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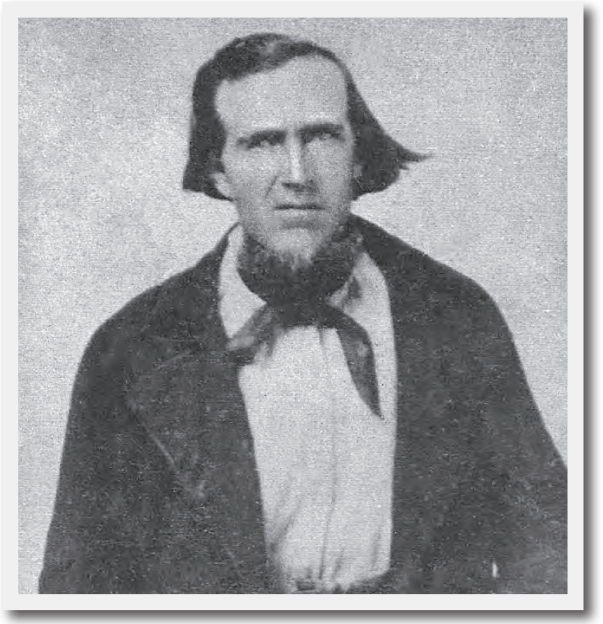

SLICKROCK MISSIONS:
JACOB HAMBLIN'S COMMUNITARIAN EXPEDITIONS ACROSS THE COLORADO

by Todd Compton

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THE JUANITA BROOKS LECTURE SERIES

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by Todd Compton, Ph.D

St. George Tabernacle
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Juanita Brooks was a professor at [then] Dixie College for many years and became a well-known author.

She is recognized, by scholarly consent, to be one of Utah's and Mormondom's most eminent historians. Her total honesty, unwavering courage, and perceptive interpretation of fact set more stringent standards of scholarship for her fellow historians to emulate. Dr. Obert C. and Grace Tanner had been lifelong friends of Mrs. Brooks and it was their wish to perpetuate her work through this lecture series. Dixie State University and the Brooks family express their thanks to the Tanner family.

Todd Compton (Photo by Byron Harward)

Todd Compton was born in Provo, Utah in 1952. He attended grade school in Alamosa, Colorado, and Jr. High and High School back in Provo. He graduated from Brigham Young University with his B.A. in English, then received his M.A. from BYU in Classics, and his Ph.D. from UCLA in Classics. He taught Classics for a year at the University of Southern California.

Soon after he received a fellowship and his work on Eliza R. Snow in the Huntington led to his first book, In Sacred Loneliness: the Plural Wives of Joseph Smith (Signature Books 1997). This won Best Book awards from the Mormon History Association and the John Whitmer Historical Association. In his next book, he edited the diaries of Helen Mar Kimball Whitney, one of the women in his former book. This book, A Widow's Tale: The 1884-1896 Diary of Helen Mar Whitney (Utah State University Press 2003), written partially with Charles Hatch, won Best Documentary book from the Mormon History Association. Three years later he returned to classics to publish Victim of The Muses: Poet as Scapegoat, Warrior and Hero (Harvard University Press/ Center for Hellenic Studies).

When his parents retired to St. George, they served as missionaries and led tours through the Jacob Hamblin home. This, combined with his longtime interest in Indian-Mormon relations, led to his doing research on Hamblin, and in 2013, he published A Frontier Life: Jacob Hamblin, Explorer and Indian Missionary (University of Utah Press). This won the inaugural Juanita Brooks Prize in Mormon Studies, the Best Biography Award from the Mormon History Association, the Best Biography Award from the John Whitmer Historical Association, the Evans Biography Award from the Mountain West Center for Regional Studies, and the Francis Armstrong Madsen Best Utah History Book Award from the Utah State Historical Society.

He currently lives in the Bay Area, California, where he works as an ADS Specialist in a law firm. He is married to Laura Hansen Compton, and has two sons, Zachary and Wesley.

Slickrock Missions:
Jacob Hamblin's Communitarian Expeditions across the Colorado

By Todd Compton

I am greatly honored, and a bit intimidated, to be invited to give this lecture. Anyone who works in Mormon history is deeply indebted to the courage of Juanita Brooks when she wrote her Mountain Meadows Massacre, but anyone who works in southern Utah history, as I did in my Jacob Hamblin biography, finds her looming like a giant. She edited three of the key primary documents related to Jacob Hamblin, the diaries of Thomas Brown, Thales Haskell, and John D. Lee; and her biographies of Lee and her grandfather, Dudley Leavitt, were also key reference works for me. Levi Peterson's biography of Brooks also presents an inspiring picture of her as an independent historian, which is the label that I work under, for better or worse.

I'm also intimidated by following in the footsteps of all the distinguished participants in the Annual Juanita Brooks Lecture Series — authors in this series who have made a deep impact on my biography of Jacob Hamblin are Charles Peterson, Leo Lyman, Robert Briggs, C. Gregory Crampton, Paul Reeve, and Hartt Wixom.

As I researched and wrote my biography of Hamblin, I became fascinated by the exploring expeditions he led — their social and spiritual makeup, their material culture, their purposes and accomplishments. I wondered what it was like to be a member of one of these companies. They are a unique and important phenomenon in Western history. Jacob Hamblin is not well known outside of Utah, but his explorations in the Grand Canyon area deserve to stand beside those of John Wesley Powell, for example. The communitarian, religious nature of these journeys sets them apart from explorations of Hamblin's contemporaries, such as John Fremont, Powell, and earlier, people such as Jedediah Smith and Lewis and Clark.

