The Battle of Fort Utah, 1850, described in Ute Picture Writing at Rock Creek.

Interpretation based on Black Hawk Wars, Historical Documentation and Ute Tribal Spokespersons.

Figure 1. Petroglyph of the Fort Utah attack on Timpanogo camp of 1850.

Introduction

In the spring of 2025, I was approached by Craig and Rojean Addley of Miton, Utah, to interpret a historic petroglyph located near the confluence of the Duchene River and Rock Creek near Miton, Utah (Figure 1). They visited it decades ago and had always wondered if it was a map. Both had visited many sites in the region with Lavan Martineau in the 1980s and were familiar with Ute picture writing and sign language symbols.

As I viewed the photographs they showed me, I recognized the symbols for knife, cannon fire, bad, starving, grave, and burial along with body gestures of violence and death. Through a literature search of regional battles between the Ute Indians and Mormon settlers of the 1800s, I determined that this panel might be describing the Fort Utah Battle of 1850. A full description and list of sources appear in *Utah's Black Hawk Wars*, by John Alton Peterson, (1998), and *Founding Fort Utah* by D. Robert Carter (2003), which confirmed my suspicions. I turned to tribal historian Forrest Cuch of the Northern Ute tribe, editor of *A History of Utah's Native*

Americans, (2000) for his opinion. He pointed out some conflicting accounts of events and tribal identity in the primary sources. These are beyond the scope of this report to debate. However, the events of the battle are accurately portrayed in the Ute picture writing, presented here.

,A Mormon descendant, Craig Addley and I organized a field trip to visit the site along with Forrest Cuch and archaeologist Nancy Hewitt. I examined and photographed the panel for further study with instructions from Forrest to present the truth about what really happened from the Ute perspective. He said that only from the point of knowing the truth we can begin the healing process. At this petroglyph site we all did a healing ceremony with tobacco, sending the smoke to the four directions with hopes and prayers from each of us that the truth represented in this panel will bring closure to the trauma and allow the healing process to begin.

Location Map

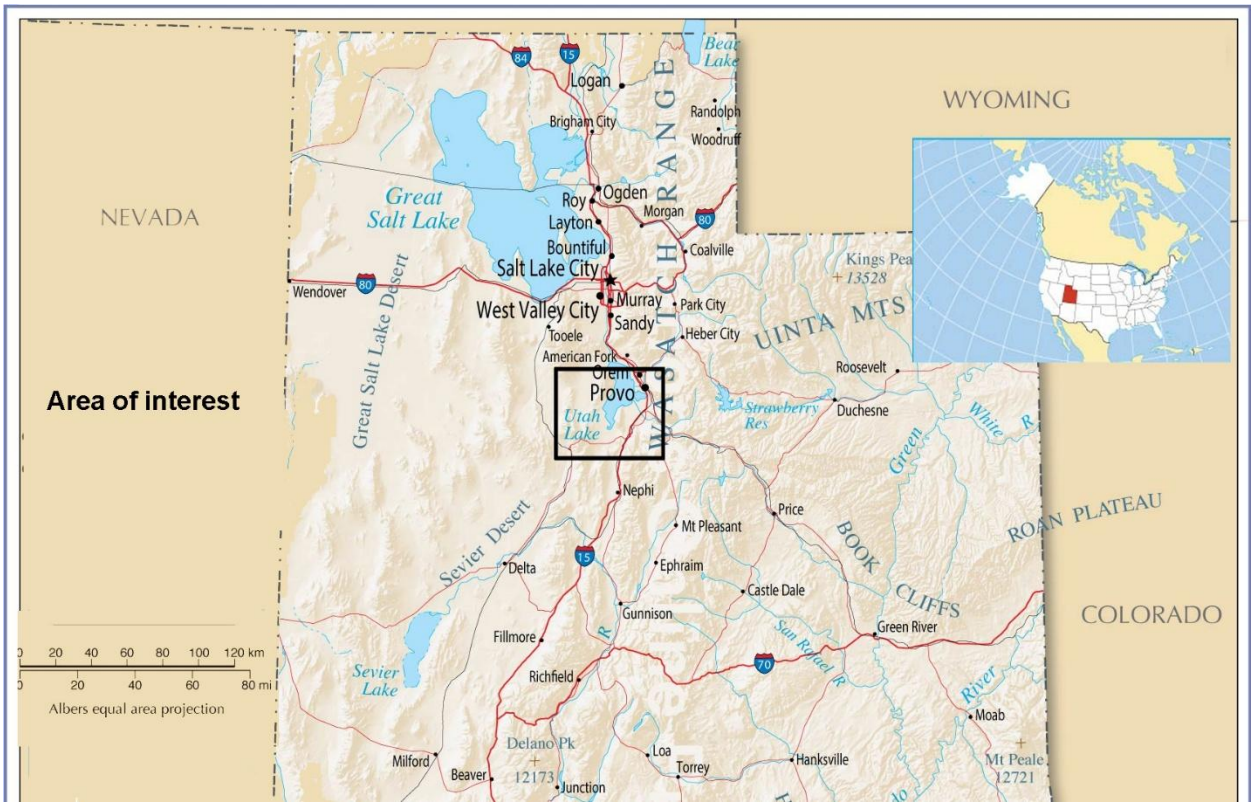


Figure 2. Location map of the area where the battles occurred in Utah, along the Provo River and Lake Utah. (Public Access)

The Setting

The Utah Valley was home to the Ute Indian band called the Timpanogos, who lived near the confluence of the Provo River and the south end of Lake Utah. These people were called Fish Eaters *Tumpanawach* because of the abundance of fish and other natural food sources (Duncan 2000, 188). They were hunter/gatherers and relatives of other Ute bands living in Colorado and eastern Utah. These groups successfully adapted to the unique conditions of the Great Basin region, and had developed skills and traditions suited to the region.

The Timpanogos followed their food sources through the seasons, moving to higher altitudes in the summer for harvesting choke cherries, elder berries, service berries, and other plant roots and leaves. In the fall and spring, they fished and gathered cattail spouts, and bulrush bulbs and hunted waterfowl and bird eggs. Game animals including deer, elk and mountain sheep were attracted to the lush meadows and river bottoms.

During the winter months they camped along the streams and shores of the lake and caught chubs, trout and mountain whitefish with brush and sapling weir nets across a stream. Women waded in, clubbing the fish and scooping them into baskets. During the fall spawning season, the Timpanogos fished with nets strung across a stream and weighted at the ends with stone sinkers. They dried the fish and cached it for leaner times (Janetski 1991). Thousands of fish filled the Provo River, and neighboring Ute and Paiute bands from miles around came to share in the harvest. Utah Lake, is the third-largest freshwater lake west of the Mississippi River, along with Lake Tahoe and Pyramid Lake, (Farmer 2008).

