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"Save the Emigrants"

Joseph Clewes on the Mountain Meadows Massacre

Ronald W. Walker

Occasionally a major, previously published document such as this one falls between the historical cracks and becomes virtually forgotten. Although Joseph Clewes's statement on the Mountain Meadows Massacre was published in 1877 and was widely discussed at the time, current scholars have made little or no use of it. Their omission is unfortunate.

Clewes's statement has its limitations. It was written twenty years after the massacre and was therefore subject to the vagaries of memory. Also, like many of the several dozen affidavits made by people who participated in the massacre, it is self-serving in its attempt to minimize or avoid personal responsibility. Still, it is a pivotal piece of evidence. Most importantly, it contains details of the massacre not found elsewhere, including information that helps us construct a sequence for the five-day-long event. Clewes's statement also allows scholars to evaluate the conflicting claims of other eyewitnesses, in part because Clewes seems so credible: his details fit a logical pattern, and they are convincingly told. Apparently no longer associated with the Church at the time of the statement, Clewes made no effort to justify his former neighbors or the institution of Mormonism. Rather, his narrative is straightforward and neutral in tone.

Clewes's contributions to historical knowledge include the following: (1) His statement confirms that John D. Lee was present at the initial Indian attack on Monday morning and played a leading role on Friday as the events of the massacre unfolded. Lee later denied or minimized these roles. (2) Clewes affirms that Isaac C. Haight, who shared command of the Iron County militiamen at Mountain Meadows and whose role as stake president gave him ecclesiastical responsibility for the men, apparently

oscillated between a policy of attack and peace. Throughout the episode, Haight, who apparently remained about forty miles to the east in Cedar City, was probably in contact with his men at the Meadows. (3) Clewes makes it clear that Native Americans were a factor in the massacre. According to Clewes, Native Americans appear to have become restive after suffering serious casualties in the initial attack on Monday. Clewes also says that a new group of them arrived on Thursday. He suggests that, under the direction of Lee and others, they took part in the final killing. (Because Clewes was not present at this event, he can relate only what was planned.) (4) Nothing in Clewes's account suggests that Brigham Young planned the massacre. Instead, Clewes describes the ebb and flow of local decision making. Even on the day of the initial attack, Haight is reported to have sent "an order to save the emigrants and render all the assistance that could be given." Further, after learning that the disaster had probably taken place, Haight and his military superior, William H. Dame, who had just arrived in Cedar City from Parowan, "were angry at each other," perhaps quarreling over the role each of them had played in the event. The two men's argument is evidence that they and the others were not simply obeying orders from Salt Lake City. And Haight's last-minute message to "use your best endeavors" to protect the emigrants shows that he was not operating under higher directives to eliminate them.

Biographical Sketch of Joseph Thomas Clewes

Joseph Thomas Clewes was born October 12, 1831, at Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, England, the son of Andrew and Mary Ann Thomas Clewes. At the age of sixteen, he was baptized into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In 1849, while en route to Utah, his parents and younger brother died in St. Louis, apparently of a local cholera epidemic that took more than 4,500 lives that year.¹ Joseph and his sister Emma Jane paid their way to Utah by promoting Emma's skills with a horse pistol.² Once the twenty-year-old Joseph was in Zion, he settled in Cedar City and became a

1. Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District Public Communications, "1849 St. Louis Cholera Epidemic Helps Initiate Sewer Construction," *Pipeline*, issue 2 (September/October 2000), www.msdl-st-louis.mo.us/PublicComm/Pipeline/2-2000/S3.htm, cited February 7, 2003.