For those who haven't read my biography of Hamblin, I offer a short overview of these expeditions, which were at the same time

missions based on religious devotion and hair-raising adventures in the old southwest. He led these expeditions from southern Utah across the Colorado River, traveling into northern Arizona and often to the Hopi mesas, starting in 1858 and repeating the feat about every year for some twenty years. In his early expeditions, he crossed the Colorado at the Crossing of the Fathers, in Glen Canyon, about thirty-nine arduous miles east of Lee's Ferry.

In 1862 and 1863, Hamblin traveled south of St. George, down the Grand Wash, on the western end of the Grand Canyon, and crossed the Colorado there. Pearce's Ferry eventually was located at this place. Then he traveled east across mostly unknown country to the San Francisco Mountains, near modern Flagstaff, crossed the Little Colorado and arrived at the Hopi Mesas. In 1862 he returned via the Crossing of the Fathers, and thus his party became the first whites to circle the Grand Canyon.

In 1864 he became the first white to cross the Colorado at Lee's Ferry (the eastern beginning of the Grand Canyon), opening up the most important artery between Arizona and Utah for many years, an important event in southwestern history.

When John Wesley Powell came to northern Arizona and southern Utah beginning in 1869, Hamblin served as his guide and Indian interpreter. Hamblin, of course, had been exploring Grand Canyon country for more than a decade before Powell's arrival. In 1876, the Mormons were able to found successful communities on the Little Colorado in Arizona, and Jacob Hamblin and one of his wives moved to Arizona three years later.

These expeditions often took place in the winter, because it was easier to cross the Colorado then, due to low water levels in November and December. When Hamblin and his companions, in 1864, learned to cross the Colorado at Lee's Ferry with rafts and later boats and ferries, the winter timing of these expeditions was not as necessary.

The early trips started in the desert-like St. George Basin, which, as you know, can often be hot even in the winter. After passing miles of desert, these explorers refreshed themselves at the important watering spot, Pipe Spring, then traversed more weary miles in arid

country. After this they had to surmount Buckskin Mountain, modern Kaibab Plateau. So in a few days they exchanged the summery weather of Dixie for the bitter wintry temperatures of this high, forested formation, often having to plow through deep snow (sometimes drifts were waist high) at the same time they were searching for a path to follow. After descending the eastern slope of Kaibab Plateau, they stopped at Jacob's Pools (named after Hamblin), then, with the Vermilion Cliffs on their left, made their way across more desert territory down to modern Lee's Ferry, where the Paria empties into the Colorado. In 1858, Jacob and company looked wistfully at the other side of the Colorado, but couldn't see how they could cross the wide river there, and so took an Indian trail up the cliffs east of the Paria and made their way across high slickrock country to the Crossing of the Fathers, just barely in modern Utah. On the way they linked up with what they called the "Ute Trail" which led from central Utah to the Hopi Mesas. (By the way, these days you can easily visit the Crossing of the Fathers by hiring a submarine or diving bell; it is deep beneath Lake Powell, a casualty of the Glen Canyon Dam project.)

After making the difficult crossing at El Vado de los Padres, without ferries or boats, they were immediately faced with another imposing barrier, modern Navajo Canyon (which they called Cottonwood Canyon). They had to descend this by a slender, dangerous Indian trail with steep drop-offs, and then ascend it again. After this they passed through the Kaibito Plateau, a no man's land of canyons, washes, and plateaus. In this territory, they were always worried about where the next water hole would be, and whether it would have water. One major geographical feature before they came to the Hopi Mesas was Blue Canyon in the Moenkopi Wash, where Navajos killed George Smith Jr., the teenage son of apostle George A. Smith, in 1860.

When Hamblin and his friends learned how to cross the Colorado at Lee's Ferry, they would swim their horses or mules in the cold water by the side of a raft or ferry. They then surmounted Lee's Backbone and traveled south before climbing the Echo Cliffs and traveling east to the Hopi Mesas. In later trips they would come to Moenave and Moenkopi, where a few Mormons and friendly Hopis lived, near modern Tuba City, then follow the Moenkopi Wash east.

These expeditions were grueling, expensive, dangerous, and time-consuming. I want to emphasize: they were life-threatening. A short overview of the dangers:

Lack of water and food, both for humans and the all-important animals, was a constant worry. Often the companies ran out of food long before they arrived back at Mormon towns in southern Utah. The place names Badger Creek and Soap Creek, between Lee's Ferry and Jacob's Pools, derive from the 1858 trip, when his company was starving on their return from the Hopi Mesas. At the first creek Jacob Hamblin shot a badger, and when they camped at the next creek, Soap Creek, he cooked it. His bad cooking skills are memorialized for all time by this last name, for the badger, when cooked, turned into soap.

Another discomfort was sickness, which was especially uncomfortable if you had to continue riding a mule through the day, over frigid snowy mountains or deserts with their punishing heat, and had to sleep in wet blankets in rain or snow. Ammon Tenney wrote that in these trips across the Colorado, the men suffered, "Starvation, sickness, without clothing to cover our weak and worn bodies, disentery followed with Hemmorage." [1]

Even for healthy travelers, sometimes discomfort became pronounced on these expeditions, by modern standards. In one of Jacob's later journeys to Arizona, in 1881, family traditions tell us that the company was afflicted by lice, and at night they took off their underclothes and left them in water overnight to kill the bugs. The next morning they built fires to unfreeze the blocks of ice that contained their underclothing. [2]

While the Hamblin companies were fortunate to lose only one member to Indian attack, the above-mentioned George Smith Jr. in 1860, Indians were a constant threat in the southwest. The Navajos were fighting a war with the U.S. government in New Mexico and eastern Arizona in the 1850s and 1860s, and were generally not sympathetic to any whites, which is part of the reason Smith Jr. was killed.