The Mormon settlers in Salt Lake City, led by Brigham Young, decided they wanted to expand to the south. From 1848-1850, the Mormons established a fort on the Provo River at the south end of Lake Utah in Utah Valley, hoping to gain the fertile land for their growing populations. At first, the Timpanogos people had a good relationship with the settlers. But as time went on, they were frustrated with fenced pastures and cattle over-grazing their wild plant resources and scaring off wild game. They soon experienced hunger and starvation and resorted to killing Mormon cattle for food (Peterson 1998).

The Battle Creek Massacre

In February 1849**,** Dimick B. Huntington (interpreter of Ute and Spanish) spoke with Timpanogos leader Little Chief about some missing cattle. Little Chief said that Roman Nose

and Blue Shirt were great thieves who had decided to live off of the settlers' cattle all winter. Little Chief said the Mormons should kill these renegades, out of fear that his tribe would be blamed and people killed for the missing cattle, (Peterson 1998).

On March 3, Captain John Scott took fifty men into Utah Valley to put a "final end" to the "depredations," (Carter 2003, 63). Little Chief's two sons led Scott's men to a camp near Battle Creek Canyon. The camp consisted of four men, one teenage boy, and a dozen women and children with only bows and arrows and one gun. Scott surrounded the camp with thirty men and called out to Roman Nose to surrender. The Utes refused to talk and opened fire on the company. Five or six times during the skirmish the Mormon interpreters beseeched the Indians to surrender. In order to help convince the women and children to do so, Scott's men tried the tactic of throwing rocks and tightening the circle around the Ute camp. This worked, and the women and children surrendered, (Ibid, 65). *Pareyarts* (**Old Elk**) and *Opecarry* (**Stick-in-the-Head**), both leaders of local Timpanogos tribes, escaped but watched from a distance as Scott's men "relentlessly shot down" the remaining Timpanogos,' (Carter 2003, 64-67).

A young man named *An tonga* was a survivor of the attack on his village at Battle Creek. He was taken prisoner to Salt Lake City and was cared for by a Mormon family. Years later, a mountain man named Joshua Terry said the captured Ute boy grew up to become the famous warrior An tonga, called **Black Hawk** by Brigham Young. "Black Hawk confided in Terry that he could never understand why the white men had shot down his people. It put bitterness in his heart; and though he lived for some time with the white people, his mind had been set on avenging the wrong," (Driggs 1948, 20). "The famous Ute war chief Wakara (Walker) was Black Hawk's uncle. The Timpanogos killed Wakara's father and he always held that against the Timpanogos." (Cuch, personal conversation 2025).

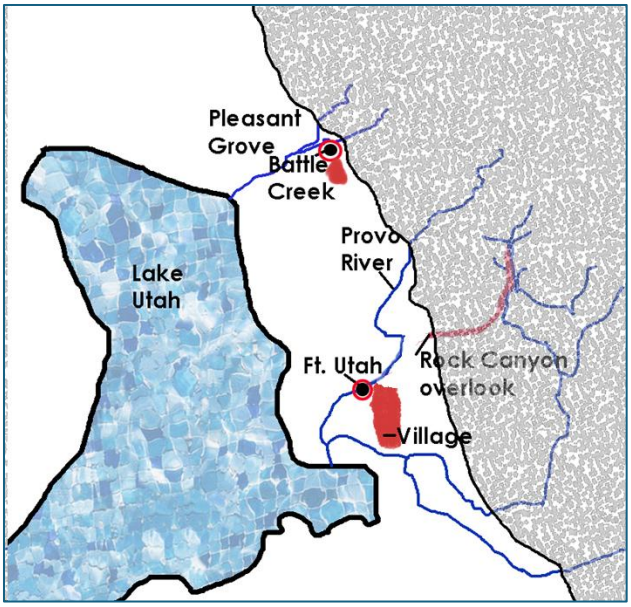


Figure 3. A schematic drawing of the locations around Lake Utah for the **Battle Creek Massacre** and the **Fort Utah Massacre** are circled in red with the location of the Timpanogos villages nearby, (map by Craig Addley).

On March 10, 1849, Brigham Young assigned thirty families to settle in Utah Valley. They headed toward Timpanogos territory with thirty families or 150 people, (Boren, et al.,104).

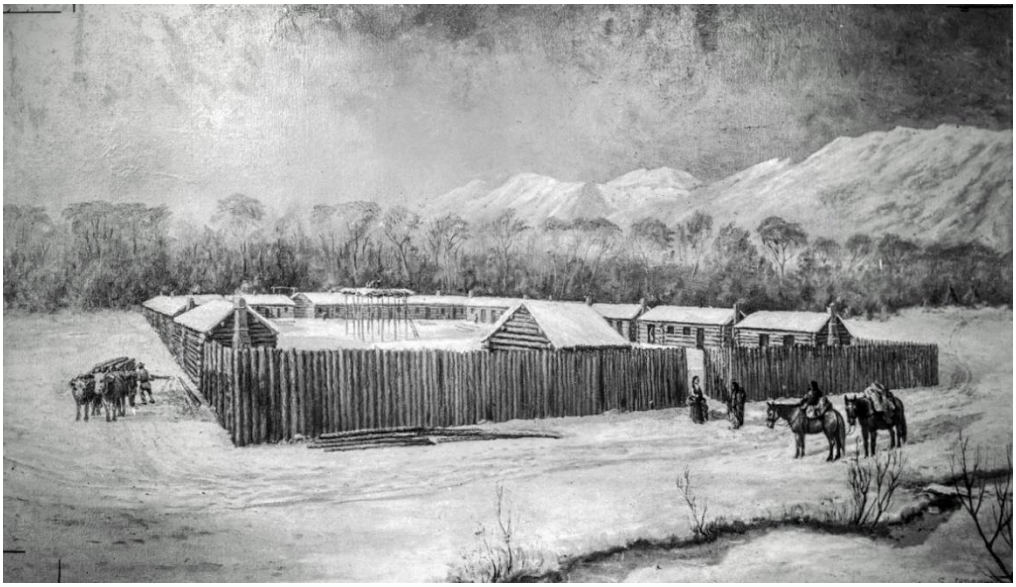


Figure 4. Artist rendition of Fort Utah, (by Samuel Hans Jepperson, Public Domain).

By April, the settlers finished building the fort, (Carter 2003). The Timpanogos viewed this as an invasion of their territory and sacred land, (Duncan, 2016).

> As the settlers tried to move into the valley, they were actively blocked by a group of Timpanogos led by *An-kar-tewets* with warnings that trespassing would be met with death….Later, a Timpanogos chief met with Huntington who told him that the settlement would be beneficial for the Timpanogos and reported that the leader consented to the Mormons settling there after Huntington swore they would not drive the Timpanogos off their lands or take away their rights, (Farmer 2008,65).