2. "Biographical Sketch of the Militia at Mountain Meadows," unpublished manuscript, Historical Department Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City.

member of the Iron Mission.³ He worked as a stonemason, helping to build the Iron County ovens. He also briefly held stock in the Deseret Iron Company. During this time, he and his wife, Mary Ann Balden Clewes, also a British immigrant, began a family of a dozen children.⁴

In 1854, Clewes became embroiled in a small controversy when he was among a dozen young men charged with "Dancing and merriment Contrary to Council given and Covenants entered into on Sunday Jany 4th 1854." The Iron County Saints were not opposed to dancing but were trying to abide counsel, for "Council had being given by the president to have no Dancing until the fort was enclosed." Clewes acknowledged "he had manifested a bad spirit" and obtained the forgiveness of local authorities.⁵

While Joseph Clewes was active in the Sixty-Third Quorum of Seventy in the weeks prior to the tragedy at Mountain Meadows, he later fell out of favor with his brethren. On October 7, 1857, he asked the quorum's forgiveness for undisclosed errors and assured them he had the support of Isaac Haight, the stake president. At the quorum meeting on October 21, Clewes testified, "I am desirous to do right and be one with you. I have not been received into good fellowship yet by the quorum," though, he argued, the Church considered him to be in good standing. Haight himself stood then and rebuked the quorum, "Bro Clewes is a member of this quorum and you cannot help yourselves." Whether some connection exists between what took place at the Meadow and his standing in the quorum remains unclear.

By 1858, Clewes had again assumed an active role in quorum life. Throughout 1858 the quorum charged him with building projects and

3. See Morris A. Shirts and Kathryn H. Shirts, *A Trial Furnace: Southern Utah's Iron Mission* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 2001).

4. Contemporaneous documents sometimes spell the surname "Clews." On his birth, see "International Genealogical Index—British Isles," Family History Library of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah. On the baptism and death of family members, see "Ancestral Files—Andrew Clews Family Group Sheet," Family History Library. For his activity in Iron County, see Shirts and Shirts, *A Trial Furnace*, 213, 270, 349, 462. He is called an "eccentric genius" in Joseph Clewes, "Mountain Meadows Massacre: Joe Clewes' Statement Concerning It," *Salt Lake Daily Herald*, April 5, 1877, 4; and a Seventy in Spencer W. Wiltbank, "Report of the Fifth Quorum," *Deseret News*, August 22, 1855, 192. See also "Covered Wagon Families: Clewes Family among Early Settlers of Base Line Area," December 18, 1938, unidentified newspaper clipping, author's possession.

5. Cedar City Ward Bishop's Court Minutes, 1853–1856, Church Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City.

music instruction, and he apparently performed satisfactorily in these roles. By late 1859, however, Clewes was listed among those who “but very seldom attend; and their Standing is quite suspectable.” Quorum members were sent to reclaim Clewes if possible. They reported at a November 30, 1859, quorum meeting, “We visited Joseph Cluse, he felt bad, found fault with the Authorities of the church, thought he had a perfect right to go where he pleased, to attend meetings when he pleased and that no one had a right to cut him from the church.” A deliberative council followed in which quorum members unanimously determined that “Joseph Cluse be cut off from this Quorum.”⁶

In 1858 the Iron Mission was in its final throes, and many settlers, including Joseph Clewes, left the area.⁷ Along with a number of other Utah immigrants and sixteen wagons, the Clewes family arrived in San Bernardino, California, on December 24, 1859.⁸ While San Bernardino was once a Mormon-dominated area, many Saints had left for Utah during the Utah War. Perhaps with the less-fervent remnant that remained, Joseph Clewes found congeniality. Instead of involving himself with Church activity, he farmed, mined, and worked as a mason. His latter work provided the foundation for such buildings as the first San Bernardino courthouse, the town’s opera house, and an early high school.⁹ When he died in 1894 of an illness incident to diabetes, he was remembered by the *San Bernardino Sun* as a well-educated man who was a pioneer and the father of a large family.¹⁰

Context of Clewes’s Statement

When his name surfaced in the second John D. Lee trial in 1877, Clewes started out for the courthouse in Beaver, Utah, to clear his name. While on