Another danger was narrow trails in very steep canyons, which required the men to dismount from their horses and mules and walk

ahead of them. If a horse or mule fell off a cliff, which sometimes happened, it was a serious loss for the owner of the animal, but it might also be a disaster for the logistics of the company, as the animal might be carrying important supplies, such as the company's cooking utensils.[3]

Crossing the Colorado and other rivers was also dangerous. In 1876, while Jacob and a number of church leaders were crossing the Colorado on a ferry, it capsized and Bishop Lorenzo Roundy was drowned. Both Jacob Hamblin and First Presidency counselor Daniel H. Wells had to swim through freezing water to safety. (Roundy, a good swimmer, apparently cramped in the ice-cold water.) John R. Young took a chill, which turned into a serious illness after helping to ferry a large company across the Colorado in 1869.

Another constant psychological strain was not knowing exactly the route to take. Thales Haskell wrote, in a non-romantic poem about exploring:

This thing they call exploring
Looks pretty in a book
But if you follow it up, boys
You'll wear a disappointed look
For the country is wilderness
There are no Indian signs
We have no trail nor guide, boys
We have to go it blind.[4]

This was not always true. Sometimes they did have Indian trails and Indian guides. But sometimes they did not. In the epic 1862 and 1863 trips in which they traveled east across northern Arizona, they often did not have Indian guides, though they would ask local Indians about paths and possible water holes as they traveled. However, these instructions were often confusing and unproductive, and the local Indians sometimes did not speak Paiute. And a water hole might be unexpectedly dry at certain times of the year.

Given the enormous difficulties of these expeditions, we may well ask: why did they take place? Why were they so important?

Exploration as mission

First, we should emphasize that they were missions. They were examples of whites proselyting Indians in the Old West. Jacob Hamblin had become somewhat disillusioned with the Paiutes in southern Utah, so when he and other Mormon leaders heard stories of Indians living in towns, unlike most Native Americans, who were migratory, they had high hopes that these Hopis would be the Indians who would join the church en masse and live with Mormons in Utah. Later, Hamblin and other Mormons also became interested in proselyting Navajos. (I should add that, despite some baptisms of individual Hopis and Navajos, these missions were not generally successful as proselyting missions. The cultural gulf between Mormons and these southwestern Indians was too vast.[5])

If we ask how people were called to participate in these exploration jaunts, the answer shows us their "mission" aspects. The November 1862 to January 1863 expedition will serve as a representative example. This was an especially difficult trip, in which the company circled the Grand Canyon. Church leaders did not ask for volunteers. Instead, in a Stake Conference held at the St. George Bowery on October 26, 1862, Jacob Hamblin spoke on the Hopi mission, and was followed by apostle Orson Pratt, who "stated that he wanted 20 or 25 men to accompany Brother Hamblin to the Moqui villages and to be ready to start on the 17th of November." The conference attendees got an hour or so to ponder uneasily about such a call, and when they returned to the afternoon session of conference, twenty men heard their names called out as "Indian Missionaries" to visit the Hopi mesas, by a new route.[6] This was a typical method of calling men on missions in the LDS church at that time, names read out in a church meeting.[7] Here, the call came directly from an apostle.

Sometimes the participants of these expeditions would be blessed and set apart, as took place in the 1869 mission.[8]

Second, these expeditions had the aim of opening up territory for possible Mormon settlements. Brigham Young the colonizer was always interested in extending the Mormon presence further south, and exploration was the necessary prelude to colonization. In fact,

explorers often became the first colonizers, and Jacob Hamblin was a founder of Santa Clara and Kanab in southern Utah. Once again, we should remember that, for the Mormons, colonizing was a mission. Charles Peterson, in his wonderful book Take Up Your Mission, has shown how colonizing the Little Colorado area in northern Arizona was a religious calling for those early settlers.[9] Jacob Hamblin, in the process of getting a settlement going in Kanab, wrote, "Started for the Canab Mission."[10] When he founded Santa Clara, he was part of the Southern Indian Mission.[11] So exploration leading to Mormon settlements was a mission as much as the settlements were.

We should note that the Utah War of 1857 and 1858 had an impact on both these aims. First, Mormons hoped that Indians would be allies with them against the invading U.S. government. Second, Brigham Young was seeking places of refuge should the Mormons have to leave Utah. Even after the formal close of the war, Young was looking for places that the Mormons might migrate to, and Arizona and Mexico in the south were places he was interested in for that reason. Both these factors gave an urgency to exploration, opening up trails and roads south, and settling Mormon towns in Arizona.[12]

I should also note that I argue in my book that the Indian missions and the colonization missions were often in conflict. Mormon colonies such as St. George often disrupted the ecological systems that local Indians depended upon, and led them to near-starvation and death by diseases introduced by whites.

Blankets, flour, mules and guns: material culture

As I researched my book, I became interested in the nuts and bolts of these expeditions, their material culture. In the same document that describes the calling of twenty men on the 1862 mission to the Hopis, we are fortunate to find a list of things each missionary would need. I will quote, then comment. First, food is listed:

- 75 pounds of flour or hard bread.
- 12 " " dried beef or bacon.
- 12 " " beans
- 1 " " salt.

Flour and bread is the staple. Meat, beans and salt add variety to the diet. Next we turn to transportation:

- 1 Riding Animal
- 1 Pack " with pack saddle
- 1 Lasso for each animal
- 1 Pair of hobbles for each animal.

