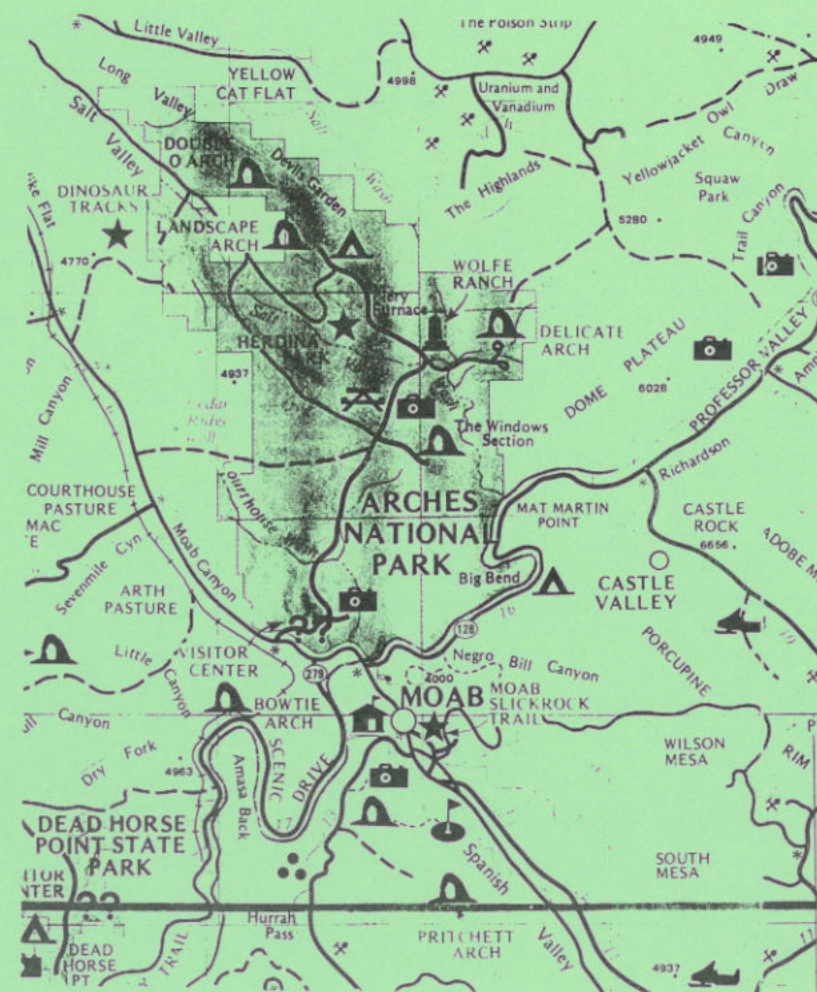
Several weeks later, Sheriff Tyler and his deputy, Sam Jenkins, were again on the trail of Tom Dilly, when they came upon the camp of three men they at first assumed were Indians, for they sat near the fire with Indian blankets draped over their shoulders. The lawmen approached and Tyler asked the men, whom he then saw to be white men, if they had seen anyone matching Dilly's description. They had not, but the leader of the three men asked Tyler, "Say, aren't you that sheriff who killed Flat Nose George Curry a little while back?"

Tyler said that he was, and proud of it. At that moment, the leader of the three men introduced himself as Kid Curry, and commenced to blast the sheriff and his deputy from beneath the Indian blanket where his gun had been ready all the time. The other two men present were the Sundance Kid and Bill Carver. Had Sheriff Preece been a braggart, he might have suffered the same fate as Sheriff Tyler, even though Sheriff Tyler was guilty of nothing more than conceit.

There you have it - a different version of the killings of Flat Nose George and Sheriff Tyler. Please readers, keep those letters and bits of information coming. They all help resolve the "problem with history."

NEXT ISSUE...

Look at any map of Southeastern Utah and the Four Corners region and you will see some unusual geographic place names. Those more commonplace are self-explanatory, such as the numerous canyons called "Cottonwood." The history behind the naming of other areas (specific mesas, mountains, canyons, rock formations, settlements, etc.), is more obscure. How they got to be called what they are is the subject of the next issue of *Canyon Legacy*. Please join us this summer in exploring the origin of PLACE NAMES.



Canyon Legacy subscriptions:

_____ \$18.00 per calendar year

Back Issues - \$4.50

_____ **Premiere Issue** *Survival Through Time in Canyonlands*

_____ **Issue #2** *40 Years in the "Reel" World - Moab Movie-making History*

_____ **Issue #3** *Canyonlands National Park History*

_____ **Issue #4** *Canyon Country Natural History*

_____ **Issue #5** *River History of the Colorado Plateau*

_____ **Issue #6** *Extinct Species of Canyon Country*

_____ **Issue #7** *Archaeological Discoveries*

_____ **Issue #8** *Planes, Trains and Automobiles: A Regional History*

_____ **Issue #9** *Explorers and Expeditions*

_____ **Issue #10** *Riches From the Land*

_____ **Issue #11** *Ranching and Cowboys*

_____ **Issue #12** *Dreams and Schemes*

All four issues of one year at special rate of \$16.00 per set:

_____ 1989 _____ 1990 _____ 1991

Back Issues - \$5.00 each

_____ **Issue #13** *Geology of Canyonlands*

_____ **Issue #14** *Days of Discovery*

_____ **Issue #15** *The Law and the Lawless*

_____ **Issue #16** *Canyon Country Rock Art*

Four issues for 1992

_____ \$18.00

SHIPPING AND HANDLING ON MAIL ORDERS: Please include \$1.25 for one copy, \$2.00 for two, and .50 for each additional copy. Make checks payable to: *Canyon Legacy*, 118 E. Center St., Moab, Ut. 84532

Canyon Legacy

ISSN: 0897-3423

Dan O'Laurie Museum

118 East Center Street
Moab, UT 84532

NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MOAB, UT
PERMIT NO. 20



The controversial practice of "chaining," clearing forest trees to promote grass growth. Photo by Vicki Barker.