6. Sixty-Third Quorum of Seventy [Cedar City, Utah], Minutes, 1856–1863, Seventies Quorum Records, Church Archives.

7. Shirts and Shirts, *A Trial Furnace*, 396–97.

8. Clewes thereby became one of the first settlers on the Base Line Road near Waterman, later resettling near Tippecanoe, also on the Base Line. Helen Loehr, comp., “Clewes,” in “Pioneers: San Bernardino County Historical Society,” 19 (1949), microfiche copy, Family History Library. The “Base Line” received its name from a land survey post erected on Mount San Bernardino, about twenty miles from the original Mormon settlement. See *Guideposts to History: People and Places of Historical Significance in Early San Bernardino and Riverside Counties*, 2d ed. (San Bernardino, Calif.: Santa Fe Federal Savings and Loan Association, 1977), 8.

9. Loehr, “Clewes;” Virginia R. Harshman, *The Story of Lytle Creek Canyon* (Lytle Creek, Calif.: Guthrie Publications, 1992), 110.

10. “Index to Deaths, 1892–1903,” vol. 2, 47, San Bernardino County, Family History Library; *San Bernardino Sun*, September 1, 1894.

the road east, however, he decided to avoid the public controversy and turned back. As a substitute for his testimony, he issued a statement that was published in the *San Bernardino Times*, which cannot be located because only partial runs of the newspaper now exist. Fortunately, Clewes's statement was soon republished both by the *Salt Lake Daily Herald* and, in abbreviated form, by such national newspapers as the *New York Herald*.¹¹ Its circulation must have had a public impact, for Clewes was reportedly soon sought by authorities for additional information. Once more, to avoid involvement Clewes fled "to the mountains."¹²

The *Salt Lake Daily Herald* version, reproduced below, is the most complete text of the Joseph Clewes statement now available. This same version is included in *Journal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* under April 5, 1877, the date of its Utah publication.¹³ The papers of Seymour B. Young housed at the Utah Historical Society in Salt Lake City, Utah, include a Clewes statement. It differs from the *Herald* account only in inconsequential details and is apparently a variant. Caroline Parry Woolley, a granddaughter of Isaac Haight, copied Young's version of the Clewes statement for use in chronicling Haight's life.¹⁴

Unfortunately, more Clewes material is unavailable. As will be seen in his statement below, Clewes reported that two days before the massacre he and John D. Lee "sat down and talked awhile." While Clewes promised to provide a record of this important conversation at a later time, diligent effort to find it has been unsuccessful. So full of enigmatic promise for revealing still more mysteries of the massacre, that record, too, at least for the

11. Clewes, "Joe Clewes' Statement concerning It," *Salt Lake Herald*, April 5, 1877, 6; also in *New York Herald*, March 31, 1877.

12. "Joe Clewes Fled," *Salt Lake Daily Herald*, April 7, 1877, 3.

13. Joseph Clewes, "Mountain Meadows Massacre: Joseph Clewes' Statement concerning It," *Journal History of the Church*, vol. 116, April 5, 1877, pp. 6–7, *Selected Collections from the Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 2 vols. (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 2002), vol. 2: DVD 7.

14. Seymour B. Young Papers, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah. The Young account spells Isaac Haight's surname "Hait" and includes other minor differences from the *Herald* account. For example, the *Herald* has Clewes saying, "I lived in the new city, as it was called, probably about a mile from the old town of Cedar." The Young account has Clewes saying, "I lived in the city as it was called –3 mile from the old town of Cedar." Where the *Herald* has no date for the Monday of the massacre, the Young account adds parenthetically "September 7th 1857." See also "Joe Clewes Statements concerning the Mountain Meadows (told to

moment, has seemingly fallen by the historical wayside. Nevertheless, the following statement of Joseph Clewes sheds considerable light on events that much of the historical record seems to cloud.

Dr. Seymour B. Young),” in “Notes from the Journal of Seymour B. Young,” Caroline Parry Woolley Papers, Special Collections, Gerald R. Sherratt Library, Southern Utah University.