The riding animal would often be a horse, and the pack animal a mule, though sometimes both animals would be mules. [13] Jacob Hamblin generally rode a mule. [14] The mule was a superb pack animal and could go farther on little water and forage than a horse. In addition, it was a sure-footed, intelligent traveler on difficult, steep trails. [15] In many of Hamblin's expeditions, horses simply dropped dead, of exhaustion, malnutrition or dehydration. In the trip circling the Grand Canyon in 1862, the company lost eight horses before they reached the Colorado on the way home. [16] However, mules tended to survive.

Unfortunately, mules were also notoriously bad-tempered. Their owners often named them Satan or Devil, following the principle of truth in advertising, I think. [17] The Thales Haskell diary is full of the misdeeds of mules. For example, one mule "seemed to take great delight in all kinds of mulish deviltry — for instance Jumping stifleged — turning his pack — geting tangled in the riging &c." However, Hamblin and his companions, experienced frontiersmen, became expert at packing and dealing with these recalcitrant animals. One of the curious things that struck me about these expeditions was the frequency with which mules and horses disappeared during the night. Some men would have to be sent back to find them in the morning, delaying the expedition by hours, or splitting the group in dangerous ways. Sometimes men got lost looking for animals, and would have to shoot guns to find each other. Total greenhorn that I was, I wondered why these men, obviously expert horsemen, couldn't tie up their animals adequately at night. But I was told by experienced riders that often horses and mules had to graze at night, and you had to give them some limited liberty to find food — thus the hobbles, which horses and mules sometimes broke. [18]

One of the comic moments in the expeditions took place in 1859, when the company brought along two oxen, a male and a female, to use as food. At Jacob's Pools, they slaughtered the female, and after this the male understandably seemed out of sorts and uncooperative. When they came to the Crossing of the Fathers, the ox was not inclined to cross the wide Colorado, stopped halfway across, and would not budge. The missionaries had to let him return to the northwest shore. Two missionaries were then sent back to bring him across, but with no luck. The next day, Thales Haskell and William Young again made the difficult crossing back to the other side of the river, constructed a pole with a spike, and were able to drive the animal to the shore south of the Colorado.

Everyone sighed with relief. The next morning, they had breakfast, packed, and started south, but after they had covered a mile, someone noticed that the ox was not with them. They returned to the Colorado and found that it had crossed back to the other side of the river.19 Dealing with animals, keeping them fed, packing them properly, keeping them from wandering in the night, was a constant challenge.

Back to the list. Next come eating implements:

- 1 Canteen (at least two quarts)
- 1 Cup
- 1 Knife and scabbard
- 1 Tin plate.

The canteen was a crucial implement for men travelling across desert country. One wonders how they got by without forks and spoons. Then, we turn to weaponry:

- 1 Revolver or light Rifle

Both, if possible, with at least 12 rounds of ammunition and much more as convenient. A gun would be used for hunting, for defense, for communication, and also for recreation.[20] Next on the list:

- A comfortable supply of blankets

In modern overnight hikes, we usually pack reliable tents and light, warm, sleeping bags, miracles of modern construction. In 1862 southern Utah, travelers were not so lucky. Imagine what it was like

sleeping in the rain with only blankets to protect you. We know from other sources that tents were not totally unknown to the missionaries, but blankets were the usual night protection. Jacob Hamblin once wrote, of his mission to the Dixie Basin:

> *I hav sufferd many privations since I started on this Micion. Sometimes I step on the scorchig sand of the Desart at other times on the snow capt. Mts. The Mother Earth was our bead [bed]. The canopy of Heaven was our covering except a few blankets.* [21]

In 1872, photographer Jack Hillers, on a trip to the Hopi mesas with Hamblin, wrote, "Had supper and rolled up in blankets." [22]

Here is a little vignette of camp life: One day in January 1870, Jacob and some Paiutes traveled twenty miles, to the foot of what Jacob called "Purple Mountain." It began to rain, the rain turned to snow, and Jacob endured "a cold wet sleeples night." When dawn broke, he woke up drenched and chilled through. "It was with mutch dificulty that I could get warm," he wrote. To add insult to injury, the horses had disappeared and had to be tracked down. [23]

To return to the final entry on this list, we now receive our reminder that nineteenth-century LDS attitudes toward the Word of Wisdom were significantly different from twentieth-century LDS attitudes. Members of the expedition were counseled to bring:

Tea, Sugar, Coffee, molasses and as many comforts as each person may deem necessary to make himself comfortable.

This is not a diary recording secret consumption of tea and coffee. This was a list prepared for missionaries. Chewing tobacco was also a prized commodity on these trips, [24] and the men sometimes smoked pipes and cigarettes. [25] I suspect that this practice of the Word of Wisdom was typical of Dixie frontiersmen, and was not simply a characteristic of Indian missionaries.

This list is a remarkable document giving clues to the quality of life in the Hamblin expeditions: food and drink (subsistence and luxury), weapons, sleeping arrangements, riding and pack animals with gear, eating and drinking implements.

We should take a moment to reflect: getting this much material together, as well as two horses or mules, would be very expensive. In addition, the Indian/exploring missionaries had to leave their occupations for a couple months, had to rely on family members and friends to do their daily jobs, such as farming and ranching, and sometimes had to rely on community members to take care of their families.

It is not clear how these trips were financed. Many explorers in the west had government funding; Jacob Hamblin, for the most part, did not. There is some evidence that the burden fell mainly on the individual missionaries. In Jacob's 1854 diaries we do find entries where church members donated to him as a missionary as he traveled through Utah, though this is pre-1858 evidence.[26] Brigham Young and apostle Erastus Snow sometimes ordered these missions; it is possible that they contributed to the expenses, but I have no evidence at this point that they did. More research needs to be done on this topic.