Old Bishop's murder

In August, the Timpanogos agreed not to take the settlers' cattle if they would not kill the wild game animals. But a Timpanogo named Old Bishop (because the Mormons thought he looked like an old bishop they knew), discovered three men hunting deer, and expressed his displeasure. For that, the men killed him, saying he was shot over a dispute about a shirt he was wearing they thought was stolen, (Farmer 2008, 67-68; Bagley 2019, 121-122; Carter 2003, 120).

> "But in reality, the Mormons were pushing out the game, and it left the Utes starving. The Utes had established a prohibition against Mormons from hunting, but Old Man Bishop caught Ivie (and others), poaching deer. Ivie knew they would be turned in, so Ivie shot Old Bishop and not over a shirt, which was a lie," (Cuch, personal conversation 2025).

They filled his body with rocks and threw it into the Provo River. The men went back to Fort Utah and openly bragged about the murder, (Christy 1978, 223). The Timpanogos found Old Bishop's body and were angry and demanded that the murderers be handed over. But the settlers refused to do so. The Timpanogos asked for material compensation for Old Bishop's death according to their custom, which the settlers also refused. This enraged the Timpanogos, who were already sharing prime pasture and fishing land with the settlers, (Carter 2008:68).

A group of Timpanogos people responded to the murder by stealing around fifty cattle. The settlers and lawmakers then convinced Brigham Young to exterminate any Timpanogos hostile to the Mormon settlement, (Christy 1978, 224; Conetah 1982, 38). By January 1850, settlers of Fort Utah wanted a military party to attack the Timpanogos.

Planning the attack

Brigham Young ordered an extermination campaign against the Timpanogos, with orders to kill all the Timpanogos men but to spare the women and children if they behaved, (Farmer

2008, 394; Christy 1978). General Wells drafted the extermination order as Special Order No. 2 and sent it to Captain George D. Grant on January 31, (Christy 1978, 224). In his letter, he told Grant, "Take no hostile Indians as prisoners" and "let none escape but do the work-up clean." (Compton 2009,12). On February 2, Brigham Young sent Wells to lead the army with the expanded mission "not to leave the valley until every Indian was out".

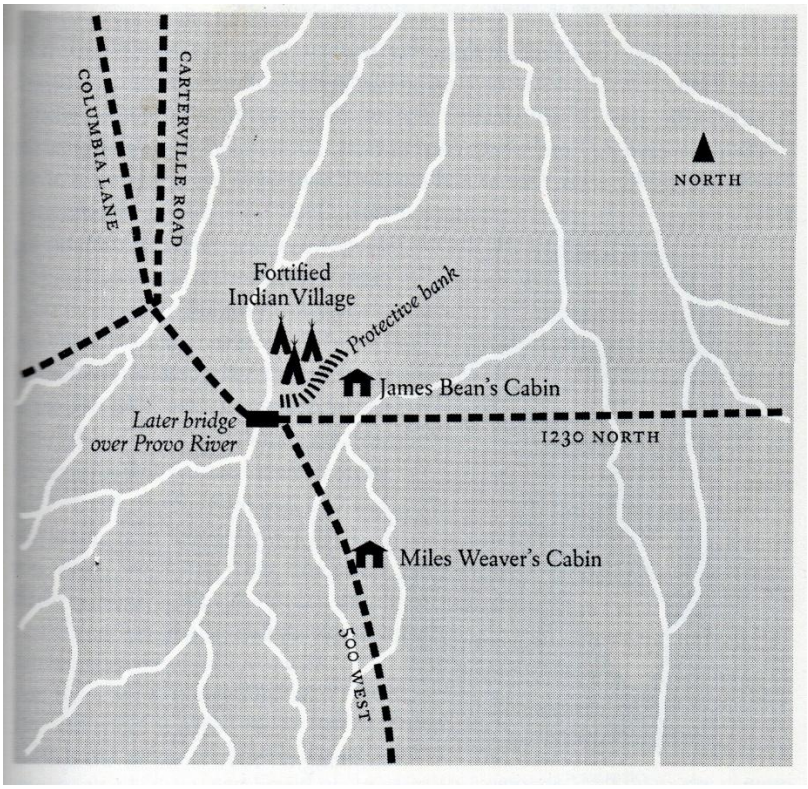


Figure 5. The battle ground on Provo River. The Mormon militia and the Utes from Utah Valley fought the two-day Battle of Provo River in an area lying between the Provo River and 1230 North and between 300 West and 700 West. The Utes manned positions in their village, behind a protective bank that was cut by a former channel of the Provo River and in James Bean's partially completed log cabin located only 100 to 150 feet from the Ute village. The militia made their field headquarters in Miles Weaver's log cabin located a quarter to a half-mile south of the Indian village, (Carter 2003, 171 figure 51).

The Timpanogos had fortified their village with barricades made from stacked logs and fallen timber. The fortifications housed seventy warriors and their families, (Boren et al. 105; Tullidge 1889, 79). The Timpanogos were led by Chief Pareyarts, Old Elk, who was sick with the measles. Some Timpanogos who were friends with the settlers, sought shelter in Fort Utah before the battle including An tonga, Black Hawk, (Farmer 2008, 72).

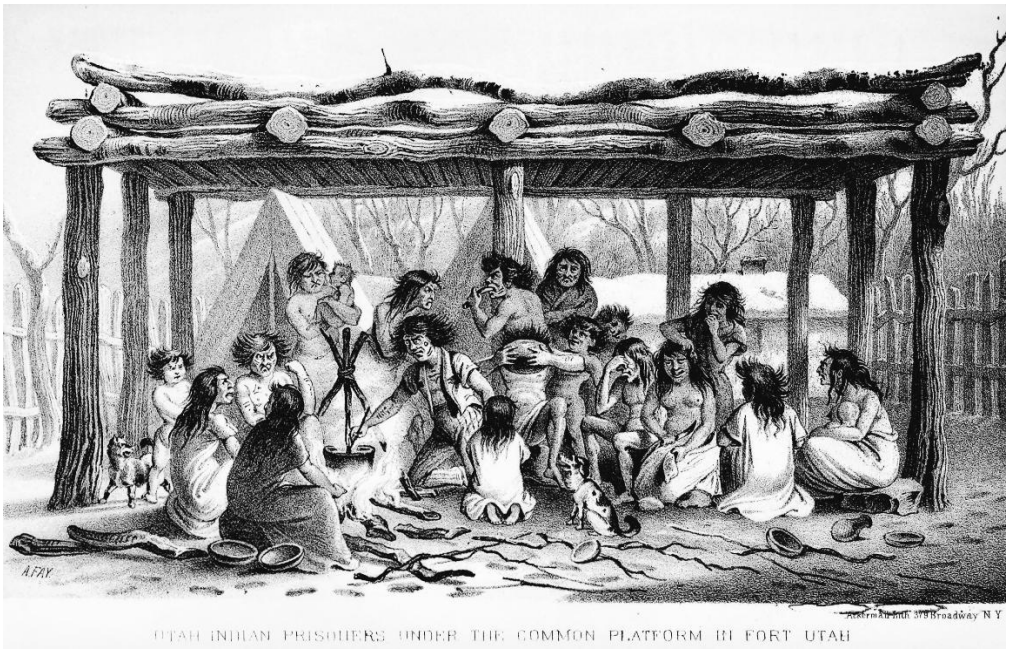


Figure 6. An artist caricature of prisoners at Fort Utah, (By A. Fay - Exploration and Survey of the Valley of the Great Salt Lake of Utah, in Howard Stansbury Public Domain).

