

*Editor Salt Lake Tribune*

The Mormon leaders owe to the Mormon community a frank avowal of what they know about the Mountain Meadows Massacre. Here is a people charged with that great crime, the majority of whom knew no more about the deed, until after it was committed, than the people of New York; and to this day the ignorant masses of this community, living in the northern part of the Territory, believe it was the work of the Indians, so persistently have the Mormon leaders denied that they knew aught of the deed, only that they heard it was an Indian massacre. But facts are stubborn things and here are a few of them.

In the Fall of 1857, Utah was in open rebellion against the United States Government, and the prejudice was great against the Gentiles. To fan the flame of fanaticism a great religious reformation was going on in the Mormon Church, and judgment was being laid to the law and the word of the President and Bishops was supreme throughout the Territory. This company of emigrants happened to be passing through the Territory that fall on their way to California and, it being late in the season, concluded to go the Southern route. On their way south through the settlements they seem to have exasperated some of the Mormon people; reports said some of their party boasted they had helped to stir South and East in the States; others poisoned running streams of water, and one traveler had the audacity to call two of his bull team, old Brigham and Hober, so the story runs; and by the time they had got near Parowan and Cedar City the excitement was great, and it was evident that some move was on foot for their destruction. There is no doubt but a council was held at Parowan, where the fate of the emigrants was sealed, and it is well known that an express was sent to Brigham Young informing him of what was going on. What answer was given to that express by Brigham is not to be found out; some say it was to stop the lighting, others say it was to "spare the women and children." Again it is said when the express returned to the south the fight was over with, and his orders could not be heeded. After the massacre John D. Lee, the leading spirit in the horrid deed, came to Salt Lake City and gave a full account of the whole affair to his superiors. It is said Brigham kept his room for two days and wept bitterly for what had been done, but the deed was over with, and how could such a horrid crime be covered up? It must be denied, and laid to the Indians, for it would never do to have it known that the Mormons had anything to do with such a crime. In the fall of that year John D. Lee and Jesse Haight came up to Salt Lake City to attend the legislature, and while here, it is said, made a further report of all connected with the massacre to Brigham, and from that time until the present there are but few of the intelligent portion of the Mormon people but what have known that a portion of the Mormons living in the southern part of the Territory were connected with the Mountain Meadows massacre. But justice demands that charity should be extended to the poor ignorant men who were deluded and led into that horrid affair by those priestly leaders whom they had been taught to implicitly obey. God knows, the men who were urged into that massacre (and many against their will) have suffered enough since then, and feel to curse the priesthood and fanaticism that led them to such a crime. If Brigham Young years ago, when his word was law from one end of the Territory to the other, had caused the leaders in that crime to have been arrested and executed, he would have pleased every intelligent Mormon in the Territory, for they have all ashamed and bowed down that they had to bear the disgrace of a crime in which they had no part or sympathy; and now for the Mormon leaders to deny knowing about it, and the *Deseret News* and *Herald* to ignore the above facts, which are known to three-fourths of the Mormon people, is enough to consign them to utter contempt and obivion.

When that man stood at the Mountain Meadows monument, a few years ago, and read—"Vengeance is mine, and I will repay, saith the Lord," he little thought in so short a time that others would rule in the land of Zion, or he would not have turned from the monument and said,—"Vengeance is mine and I have repaid, saith the Lord."

OLD SETTLER.