"gasing smoking spinning yarns about old times": Social Culture

Now I would like to turn to social culture. First of all, who were the participants of these expeditions? The great majority were LDS men from towns in southern Utah. However, there were some minorities.

Second, sometimes Indians — Paiutes, Hopis, and Navajos — were members of these companies. Sometimes they served as guides, taking the companies along Indian trails that were well-known to the Native Americans. The Paiute Naraguats, guide for Jacob's first trip across the Colorado in 1858, is the outstanding example. So we should always remember the obvious truth that white explorers were only explorers in the sense of reporting on territory that was new to other whites. And they only "discovered" this new territory because they had Indians to guide them through it. We call the crossing of the Colorado on the upper Glen Canyon the "Crossing of the Fathers," referring to Fathers Escalante and Domínguez, who came here in 1776. This was certainly a major feat for these explorers. But it was a trail that Jacob Hamblin knew as the "Ute Trail" that led to that crossing, and the Paiute Naraguats led Hamblin along that trail and over the Colorado there.

Sometimes the Indians had converted to Mormonism and were coming on these expeditions as missionaries. Among these were Albert, Jacob Hamblin's adopted Shoshoni son; and Tutsegabits, the headman of the Santa Clara Paiutes, who was a solid ally of the Mormons in southern Utah. The Kanab Paiute headman Chuarumpeak is probably also in this category.

During the Navajo-Mormon Wars, in the 1869 expedition, there were twenty-one Caucasian Mormons and twenty-one Paiutes who traveled to the Hopi mesas. Typically, we have the names of all the whites, but only five names of the Indians: Panamitow (a son of Tutsegabits), the well-known Cedar City headman Tau-gu (Coal Creek John), Quantuquackets, a Shivwit, Mannaradet, and an Indian known as George. Sometimes Indians, also converts, were coming from the other direction, as visitors to Utah. Hopis such as Tuuvi, his wife, Talasnimki, and Lye, who came to Utah then returned to Hopi country, are examples.

Sometimes groups of friendly Indians simply fell in with a Hamblin company, as was the case when the Navajo Koneco, with a group of Navajos, traveled to Utah with Hamblin in 1871. The Navajos were probably on a trading expedition. Later, Hamblin joined a group of Navajos led by Hastele (possibly Ganado Mucho, the headman of western Navajo territory) and non-Mormons on an important negotiation trip to Fort Defiance in eastern Arizona in the wake of the Grass Valley killings in 1874.

John Steele, diarist of the epic 1862 trip circling the Grand Canyon, was not a fan of Jacob Hamblin's leadership in this expedition. One of his criticisms was that Jacob would waste food by sharing it with Indians along the way. Of course, preserving links of hospitality and friendship with Indians on these routes could also be seen as an act of practical intelligence.

It is striking how little danger from Indians Jacob Hamblin and his men faced in these expeditions (with the exception of the tragic 1860 trip in which George Smith Jr. was killed by Navajos). In fact, when traveling through unfamiliar country, when the whites needed guidance to find water holes, or needed food, Jacob Hamblin would sometimes simply shoot a gun to attract Indian attention. Paiutes

would show up and direct the whites to nearby water sources. Sometimes he would make smoke signals.[27] These good relations with Indians sometimes saved the companies from near-starvation and extreme suffering by thirst.

All the members of these exploring expeditions were male, except for one trip: that same 1860 expedition, in which Hamblin and Ira Hatch brought their Indian wives, Eliza and Sarah, with them. Militant Navajos demanded that the whites give up these women to them, especially since Sarah Hatch was half Navajo, and the Mormons almost had to use violence to defend these women. Perhaps this inclined Hamblin and other Mormon leaders never to bring women on these trips again. Tuuvi's wife Talasnimki was another woman on these expeditions, but she and her husband traveled the opposite direction, from Arizona to Utah, before returning to Hopi territory.

Though these expeditions were overwhelmingly Mormon, a few non-Mormon names can be found in their rosters. Among them were John Wesley Powell and his men, including the young artist and later a well-known author, Frederick Dellenbaugh, and the famous Western photographer Jack Hillers. Another Gentile odd man out among the missionary explorers was Lewis Greeley, the nephew of famous journalist and politician Horace Greeley. Lewis showed up to take part in the difficult 1863 expedition, in which the company made an unexpected descent on a spectacularly dangerous and exhausting path into Havasupai Canyon, and on the way back had many of their horses and mules stolen by Hualapai Indians.

How did these missionaries interrelate on these expeditions? First, we should mention that generally they had great camaraderie and humor, as is abundantly evidenced in the delightful 1859 expedition diary of Thales Haskell. They called each other "the boys". One place where group entertainment and bonding took place was around the campfire, at night. Jacob Hamblin, known as reticent and silent, by some accounts, would talk at length around the campfire. "Jacob whiled away the evening 'yarning,'" wrote Walter Clement Powell on October 17, 1872. And two days later, he wrote, "Jacob entertained us with a history of his past life."[28] I wish I could have been there.

Thales Haskell described one campfire evening spent "gasing smoking spinning yarns about old times." [29]

These were men of rough humor, at times. When schoolteacher Marion Shelton got too close to the fire one night suddenly "br Shelton's pants caught fire causing him to jump and dance in such a manner as to set the rest of us into a roar of laughter," wrote Haskell. Unfortunately, Shelton burned his hands putting out the fire, which tempered the merriment somewhat.

