

Heber Benson

"When I was 17 I was mustered into the Utah Militia, in August, 1866, under Brigadier General Erastus Snow and Adjutant Augustus P. Hardy. We were to serve in the Black Hawk War. That same month 63 men were picked from all the settlements from Paragoonah to St. George. James Andrews was our captain. We were sent to explore and find the trails where the Indians crossed the streams to get into this country. We covered all the country southeast to Escalante, to where the Green River and the Grand River empty into the Colorado. On the 24th of August, 1866, Indians killed one of our company, Elijah Everett of Washington. He laid where he was killed until the next day, when a number of us helped to bury him in the roughest part of this state, on the Paw-Reah, a tributary of the Colorado. Seventy years later I unveiled a monument in his honor, marking his grave for posterity. I served in the Black Hawk War and the Navajo War for four years, from 1866 to 1870."

Some Indian fighting in the red hills east of Paragoonah and Parowan are noted as follows: On the 22nd of July, 1867, John Lowder was on picket guard north of Paragoonah. He gave the alarm that about 75 Utes were divided into small groups over the north of the valley and were heading stolen cattle toward Little Creek Canyon. Edward Dalton, captain of the militia, gave the command and a company of men started after them. The Indians were well up the canyon before the militia arrived. Captain Dalton divided his men and sent James Adams, Lars Mortenson, Zack Decker, Peter Mortenson and Silas Smith and several others around through Cottonwood Canyon, where the Indians had taken the bunch of cattle. The posse surprised them and took all the cattle and started back down the canyon. The rest of the men with Captain Dalton followed the Indians up Little Creek Canyon until late the next morning. The Indians started shooting from the cliffs above where they were in ambush. Two of the militia's horses were shot and Allen Miller narrowly escaped with his life, a bullet hitting the holster of his rifle. The two companies met at the mouth of the canyon and returned to the settlement.

There was a lull in Indian troubles in '68, but in '69 the Navajo War was worse than ever. These Indians made a raid in 1869, stealing horses and mules all through the country south of Cedar and north through Parowan and Paragoonah. The militia followed them up the canyon, over the Hogsback, over Fish Lake Mountain, and over to Johnson, east of Kanab. The animals were not recovered, but another bunch of about 40 head were taken near the Mammoth that belonged to Cedar settlers.

On New Year's day, 1870, the men were called out of a dance as the alarm was given that the Navajos had rounded up about 500 head of horses. Among the men who started up Parowan Canyon were the following: Capt. Edward Dalton, Sydney Burton, Horace Smith, Samuel Orton, Peter Wimmer, Johnathan Prethro, Hugh L. Adams, Charles Adams, James J. Adams, Ed Clark, Ed Ward, Nels Holingshead, Wm. C. Mitchell, Henry Harrop, Oscar Lyman, Hy Paramore, Bill Lister, John Butler, Heber Benson, Tom Butler, Allen Miller and Tom Yardley. There was so much snow in Parowan Canyon that after attempting to traverse it, they ascended Little Creek Canyon. The men did not overtake the Indians because of the deep snow. They went over to the East Fork of the Sevier River, with no success, so Captain Dalton gave the order to go home. Some of the men wanted to proceed further, but their captain was impressed to go home and all the men followed him. It was learned from scouting parties that they had avoided annihilation from hordes of ambushed Redmen.- **Luella Adams Dalton.**