On February 8 and 9,1850, the Nauvoo Legion was sent from Salt Lake City, and they engaged the Timpanogos in battle, (Farmer 2008, 71). Their initial strategy was to encircle the Timpanogos village and kill all hostiles. When the militia descended upon the Ute village, they found the Utes fortified in an abandoned cabin on the Provo River. “They had cut down cottonwood trees along the bank and piled up snow with port holes through the snow which completely hid them from our view,” (Carter 2003, 172).

Around noon General Grant lead a group of mounted men to the Ute Village. Dimick B. Huntington was the interpreter. He called Old Elk out to talk. He was brave, cool, and determined, standing six feet tall. Ope-Carry, called Stick-in-the-head, recognized as the head chief, came out and talked. He was inclined to make a treaty after seeing the number of troops surrounding the Indian camp. However, Old Elk’s warlike influence swayed the warriors in the stronghold. The Utes opened fire instead of suing for peace, and the Battle of Provo River began, (Ibid, 172).

Captain Grant called the “Long Range” cannon into service. He said the artillery men charged the cannon, “With black powder and loaded it to the muzzle with scrap iron, bits of chain, rocks etc.,” (Ibid 173).

The First day of the Battle at the Provo River ended in a stalemate. Pareyarts's, Old Elk's braves were joined by warriors from villages on the Spanish Fork River and Peteetneet Creek, (Carter 2003, 178).

The Second day, the militia brought up movable "A-shaped" log batteries mounted on sleight runners. Behind these batteries, infantry men could find shelter as they moved to within close rifle range of the village. The defending Timpanogos suffered about ten casualties. Ute Chief Opecarry was wounded. Joseph Higbee, son of Isaac Higbee, was the only Mormon, (Carter 2003, 178; Farmer 2008,73; Bagley 2012, 30).

After the second day of fighting the Timpanogos fled during the night. They split into two groups. Old Elk took a small group of wounded and sick and fled northeast into Rock Canyon. The second group fled south to Spanish Valley and across Lake Utah.

Black Hawk, was at the Fort at the time of the attack. Early on the morning of the third day, he and a couple of other Utes were sent with the militia to scout out the village. It was deserted except for the bodies of around ten Ute men shot by the Nauvoo Legion, (Carter 2003,188; Farmer 2008, 73).

The Ute trackers witnessed the devastating effects of the conflict. They saw the bodies mutilated by the cannon shot. They saw the blood spattered snow in the footprints of fleeing victims. They saw snowshoe tracks leading into Rock Canyon.

The trackers and militia divided into two groups. The first group took Black Hawk and other Utes northeast into Rock Canyon, going up the trail that looks down on the valley. They found a few tipis with a few survivors badly wounded and others frozen to death. Twenty-some prisoners were taken. A basecamp was set up at the mouth of the canyon.

The second group of militia men under General Wells went south into Spanish Valley. There, they chased surviving Utes out onto the ice on the south end of Utah Lake, where they killed twenty-nine more Indians and took even more women and children prisoners.

Interpretation of this panel

The drawings for this report were traced on plastic overlayed on enhanced photographs of the petroglyph panel. The body gestures and spatial positioning of human forms emulate the sign language gesture-signs for actions and iconic symbols that represent people, places or things providing context to the story. The body postures- vertical, horizonal or inverted- are clues to life or death conditions. The gesture-signs and symbols collectively narrate key events of the battle. McKay-Cody, a professor of Indian sign languages points out that "for the sign language signs, hand signers do not use suffixes like -ing or -ed;… and they are not used in many Native American languages, including Ute." The sign-gesture indicates the subject or *icon*, and the *action* is the direction of movement the sign indicates, (in Patterson 2025)

The gesture-signs for ***actions*** include "going under," "bad," "gone", "cut off", "starving", "movement back and forth", "surround", "cut down", "shoot", "dig deep", "take back out" (*from grave*,) "look", "traveling", and "fleeing".

The **iconic** symbols include: "knife," "gun," "cannon ball," "burial-wrapped-body," "splattered blood," "snowshoe," "woman and child," "bow-and-arrow," and "Ute" *sandal*.

Ute **idioms** include "arrow head/*war,*" "barefoot/*striped for battle,*" "hole/*grave,*" "dog/*scout* or *witness,*" "knife/c*ut or dig,*" "headless/*decapitate,*" "raised hand/*hand-to-hand combat,*" "body/*no arms or legs,*" "no head/*no head you're dead,*" (Martineau 1973; Seton 1918, Clark 1881).

Five episodes of the battle, are introduced by the dog with a curled tail. It is a domestic dog, not a wolf or coyote which are shown with a straight tail. The dog is metaphor for a "scout" or "witness." The hand sign is formed by pressing the thumb and middle fingers together at the tips for a snout, with pointer and little finger raised up to represent erect ears. Domestic dogs were kept for scouting and giving first warning of an enemy approaching. They are a metaphor for tough warriors who *fight to the death*, called 'dog soldiers' among Plains tribes. The Utes called their brave warriors the same.

Each dog/witness is associated with a cluster of symbols that represent a phrase describing an event. The dog-meme witnesses the evidence as he viewed the scene before him.

Figure 7. Each of the five dogs are circled in red. They represent a witness of five different episodes of the battle events. The three slash marks count the third day when the witness sees the evidence of what happened.

Figure 8 a). The first dog in the top left corner is raised up with ears cocked looking at the puff of smoke from incoming artillary; b) annotated drawing; c) ledger art showing puff of smoke, (public domain).

The first dog introduces the first episode in this panel and announces the theme for the rest of it. The arrow head and barefoot track represent the common idiom “stripped for battle.” Warriors of many tribes strip down to just a loin cloth and sharpen their arrow points before going into battle. The ledger art shows examples of a “puff of smoke” that signals incoming gun fire.