We have two anecdotes about shooting contests in our sources, which leads me to believe that they were a frequent form of entertainment and friendly competition when the men had free time. The first anecdote is the well-known story about the naming of Pipe Spring. In the 1858 expedition, when Bill Hamblin (nicknamed Gunlock for his skill with guns) and Thomas and Dudley Leavitt were having a shooting contest, and couldn't hit a silk handkerchief they were using as a target, James Davis laughed and said, "You couldn't hit my hat twenty-five yards away." The shooters declined this target, but offered to shoot a pipe Davis was smoking at the time. Bill Hamblin took the pipe, set it up, walked twenty-five paces, shot and "did tear the entire back of the pipe out without breaking the edges of the mouth." [30]

The other anecdote, from the 1869 expedition, is a similar story of men shooting at a casually chosen target, but it almost ends tragically. It shows the close bonds of love shared by these men. As they relaxed on a day off in the Kanab fort, John R. Young proposed a marksmanship contest with Mormon Battalion veteran William Bailey Maxwell, known as a skilled shooter. Maxwell "pointed to a small knot in the 2nd bottom Log of a Cabbin in the North West Corner of the fort," which Maxwell and Young understood was vacant. John R. called out twice to make sure no one was in the cabin, and when he received no reply, he and Maxwell fired, hitting the wood just above and below the knot. Then Ira Hatch immediately emerged from the house, "supporting Thales Haskell, & called for healp, stateing that Haskell [was] shot in the head." Hatch and Haskell, who had been standing guard all night, had gone unnoticed into the house to sleep, and evidently were in such a deep slumber that they had not heard Young's call.

Haskell now presented a frightening sight: blood was streaming from his right temple, and his hair was clotted with crimson. Fortunately, however, as the missionaries examined him carefully, they found that he had only suffered a flesh wound. [31]

George Fawcett, in a memoir, wrote: "Thales, jumping up, said to Ira Hatch, who was with him, 'I am shot.' After finding the ball in the sleeve of his coat he lit a cigarette and felt much better. John R. Young cried like a child he felt so bad. But he [Haskell] took good care of the wound and it got well." [32] This must have been one of the more startling wake-up calls in Thales Haskell's experience as an Indian missionary. My wife, after reading this story, said, "They're as bad as boy scouts." Sometimes they were.

Another thing these men liked to do around the campfire was sing hymns. Music was sometimes used to forge bonds with Indians and non-Mormons. [33]

Despite the general good relations these men shared, they were often under severe pressures of danger, sickness and privation, and these could cause tensions in a company. In the 1859 mission, when the group had run out of water traveling through the desert with its punishing sun, Haskell's journal shows them becoming snappish with each other. "Got off our course and rather bewildered. As it was very hot some of us began to get very thirsty. Others got to quoting Shakespeare when one of the boys remarked that he wished Shakespeare was in hell and he was with him if they had such a commodity as water there. I write this to show how savage men feel traveling in the sand without water." But good feelings returned when they found water and stopped to camp. "The water and the idea of finding a spring where we could water our animals cheered us up amazingly and we pakt up and started up the kanion in the best of spirits." [34]

In fact, in the 1862 expedition, Mosiah Hancock reported that John Steele had a dispute with Tom Walker about flour in a pack, when the company was starving, and the men almost drew guns on each other. Hancock wrestled Walker to the ground, James Andrus tackled Steele, and violence was averted. [35]

Though there were some repeat missionaries, such as Ira Hatch, Andrew Gibbons, Samuel Knight, Ammon Tenney, Frank Hamblin and Thales Haskell, many participants changed with every trip, and you could never predict the interpersonal chemistry of these men from expedition to expedition.

Individual and collective accomplishment in the West

I now turn to interpretation.

In 1893, Frederick Jackson Turner delivered his seminal paper, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," which went on to have an enormous impact on American historiography.[36] In it, Turner argued that the experience of the frontier shaped a characteristic American character. As Americans with European background moved west into "free" territory, this frontier experience developed the American character, which tended to grow by surmounting the difficulties of exploring and living in territory on the frontier, by developing civilization to replace "savagery." I would like to focus on one aspect of Turner's interpretation: he dwelt on the individualism of men on the frontier, and wrote, "the frontier is productive of individualism. Complex society is precipitated by the wilderness into a kind of primitive organization based on the family. The tendency is anti-social."[37] One might see the exploration of the West, with its individualistic mountain men and fur trappers, in this light.

In recent years, however, a movement called the New Western History, led by historians such as Richard White, Patricia Limerick and Donald Worster, has attempted a systematic dismantling of just about every point in Turner's thesis. The lands on the frontier were not "free" — they were occupied by Indians, and the European movement west was a conquest, not a character-building experience that resulted from surmounting difficulties presented by unoccupied land. To turn to the theme of individualism, Richard White, in his survey, "It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own": A New History of the American West, rejected the mythology that saw the West as standing for "independence, self-reliance, and individualism." As he examined the exploration of the west, White noted that much of the most important exploration was done by the federal government, not by

independents and loners.[38] He started by showing that the Lewis and Clark expedition, funded and carefully planned by President Jefferson and the federal government, offered the world a great deal of information about the American west, while explorers who tended to work on their own, such as mountain man John Colter, who discovered Yellowstone, may have had adventures and travelled widely, but did not contribute substantially to a wider knowledge of the west.[39]

So, in the broader context of Western history, I place these Hamblin expeditions in the category of collective explorations, following Richard White's interpretation of western experience. They were group expeditions, often organized by religio-political leaders, and manned from local communities in southern Utah. Jacob Hamblin could go on solo missions occasionally, but the important expeditions across the Colorado were always collective accomplishments. He himself sometimes pointed to the value and importance of his fellow missionary-travelers, such as Thales Haskell, Ammon Tenney, Ira Hatch, Dudley Leavitt, and Andrew Gibbons.[40] They were his irreplaceable supports on these forays into unknown, unmapped, and often inhospitable places. While we sometimes say that Jacob Hamblin discovered Lee's Ferry, for example, he generally made such discoveries as part of a group. When the expeditions returned home, the participants made formal and informal reports to the church leaders who had sent them.