Statement of Joseph Clewes

On Monday before the massacre¹⁵ (I forget dates) Bishop Philip Klingensmith¹⁶ came to me about 10 o'clock and said Isaac C. Haight¹⁷ wanted him to find him a good rider and he (Smith) thought I was just the boy¹⁸ for a quick trip. I must have expressed something in my countenance for he said, "Do not be afraid, it is a good cause you are going to ride in," or words to that effect.¹⁹ He told me where to get a horse and be ready about noon; I would find Haight at the iron works store in the old town.²⁰ I lived in the new city, as it was called, probably about a mile from the old town of Cedar. This conversation was in the new city, close to Smith's house. About 12 o'clock I was mounted and armed with an old rusty horse pistol, I

15. Monday before the massacre was September 7, 1857.

16. Of Pennsylvania German derivation, the name appears as "Klingensmith" and "Klingen Smith" in early usage. Philip Klingensmith (1815–about 1881) served as a bishop in Cedar City and by his own account opposed taking anti-emigrant action. More likely, like that of many of his neighbors, Klingensmith's attitude and behavior shifted back and forth during the ten days preceding the massacre. See affidavit of Philip Klingensmith, sworn before P. B. Miller, clerk of Lincoln County, Nevada, April 10, 1871, and printed under "Mountain Meadow Massacre," *Corinne Daily Reporter*, September 20, 1872. Klingensmith's statement was reprinted in the *Pioche Daily Record*, September 27, 1872.

17. In addition to his roles as stake president and major of the second battalion in the Iron County military district of the territorial militia, Isaac Chauncey Haight (1813–1886) served as mayor and head of the iron works. These responsibilities made Haight Cedar City's most prominent settler. James H. Martineau to Adjutant General James Ferguson in Hamilton Gardner, "The Utah Territorial Militia," 1929, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City.

18. Clewes was twenty-five at the time.

19. Clewes suggests that he was aware of the anti-emigrant sentiment in the village but did not wish to become a part of it.

20. Like many Latter-day Saint settlements, Cedar City grew in two stages: (1) the construction of an early fort-settlement and (2) the establishment of a nearby permanent village. In the case of Cedar City, the establishment of the second stage was especially important because the fort lay on what was considered to be a potentially dangerous flood plain. The new village—the site of the present town—was established southeast of the fort. At the time of the massacre, settlers occupied both locations. Shirts and Shirts, *A Trial Furnace*, 372–73.

borrowed from Tom Gower²¹ I think, that had the appearance of not having been used for twenty years at least. After waiting some time James Haslam²² came up on a fine horse to the store; meeting me he asked, "Where are you going?" I answered, "I don't know; where are you going?" He said he was waiting for orders. In a little while he received his documents, put spurs to his horse and started north, I learned afterward that he went to Brigham Young.²³ I then received a letter from Haight with

21. Thomas Gower (1816–77), born May 23, 1816, at Stourbridge, England, was "an iron foundry man by trade, having been employed as an overseer of a large force of men in an iron foundry in Stratsford, England." Thomas Amos Lunt, "Thomas Amos Lunt Journal," cited in Evelyn K. Jones, *Henry Lunt: Biography and History of the Development of Southern Utah and Settling of Colonia Pacheco, Mexico* (Cedar City, Utah: By the author, 1996), 247. Gower was enrolled in the Iron County militia, but none of his neighbors reported him present at the massacre. He was a member of the Third Platoon, Company No. 7. See "Organization of the Iron Military District," June 6, 1857, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