Figure 9 a, b, photo and drawing of the second dog witnessing the Utes cut down by cannon shot.
Figure 9 c, Cheyene ledger art show in bullet trails in contrast to cannon fire.

The bold heavy lines with round ends represent the trails of cannon fire, which is much more powerful than bullets. The stick figure in the center has down cast arms, a negative gesture for “bad,” or “no good.” It also has a slash mark cut across it’s midsection, a gesture sign for “cut in half” or “hungry”. In context with the encircling line of cannon shot, it probably means “cut down” by cannon fire.

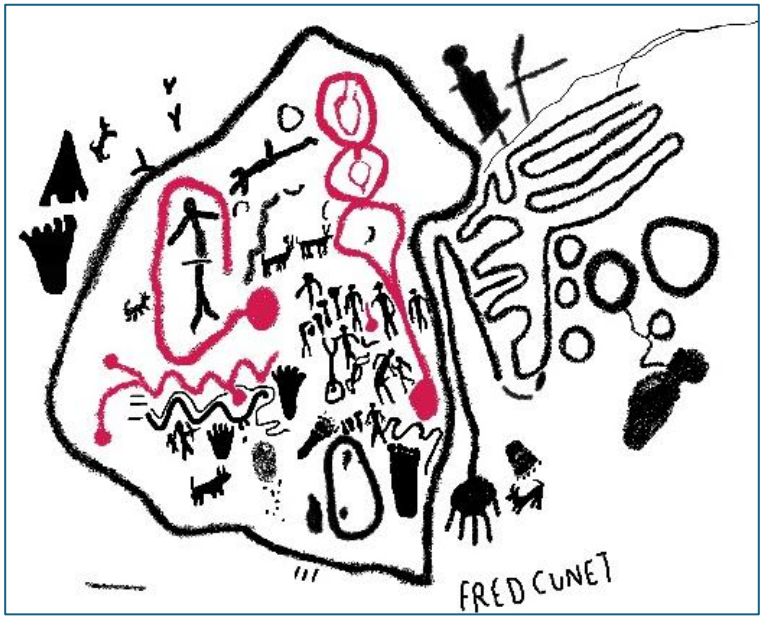
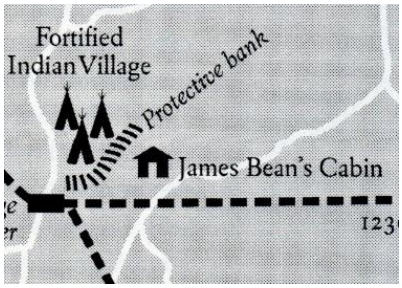


Figure 10a, shows the trail of cannon shot highlighted in pink. There are three episodes using cannon chain shot as denoted by the dog witnessing three cannon fired events. Figure 10b, is a recovered cannon ball from a battle field in the area near this panel, (Craig Addley).



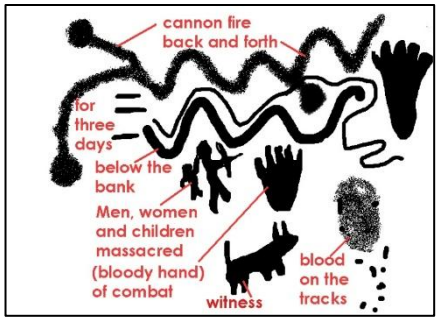


Figure 11a. Closeup map showing the protective bank and location of the cabin. Figure 11b,c shows the third dog witness to the cannon shot fired back and forth in different directions. The wavy line represents the river channel bank that protected the Ute families from the cannon shots. The bloody hand print upwards means hand-to-hand combat. The Ute families are trying to defend themselves. The dog/witness sees the evidence of the blood stains in the tracks and splattered on the snow.

The first day of the Provo River Battle engaged the cannon chain shot. Carter writes:

> Most of the cannon shots went over the Ute camp. The Indians found protection under the six-foot high riverbank, which also protected the village. In addition, the Utes hid themselves behind their log fortifications in the dense trees and underbrush…The firing of the cannon was kept up all day, the balls cutting large limbs from the trees by availed nothing and the Indians laughed hardily at the 'harmless gun,' The officers soon found they had positioned the cannon too close to the Ute stronghold. … Orders came to pull the field piece back to a safer position. (Carter 2003, 172)

On the third day, the first group of militia and Black Hawk when northwest into Rock Canyon.

> White sentries scaled huge rocks at the mouth of the canyon from which they could command the canyon floor while Black Hawk followed at some distance by other whites, made his way up the trail. Near the mouth of the canyon, he found a few tepees. After a general scattering of squaws and child, some of whom had died of wounds, but most having expired through want, fatigue, and exposure in the lethal cold. As the militiamen gathered up some twenty-three prisoners, …further up the canyon, additional lodges were found and in a number of small engagements several more Indians were killed, (Carter 2003, 199), Farmer 2008, 73).

Ope-carry, Patsowet, and their families, six women and seven children, managed to flee over the mountains using snowshoes they made overnight in the canyon, (Carter 2003, 224).

The militia set up camp at the mouth of the canyon, where they took twenty-three prisoners and found about a dozen dead bodies, including that of Pareyarts, (Old Elk). His wife Kyha died in Rock Canyon below the mountain while trying to escape the Mormon militia. One account says that she killed herself by falling from a precipice, (Carter 2003:221). The former name of Squaw Peak was Kyha Peak, named for Old Elk's wife.

Figure 12a; drawing of Old Elk, and his wife Kyhv, (by Howard Stansbury, (1852.) Figure 12b; picture of Kyhv Peak (by Pastelitodepapa, own work, CC0).

Figure 13. The Fourth dog/witness, is walking along the trail. He is shown in motion using ***two*** dogs that represent one *traveling*. The dog on the left has its tail touching the trail that Black Hawk and other tribesmen walked along witnessing the carnage.

Figure 14, photograph, and annotated drawing. The small figure with hands flared is a sign of fear or danger. The wavy line indicates his movement back and forth looking for an escape. The foot-track with claws is approaching him, a metaphor for "the killer." Between them are lifeless bodies. Below him is a barefoot track metaphor for "unprotected," pointed in one direction and a snowshoe track pointed in the opposite direction. Together, they indicate the Utes were unprepared for the deep snow, but those who made snowshoes were able to escape into the mountains. In the aftermath of the Rock Canyon fight, the militiamen pillaged the dead for souvenirs, and one of them, William Hickman, severed Old Elk's head from his body because Jim Bridger had once offered $100.00 reward for it. "Wild Bill Hickman and his men returned from Rock Canyon to Fort Utah, where Hickman showed off his trophy, and hung the head of Old Elk from the eves of his cabin at Fort Utah....it was hung like a pendant by its long hair from the willows of the roof of one of the houses. I well remember how horrible was the sight," (Carter 2003).