Unlike the explorations funded and guided by the federal government, Hamblin's expeditions were examples of religious communitarian accomplishment.[41] Generally, they combined exploration with straightforward missions to Native Americans. Often LDS church leaders, from Brigham Young to local apostle Erastus Snow, ordered these journeys, just as Jefferson had sent Lewis and Clark off on their expedition. While we might at first view them as adventures — and they were adventures, that tested the men's endurance and basic survival skills to their limits — in addition they were communitarian accomplishments, like a Mormon community in southern Utah building a tabernacle or a dam or a road.

Mormonism's communitarian heritage is a complex story. In southern Utah and the settlements on the Little Colorado in Arizona,

local settlers, directed by Brigham Young, made heroic attempts to implement the United Order, in which participants were expected to donate all of their property to the common good.[42] But none of the United Orders were ever successful over the long term.

Community support for the Indian missions also has a complex history. As I mentioned above, these trips were expensive for the participants. The bishop's storehouse may have contributed; and gifts from church members may have helped.[43] But I suspect that the participants of these expeditions paid for them largely on their own. This was a heavy burden for these men. And sometimes the Indian missionary-explorers, especially the men who were called on these missions frequently, such as Hamblin, Ammon Tenney, Thales Haskell and Ira Hatch, felt that they were not adequately supported by their communities. In 1854, Jacob Hamblin wrote, "I. hav many times had my feelings hurt to see the cold indiference with which the Elders hav ben treted by some of the Southern Setlers."[44]

When Tenney was traveling to Fort Defiance with Jacob Hamblin in 1870 to protect his fellow Saints from Navajo raids (and his services as a Spanish speaker were a crucial part of the 1870 treaty's accomplishment), his family was living in the fort at Kanab, in a single room with no chimney, and thus had no heat or fire for cooking. Bishop Levi Stewart, to his credit, saw that Tenney's family needed help and arranged for a few men to put a chimney in their room. However, when Ammon returned, he later wrote, "Brother Farnsworth called on me for his Pay before I had been Home 24 Hours, notwithstanding I had then been gone three months & made a journey of 2000 Miles, & furnished My self, every-thing — all for the People."45 This last statement is evidence that the burden of financing these missions often fell on the individual participants.

Mosiah Hancock, in the 1862 expedition, supports this picture. He wrote:

> *In October the 25th I received a call to go with Jacob Hamblin to the Moquis Indians James Lewis Being the Presiding High Priest don all he could to help me to get off so by the 29 of Oct I was in St. George with one pack and one riding animal with*

> *100 lbs flower some crackers and other food to last me in my journey I tok the flower from my own Store the People Promised to pay me the flower back but not a pound was ever brought to my place except 13 lb brought in by Allen Stout.* [46]

He did not get anywhere near the financial support he had been promised.

Jacob Hamblin, when the United Order was being attempted in the Little Colorado communities in Arizona, said, in a church talk, that he "had experienced some 40 years in a frontier life and since he had been baptized had always been in the U.O. [United Order] in fact but not in form." [47] Thales Haskell, when Hamblin asked him to stay at the Hopi mesas for a year during the 1859 expedition, answered the call with his customary loyalty. But it was a difficult assignment to accept, as he had been married recently, and he had been looking forward to returning to Utah as quickly as possible. After the main group left the mesas, Haskell wrote,

> *Slowly and sorrowfully I wended my way back to the village. Such a feeling of utter loneliness I never experienced before, for search the wide world over I do not believe a more bleak, lonesome, heart sickening place could be found on the earth where human beings dwell. And here we are, Bro Shelton and me, with strange Indians who talk a strange language, situated far from the busy haunts of men. Who but Mormons would do it? Who but Mormons could do it? Make up their minds to stay here a year!* [48]

While Haskell might have nodded to similar difficulties faced by Catholic and Protestant missionaries to the Indians in early American history, his statement is a moving reflection of the religious nature of these early explorations from southern Utah across the Colorado. Jacob Hamblin's communitarian expeditions across the Colorado are some of the important accomplishments in southwestern history.

Endnotes

1 Ammon Tenney, "Account of Travels in S. Utah and Ariz.," 3 pp. typescript. Huntington Library, San Marino, California. Todd Compton, *A Frontier Life: Jacob Hamblin, Explorer and Indian Missionary* (SLC: University of Utah Press, 2013), 131. (Hereafter, AFL.) Throughout this paper readers should consult my biography for more extensive documentation.

2 Nina Kelly and Alica Wilcox Lee, *Nutrioso and Her Neighbors: The History of a Pioneer Town.* (Flagstaff, AZ: by the authors, 2000), 79–80.

3 An example in C. Gregory Crampton, ed., "Military Reconnaissance in Southern Utah, 1866," *Utah Historical Quarterly 32* (Spring 1964): 153.

4 Juanita Brooks, ed., "Journal of Thales W. Haskell," *Utah Historical Quarterly 12.1–2* (Jan.–Apr. 1944): 68–98, 68.

5 See Charles Peterson, "Jacob Hamblin, Apostle to the Lamanites and the Indian Mission," *Journal of Mormon History 2* (1975): 21–34 and "The Hopis and the Mormons, 1858–1873," *Utah Historical Quarterly 39.2* (spring 1971): 179–93.