22. Like Clewes, James Holt Haslam (1825–1913) was chosen to carry an express from the Iron County headquarters. Haslam's mission was to ride to Salt Lake City to seek Brigham Young's direction regarding the emigrants; therefore, he had a much longer ride before him than Clewes did—an epic journey of 500 miles, which Haslam completed in six days. By his own account, Haslam was in the saddle within ten or fifteen minutes after being summoned by Haight and rode "a spanish horse" as his first mount, which he exchanged for fresh animals as he went north. "Testimony of James Holt Haslam," *Supplement to the Lecture on the Mountain Meadows Massacre* (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor Office, 1885), 84–89. Haslam returned to Cedar City two days after the killing had taken place, carrying a letter from Young to let the emigrants pass. Haslam, a native of Boulton, Lancashire, England, had been in the territory since 1851. He later settled at Wellsville, Cache County, Utah, where he worked as a blacksmith, led the brass band, and directed the ward choir. He also served as a policeman, city councilman, and member of the local militia. Haslam Family Group Sheet, Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah; "Haslam, James Holt," in Frank Eshom, *Pioneers and Prominent Men of Utah* (Salt Lake City: Utah Pioneers Book Publishing Company, 1913), 923; "Testimony of James Holt Haslam," published in *Supplement to the Lecture on the Mountain Meadows Massacre* (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor Office, 1885); *Windows of Wellsville, 1856–1984* (Wellsville, Utah: Wellsville History Committee, 1985), 527; "Made Gallant Ride to Prevent Massacre," *Deseret Evening News*, March 15, 1913. This last source is his obituary and is copied into the Journal History dated March 13, 1913, p. 2.

23. Cedar City tradition suggests that on the same day Haight dispatched other messengers besides Haslam and Clewes with the purpose of stopping anti-emigrant action until word could be received from Brigham Young. On the previous day,

instructions to carry it to Amos Thornton at Pinto Creek²⁴ and get there as quick as I could. It was now near two o'clock.²⁵ I put out as fast as I could go. After crossing the valley and near the mouth of the cañon I met two men going in towards Cedar, Mormons of course. One asked me where I was going and I replied that I was going to Pinto Creek with a letter for Amos Thornton. He said, "O, come and go back with us, your letter is of no use; Lee with the Indians jumped on the emigrant camp this morning and got a lot of Indians wounded, but—" considering a moment—"no, go on, I cannot interfere with his orders," meaning Haight; "here, give me that old pistol and take these," handing me a pair of flint-lock horse-pistols.²⁶ On I went as fast as I could. I found Thornton there and delivered my letter. I was anxious to know its contents. He opened it and read it aloud in my presence. I looked over his shoulder and saw that he read it aright. It read thus, as near as I can recollect:

"Bro. Amos Thornton—Take this dispatch to John D. Lee as quick as you can get it to him."

Sunday, September 6, a rancorous Church council suspended discussion of a Mormon-led attack pending receipt of word from Salt Lake City. See testimony of Laban Morrill during the second trial of John D. Lee in "Transcripts and Notes of John D. Lee Trials, 1875–1885," 29, Church Archives; and Elias Morris statement, February 2, 1892, Andrew Jenson, Mountain Meadows Massacre field notes, Church Archives.

24. Amos Griswold Thornton (1832–1902) was one of the Mormon "Indian missionaries" living at the newly established settlement of Pinto, about twenty miles west of Cedar City. The settlement lay between Mountain Meadows and Cedar City.

25. Four hours passed between the time of Clewes's summoning and his departure for Pinto, which is perhaps partly explained by the priority of the Salt Lake City message carried by Haslam. It had to be written and dispatched before the message Clewes carried was written.