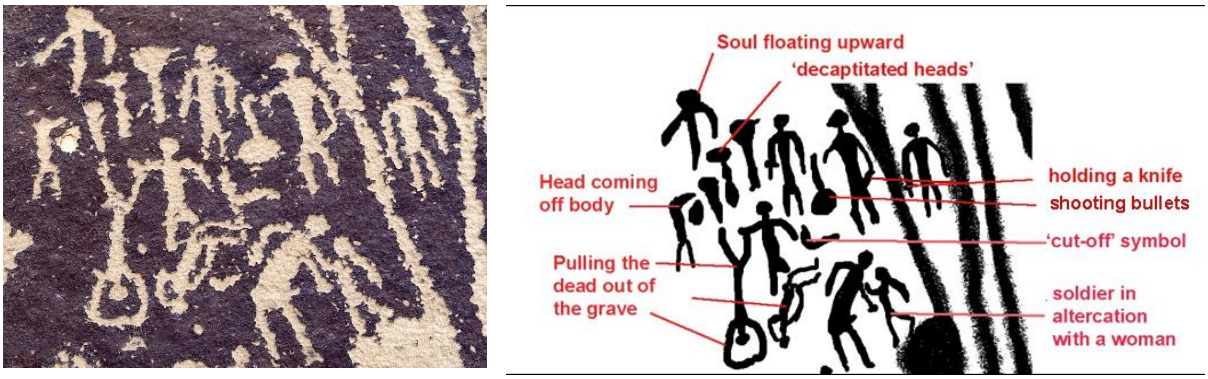


Figure 15a, b, closeup photo and annotation of the men coming with guns and knives and taking head trophies.

The center of the panel contains details of the extraordinary violence conducted by the Mormon militia. First on the right is a man (men) approaching holding both a gun and a knife. Next, they are shooting victims. Next is a man with a knife followed by a line of heads with long hair or blood hanging down. At the end is a body with its head cut off. Below this row is a man pulling a body out of the grave, indicated by the circle around his head. To the right of him is a limp body with one arm touching his own head, while the man above him is gesturing to "cut off" with his knife. Below all this, is a man is being "pushed back" by a woman shown with long hair.

Interpretation of the right side of the panel:

The fifth dog witnesses the evidence of Utes fleeing to the south out onto the ice at the end of Utah Lake. The second group of militia men under General Wells, went south looking for them. They first attacked a village along the Spanish Fork River, and then a village on Peteetneet Creek. Wells's men killed twenty-nine more Indians and took even more women and children prisoners, (Alberghetti 1962, 8; Farmer 2008, 74).

On February 13 to 20th,1850, Timpanogos families surrendered to Captain Grant in modern-day Lake Shore, Utah. General Wells wrote a letter to Brigham Young asking what he should do, (Christy 1978, 225). On February 14, Brigham Young wrote a letter instructing Wells to kill them if they did not surrender, (Compton 2011, 3). Some attempted to flee across the frozen lake, but the Mormons ran after them on horseback and shot them down. At least eleven Timpanogos men were killed; one account reports as many as twenty, (Carter 2003, 208; Farmer, 2008, 74). The family members were then taken captive, (Christy 1978, 225).

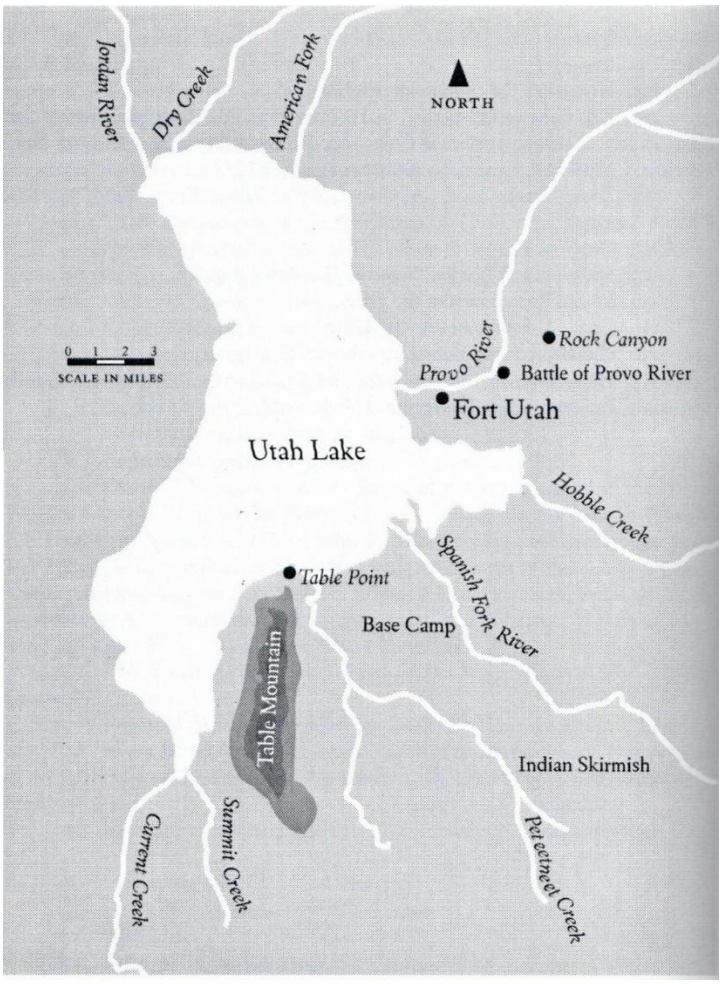


Figure 16. **Sites of the other Indian skirmishes in Utah Valley Campaign**. General Wells pursued a larger number of Utes into the southern part of Utah Valley. He established his supply camp on the Spanish Fork River. From this camp militiamen marched to Table Mountain (West Mountain) and Peteetneet Creek (Payson) where they vanquished the Utes, (Carter 2003, figure 59,196).

On February 16th, at Table Point near the southeastern shore of Utah Lake, Dr. James Blake led one of the smaller hunting parties to capture a band of some 50 Timpanogos. Blake held them prisoner overnight, but then in the morning lined up the Timpanogos men to be executed in front of their families.

Figure 17a and b, photograph and annotated drawing. The circles represent graves where the dead were buried. The two larger circles with thickened lines indicate that they have been "dug-up."

February 17, army surgeon James Blake decided a collection of Ute heads would prove beneficial to future scientific study. Dr. Blake hired James Orr and Abner Blackburn to take him across the lake to Table Point, help him cut off the heads of the Utes who had been massacred there on February 14th. Blackburn writes in his diary:

> We hired a sley and crossed over on the ice. The weather was bitter cold. The Surgeon took out his box of instruments and commenced. It took him a quarter of an hour to cut off one head. The sun was getting low, and it was freezing cold. Jim and I took the job in our own hands. We were not going to wait on the surgeon's slow motion. We jerked out our knives and had them all off in a few minutes. They were frozen and come off easily in our fashion. The surgeon stood back and watches us finish the job." (Blackburn 1992, 170).