6 *Journal History*, Oct. 26, 1862.

7 For example, "The First Mission Call," in Kate Carter, cp., *Our Pioneer Heritage*, 20 vols. (SLC: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1958–1977), 18:99–106.

8 Anonymous diarist, in Jacob Hamblin diary, Oct. 3, 1869, MSS 770, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library (hereafter Lee Library). Horatio Morrill diary, 1869 mission to Hopi Mesas, Ms B 77, *Utah State Historical Society.* The first expedition across the Colorado was preceded by "a special missionary meeting," "Journal History," LDS Church History Library, September 26, 1858.

9 Charles S. Peterson, *Take Up Your Mission: Mormon Colonizing along the Little Colorado River, 1870–1900* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1973), especially 38–62.

10 Jacob Hamblin diary, July 19, 1869, MSS 770, Lee Library. "Kanab and Pahreah Indian Mission", in "Pahreah Ward History," LDS Church History Library (hereafter, CHL).

11 Juanita Brooks, ed., "Journal of the Southern Indian Mission: Diary of Thomas D. Brown," *Western Text Society, no. 4* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1973), 2, 7.

12 John Alton Peterson, "The Last Bastion: Pipe Springs and Its Place in Brigham Young's 'Great Game.'" Talk given at Mormon History Association Conference, St. George, Utah, May 27, 2011. Clifford L. Stout, *Search for Sanctuary: Brigham Young and the White Mountain Expedition* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1984). See also *AFL* 308, 365.

13 Taylor Crosby had a pack mule and a "riding mule," Thales Haskell diary, Oct. 12, 1859 (Brooks 72).

14 *AFL* 158.

15 *AFL* 158, citing Floyd F. Ewing, Jr., "The Mule as a Factor in the Development of the Southwest," *Arizona and the West 5.4* (winter 1963): 315–326.

16 *AFL* 218.

17 *AFL* 576n155; Thales Haskell diary Oct. 12, 1859 (*Brooks* 72).

18 Personal communication, Byron L. Harward, proprietor of West Fields Ranch in Payson.

19 Thales Haskell diary, Nov. 2, 1859 (*Brooks* 77–79).

20 See below, my treatment of shooting contests.

21 Jacob Hamblin, diary, Dec. 17, 1854, MS 1951, CHL; *AFL* 67; 360.

22 Jack Hillers diary, Oct. 19, 1872, in Don D. Fowler, ed., *Photographed All the Best Scenery? Jack Hillers's Diary of the Powell Expeditions, 1871–1875* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1972), 459–60.

23 Jacob Hamblin diary, Jan. 15, 1870, MSS 770, Lee Library.

24 Thales Haskell diary, Oct. 29, 1859 (*Brooks* 76).

25 See below on shooting contests.

26 See below.

27 Thales Haskell diary, Oct. 31, 1859 (Brooks 77).

28 Charles Kelly, ed., "Journal of Walter Clement Powell," *Utah Historical Quarterly 16/17* (Jan., Apr., Jul., Oct. 1948 and 1949): 257–478.

29 Oct. 17, 1859 (Brooks 73).

30 Tenney, "Accounts of Travel."

31 Anonymous diarist, in Jacob Hamblin diary, Oct. 3, 1869, Lee Library, MSS 770.

32 Fawcett, "Memoirs," 11.

33 Thales Haskell diary, Nov. 3, 1859 (Brooks 79). AFL 342–43.

34 Oct. 21, 1859 (*Brooks* 74).

35 Autobiography of Mosiah Lyman Hancock (typescript in author's possession), p. 63.

36 Available in Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1921), 1–38.

37 "The Significance of the Frontier," 30.

38 Richard White, "It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own": *A New History of the American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 57.

39 White, "It's Your Misfortune," 121.

40 After reading Little's biography/ghost-autobiography of him, Hamblin reportedly objected that it gave him too much credit, which should have been shared with his friends. William Palmer, "Iron County, Cradle of Southern Utah," (1926), p. 20. In the William Palmer collection, box 22, fd 1, Special Collections, Sherratt Library, Southern Utah University.

41 With a few minor exceptions, Hamblin had no funding from the federal government. The exceptions were a few hundred dollars in the 1858 expedition, given because Hamblin had been enlisted to find surviving children of the Mountain Meadows Massacre (*AFL* 132), and the expeditions in which Hamblin guided John Wesley Powell, and thus was Powell's employee. (*AFL* 305–23.)

42 Leonard J. Arrington, Feramorz Y. Fox, and Dean L. May, *Building the City of God: Community & Cooperation among the Mormons*, 2nd ed. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992).

43 For example, Elijah Elmer, in Cedar City, donated three chairs to the new Santa Clara settlement/Indian mission. Jacob Hamblin journal, May 6, 1855, MS 1951, CHL. Brooks, Journal of the Southern Indian Mission, Apr. 29, 1854, pp. 14–15, lists contributions to the mission from Parowan residents.

44 Jacob Hamblin, Journal, Dec. 17, 1854, MS 1951, CHL.

45 Ammon Tenney to Pearl Udall Nelson, July 12, 1915, pp. 6–8, Ammon Tenney Collection, Arizona Historical Society, Tucson.

46 Mosiah Hancock, Autobiography, holograph, MS 570, CHL.

47 "Minutes of the Little Colorado Stake [1879–1886]," Jan. 27, 1878, pp. 14–16, typescript by George S. Tanner. University of Arizona Library, Special Collections.

48 Thales Haskell diary, Nov. 17, 1859 (*Brooks* 82).