26. Clewes fails to identify the two express riders, perhaps because of their possible involvement in the first attack and because it is likely that at least one of them returned to the siege and became involved in the massacre (Clewes reveals in a subsequent passage that prior to the massacre he no longer had the loaned weapon; he apparently had returned it to its owner at the Meadows). When reconstructing the detail and timing of events, the Monday afternoon express from the Meadows is important. It confirms that the initial attack took place on Monday morning (not on Tuesday as Lee asserted). It also suggests that news of the first attack may not have reached Cedar City before Haslam left for Salt Lake City, which, if true, means that President Young did not know of the initial fighting when writing his reply to Haight. The precise content of the no-longer-extant message carried by Haslam from Cedar City to Salt Lake City remains one of the most

The tenor of the dispatch on the same sheet to Lee was about as follows, to the best of my recollection:

“Major John D. Lee:

“You will use your best endeavors to keep the Indians off the emigrants and protect them from harm until further orders.”²⁷

(Signed)

“I. C. HAIGHT”

I felt relieved to know that such was the case, for I always understood that he [Lee] was a sort of chief among the Indians and they would do his bidding and there would be no more of it.²⁸ I saw no more of Thornton. I then met Wilson at Pinto²⁹ and he proposed to me to go over the ridge to Hamlin’s.³⁰ Mr. Hamlin was up at Salt Lake city at the time and Mrs. Hamlin

difficult issues surrounding the affair, with sources—Mormon and non-Mormon—often in disagreement. For Young’s message instructing that the emigrants be given safe passage, see Brigham Young to Isaac Haight, September 10, 1857, Brigham Young Papers, Church Archives. See also “Testimony of James Holt Haslam,” 85–87.

27. A separate report confirms this message. Richard L. Robinson, who served as the president of the Pinto community, later told Assistant Church Historian Andrew Jenson that he, too, had read Haight’s message to Lee and that its purport was to “draw the Indians off and satisfy them with [emigrant] beef if necessary but not [to] kill the emigrants.” Jenson, Mountain Meadows Massacre field notes. This information is important, for it suggests a central role of the Native Americans during the initial attack.

28. John D. Lee’s (1812–1877) commission as “Indian Farmer” gave him the responsibility for feeding and “civilizing” the southern Paiutes and resulted in considerable influence over them. Lee also served as a major in the Washington County militia and had local jurisdictional command of the men at the Meadows. As the only man convicted of the crime, he was executed at the site in 1877. Juanita Brooks, *John Doyle Lee* (Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 1992).

29. The identity of “Wilson” is uncertain. The possibilities include (1) Elliott Wilson, a courier at the time of the massacre (see “Testimony of David Wilson Tullis,” in Jenson, Mountain Meadows field notes); (2) David Wilson Tullis, who worked at the Meadows at the time of the massacre and who may have been commonly known by his middle name; and (3) if a transcript error occurred in the printing of the *Herald* account, Elliot Willden, a southern Utah settler, later indicted but not prosecuted for his role in the massacre (see “Pioneer Musician Is Laid to Final Rest,” *Deseret News*, October 9, 1920, page ix; Morris A. Shirts and Kathryn H. Shirts, *A Trial Furnace: Southern Utah’s Iron Mission* [Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1998]).

30. Jacob Hamblin (1819–1886) had recently received the appointment to head the Southern Indian Mission. Normally headquartered on the Santa Clara River farther south, Hamblin received a territorial grant to graze cattle at the Meadows and, at the time of the massacre, had begun to establish a temporary home at its

was at home alone with the family. He said she needed protection, the Indians being mad, no telling what they might do. I went there with him and guarded the house all night. Next morning (Tuesday) I started home and when I got well through the cañon I met John M. Higbee with a posse of men.³¹ He told me to come along with them, he should want me. I had to obey, there was no other alterative.³² We then moved on to Hamlin's house, at the north end of the meadows about six miles from the emigrant camp, which was at the south end of the meadows. If I remember aright, we stayed the remainder of the day at Hamlin's. Wednesday morning Higbee sent me and Wilson to the Indian camp, which was on the east side of the meadows, to find out how the Indians were acting and how many there were. About two and a half miles from the Indian camp, between two low ridges, there lay a number of Indians mortally wounded and a number of Indians lying around on every side. When the Indians saw us they came around pretty thick. We could not see the camp of emigrants from this position. They wanted to show us where the camp was and pulled and pushed us to go with them. Finally we agreed to go with them. About half a mile from the Indian camp we were hailed from the ridge on our left; we looked around and there stood John D. Lee. He came to us and showed us

north end. Several weeks before the Arkansas emigrants arrived in southern Utah, Hamblin traveled to Salt Lake City to conduct Indian business and to take a plural wife. *Jacob Hamblin: A Narrative of His Personal Experience* (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor Office, 1881); and Juanita Brooks, *Jacob Hamblin: Mormon Apostle to the Indians* (Salt Lake City: Westminster Press, 1980).