In total, one militia man and an estimated 102 Timpanogos were killed at Fort Utah and Table Point. (Sources: Wells's Special Order No. 2, Utah State Archives, State Capitol, Salt Lake City, Utah Territorial Militia Correspondence, 1849-1863, ST-27, Microfilm reel 1, Document No. 5. Eugene E. Campbell. Establishing Zion, Utah Humanities.org~).

The illustration can be broken down into separate elements.

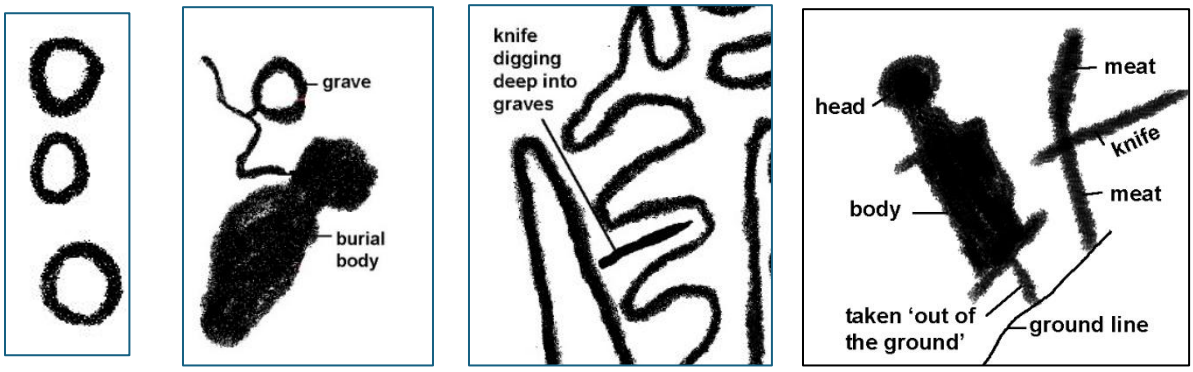


Figure 18 a) three small circles. b) grave and burial body; c) digging stick into the ground. d) the torso with arms and legs cut off with a knife as it is expressed in sign language.

The three small circles represent graves and are clarified by the depiction of a line leading out of a little circle attached to a burial-wrapped body. The digging stick is identified by its position 'poking' inside the ground line, or 'going into" the ground. The figure at the top is a head and torso of a body that is missing arms and legs. The symbol on the right is also a knife, based on the gesture sign of "cutting meat" gestured by holding a piece of meat in the mouth and cutting across-wise with a knife, (Martineau 1973). This picture-writing-phrase describes how some graves were dug up and bodies were taken out and cut up for body-part trophies to sell.

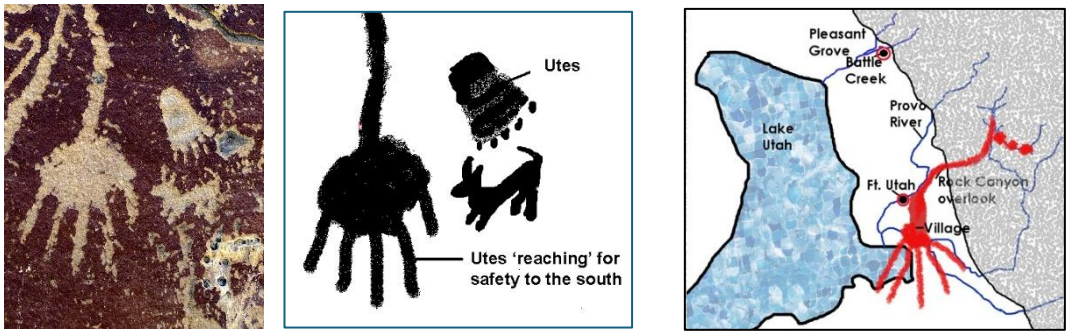


Figure 19. a) and b), photograph and annotation of the fifth dog witness the evidence of the fleeing Utes going south; c), map of the route by the second group as they fled the soldiers.

The fifth dog/witness sees the foot track of the Utes represented by the sandal track. The Ute foot track identifies the long winding trail above that the Utes left as they fled the soldiers. The trail bursts into what looks like "a hand with fingers" reaching down. It is the gesture-sign for "reaching" or "seeking" as they tried to flee south across Spanish Valley seeking safety from the militia.

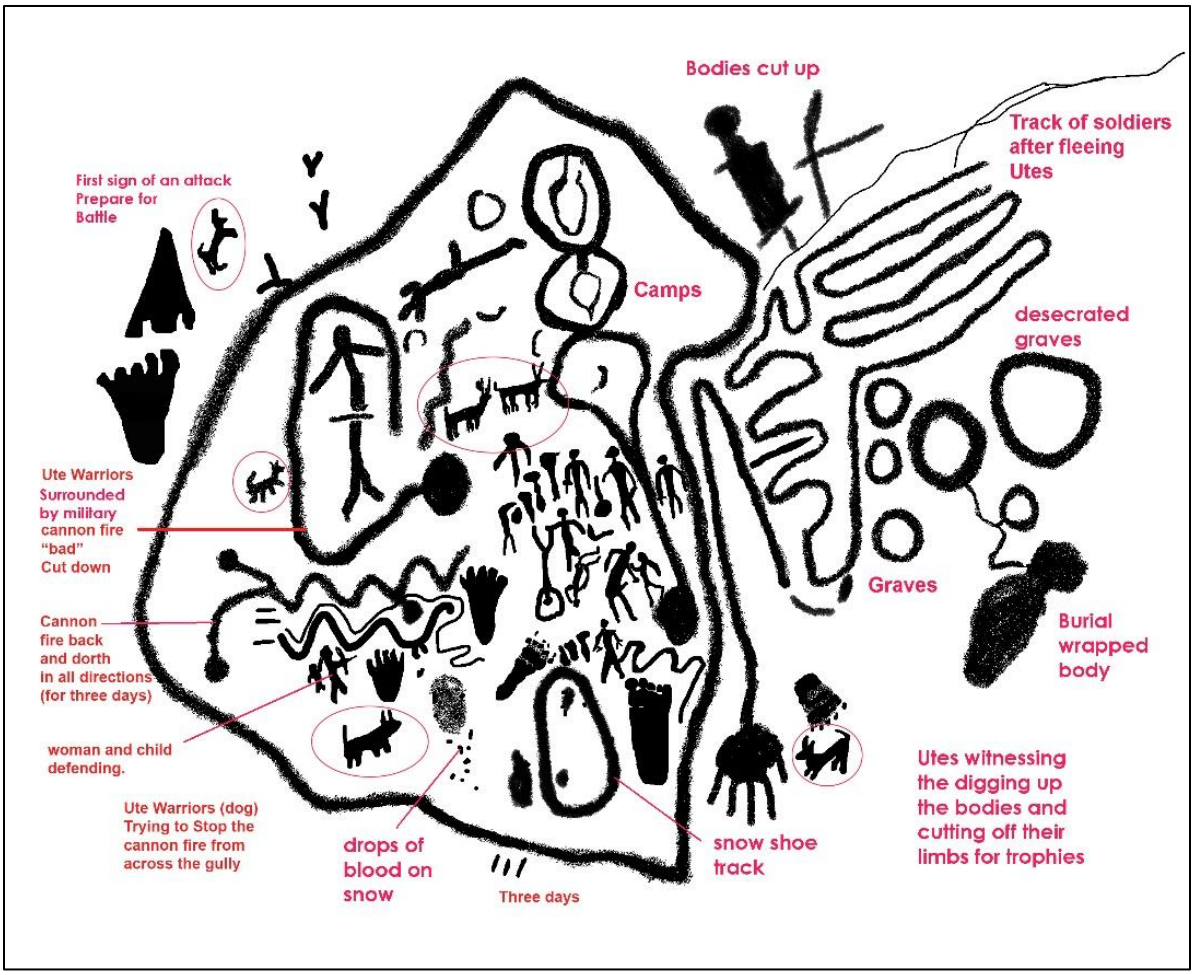


Figure 20. Summary of the five episodes signaled by the dog/witness.

Conclusion

This interpretation and identification of symbols is grounded in my thirty years of study with La Van Martineau, during which I documented many Ute panels and their symbols. Historical documentation provides essential context for identifying both the battle depicted and the possible "witness" represented in the petroglyph. I have cataloged the recognizable gestures and observed a consistent correlation between each event signaled by the dog figure and the historical accounts. It is striking how closely the petroglyph's narrative aligns with the events of a hundred and seventy-five years ago, and that much of the information from Mormon archives has only recently become available. This knowledge was shared through Ute oral traditions and documented in traditional Ute picture writing for future generations.

Black Hawk, *An tonga*, was of the San Pitch band of Ute. He went on to lead the Black Hawk Wars from 1865 to 1872. He was not a war chief, but rather a renegade warrior seeking vengeance for the killing of his family and parents that started with the Battle Creek Massacre. In his last year of life he offered an apology to all the settlers hoping that his tribe would live in peace. He died in 1870 of old wounds and was buried near where he was born.

The alleged photograph of him from the Utah State Historical Society is remarkably similar to the profile drawing of the face at the lower right of the petroglyph panel. Compare Black Hawk's face, his brow, his nose, and chin line with that in the panel.

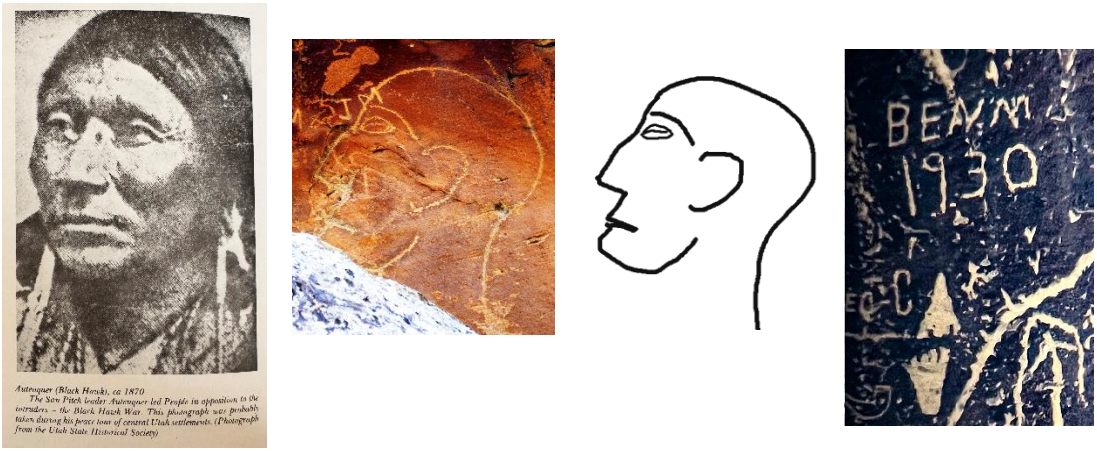
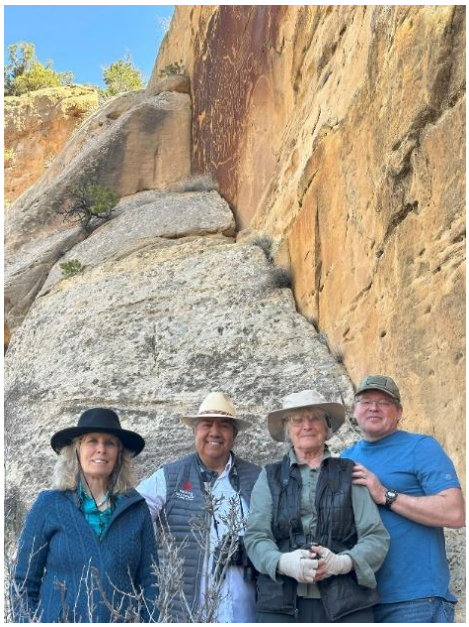


Figure 21. a) An tonga (Black Hawk), circa 1870 (Photograph from the Utah State Historical Society); b) photograph of the face in profile; c) drawing of a face looking on; d), BENM 1930.

This photograph may have been taken during his peace tour of central Utah settlements in 1870. Did the author of this panel draw a silhouette of Black Hawk looking at the diagram of the battle? Or was someone named BENM 1930 the author?

Figure 22, signature of Fred Conetah, Ute historian, and author of *A History of Northern Ute People,* (1992). Did he have the skills and knowledge of Ute picture writing to compose and execute this story by pecking it into the rock? His signature is similar in technique and age of the petroglyph.

This petroglyph was executed by someone with a working knowledge of Ute picture writing and the details of the Fort Ute Massacre. It is a prime example of how eloquently the Ute picture writing employs sign gestures and native idioms to portray many a horrific event in their history. Every detail coincides with the historical text, verbatim. This panel portrays five different episodes that the ***witness*** saw evidence of on days following the Fort Utah Massacre of 1850.



To whomever authored this panel, we are truly grateful for this recording. It has survived over a century for all generations of surviving Utes to learn the truth about their history. It is our sincere hope that the healing can begin.

Figure 23. Nancy Hewitt, Forrest Cuch, Carol Patterson and Craig Addley, April 2025.

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