31. Most Iron County settlers viewed young John Mount Higbee (1827–1904) as a man of talent and promise. As town marshal, he had reportedly attempted the arrest of some members of the Arkansas company for disorderly behavior (one rumor had it that Higbee's wife was verbally abused by one of them). When Clewes met Higbee on the Cedar City road, the latter was serving in the capacity as a major in the militia and was likely conducting a surveillance to determine conditions following the initial Monday morning assault. Although he subsequently and briefly returned to Cedar City, he was at the Meadows when the killing took place. Several participants claimed that Higbee gave the verbal order to commence the killing. See, for example, B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1965), 4:174, 5:605; Joseph F. Smith Jr., "Events of the Month," *Improvement Era* (February 1905), 8:4; John M. Higbee, *Autobiography* (Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society); Clinton D. Higby, *Historical Sketches of Our Higbee and Clark Progenitors* (Erie, Penn.: By the author, 1927).

32. As a private, First Platoon, Company No. 6, Iron County Militia, Clewes was subject to military order. "Organization of the Iron Military District."

how his shirt and other clothes had been cut with bullets on Monday morning, but his “garments” had not been touched. These garments pertained to the endowment some way and have curious cuts in them about the breast, bowels and knees and are considered proof against all harm or evil.³³

He told the Indians to go back to camp, and we sat down and talked awhile. Some of the conversation I recollect well, and will give it at some other time. He then went over the ridge, and in the evening Higbee came over from Hamlin’s with his men. Thursday I was sent back to Hamlin’s to kill a beef; in the evening I returned with it. During the day more men came from Cedar city. When I got to camp with the beef I found some strange faces. They were some men from St. George, or about there; I did not know them.³⁴ The Indians had been largely reinforced during the day.³⁵ Friday morning came that fatal day.³⁶ The old men and leaders were to themselves, sitting in something of a circle I know. I was warned not to go near them, as it was something sacred they were going through.³⁷ When that was through with, it was made known by Higbee that the emigrants were to be wiped out. Lee made quite a speech,³⁸ and also spoke through an interpreter to the Indians, instructing them what part to take. When

33. There is no record of Joseph Clewes receiving temple ordinances, which may account for his unfamiliarity with the nature and purpose of the Latter-day Saint temple or endowment garment. Lee’s statement confirms his role in the first attacks on the emigrants.

34. These men were “strange” in the sense that they were unfamiliar to Clewes. They were members of another militia contingent that had arrived on the scene largely from the village of Washington in Washington County. At the time of the massacre, St. George, Utah, had not been established. Its settlement took place almost four years later.

35. While some Indians left the area and abandoned the attack early in the week, Clewes provides the important information that others had newly arrived and therefore constituted “reinforcements.” Most of the Indians involved in the massacre were southern or western Paiutes from present-day southern Utah and southern Nevada.

36. The massacre took place on Friday, September 11, 1857.

37. This wording suggests that Clewes lacked familiarity with a Latter-day Saint prayer council, though it confirms the accounts of other witnesses who recalled this council. Clewes provides the important information that the council was reserved to leaders and not open to the rank and file.

38. Several of the men who were present recalled Lee’s strongly stated words, which urged the men to go forward with the killing. For example, see the Klingensmith affidavit in “Mountain Meadow Massacre,” *Corrine Daily Reporter*, September 20, 1872.

everything was ready, they moved off toward the emigrant camp. I kind of hesitated about moving; I had no arms;³⁹ I felt as though riveted to the ground. I was perfectly dumb with I know not what—terror it must have been; I have a very sympathetic nature; I was almost frantic. I was awakened from my momentarily semi-conscious state by Higbee's voice (he was standing on the right hand of the men as they moved out): "Clewes, we have no further use for you here; get on that mule and ride back to Haight, and tell him how things are up to this time; and," shaking his finger at me, "remember, not a word of this (meaning, of course, their acts there) to any one."⁴⁰ My heart beat light at this order. I got on that mule, and you may rely on it, reader, I made him travel out of that. I now call on the witnesses, both for prosecution and defence,⁴¹ to bear me out in this truth: I left the place before that massacre occurred. For the love of mercy and my children, clear me at once by a statement, any or all of you! When I got about half-way home to Cedar, I met Elias Morris and Christopher Arthur, going towards the Meadows. They stopped me and asked me how things were. I was afraid to to say much, but Morris hurriedly told me they were going out with an order to save the emigrants and render them all the assistance that could be given.⁴² I exclaimed, "Go! go! as fast as your horses can take

39. Clewes no longer had the firearms earlier given to him.

40. Higbee's demand for confidentiality presumably did not include information to be given to Haight, his commanding officer.

41. Clewes refers to the witnesses at Lee's second trial held at Beaver, Utah, and hopes that they will validate his testimony that he was not present at the time of the killing.

42. Arthur and Morris both confirmed Clewes's general outline of events. The former recalled meeting Clewes "some distance west of Leach's Springs" on the Cedar City road, but said, wrongly, that he and his companion were carrying a message prompted by Haslam's return from Salt Lake City. Haslam did not arrive in Cedar City until Sunday, September 13, 1857, two days after the crime. Morris also recalled bringing a message of peace, but described it as a verbal and general expression from Haight. According to the Morris statement, he and Arthur had heard "so many conflicting and terrible reports about what was going on at the Meadows, they agreed with each other that they would go out and see for themselves; but when they were about ready to start, Isaac C. Haight spoke to Morris and asked him to use his influence in the interest of peace, and do everything possible to avert the shedding of blood." Arthur and Morris statements, in Jenson, *Mountain Meadows Massacre* field notes. Finally, for additional evidence of the meeting of Clewes with Arthur and Morris as well as for the message of conciliation that the latter two men carried, see the commentary of John Wesley Williamson, in oral interview by Williamson of Corray D. Clark and Connie Clark Theodore, July 5, 1950, Salt Lake City, Utah, typescript, in author's possession.

you. You may be in time to save them.” They put spurs to their horses and rode as fast as they could while in my sight. I waved my hand after them and bid them God speed, but my heart sank within me a moment afterwards for I could not see how they could be in time. I arrived at Cedar about three o’clock and met Col. Dame from Parowan and others, likewise Haight. I was with them privately and told them the latest news. They were angry at each other but said nothing much in my presence but I could see it in them.⁴³ I went home again, but oh! what a horrible remembrance of those five days! They have been the bane of my existence, have kept me in the back ground and in the shade, have kept me out of society and away from people I should like to have associated with. Such has been my lot or strange fatality.

I will continue this statement further at my earliest opportunity and show how things went on up to my arrival in San Bernardino, eighteen years ago. I forward this by Col. Paris⁴⁴ for publication.

Joseph Clewes

43. Others recalled that a Dame-Haight altercation continued after the tragedy. For instance, see Abraham Cannon, *Diary*, 95, June 11, 1895, Perry Special Collections.

44. This courier was likely San Bernardino resident Frederick T. Perris. Perris was a former Salt Lake City merchant, who later allied himself with the spiritualistic reform movement of William S. Godbe and E. L. T. Harrison. See Ronald W. Walker, *Wayward Saints: The Godbeites and Brigham Young* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 101, 200.

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