Of Slade, Beidler said, “We communed on many occasions as friends. He was an honest man and did not like a thief, but he was a very dangerous man when drinking.” And Slade had been drinking a great deal. With him on the loose and threatening to shoot the deputy and the judge, Beidler made one last effort to avoid what he knew was coming. He asked Slade’s friend Jim Kiskadden to take Slade home, that a party of miners were headed for town with the intention of carrying out the vigilance committee’s order.

Slade reluctantly turned his horse around and began riding out, when he spotted his quarry near a store. With a gun in each hand, he began an insulting tirade against the judge, the deputy, and the store owner, P. S. Pfouts, who also was the president of the vigilantes. At that moment, the miners hove into view with Captain James Williams, a vigilante, at their head. The sight sobered Slade immediately; his only response, “My god!” Williams informed him he had just one hour to live, and if he had any business to attend to, “he had better do it.” Beidler later remarked that if Slade had ridden out when he was told, he would not have been hanged.

A group was sent to find a place of execution and decided on an empty beef scaffold. A noose was thrown over it, and Beidler said, “When Slade’s hour expired . . . he expired with it.” Standing on the boxes beneath the scaffold with the rope around his neck, he pleaded for his life. The crowd responded, “Time’s up.” Williams ordered, “Do your duty,” and boxes were kicked away, plunging Slade into the abyss of death, for having disturbed the peace of Virginia City.

When Virginia Slade, who had been summoned from the ranch some dozen miles distant, rode into the city, she discovered to her horror she was too late. Her husband had been removed to a nearby store, his clothing arranged and prepared for burial. It was March 11, 1864. The bereaved widow cursed the town, took her husband’s body home in a tin-lined coffin, filled, it was said, with a keg of whiskey. She swore he would never be buried in this “damned territory,” and shipped the remains to Salt Lake City with instructions for the coffin to be transferred to an eastbound stage for Illinois.

By the time the roads cleared and the stage reached Utah, it was mid-July, and Virginia Slade’s instructions had become confused. Slade’s body was transferred to the Salt Lake City Cemetery and buried in the Stranger’s Lot, “to be removed to Illinois in the fall.” But no one ever came for Jack Slade. And today his remains—and the whiskey that proved his undoing—still await the stage for Carlisle.

**CREATING CAMP DOUGLAS**

United States troops ordered to Utah from California during the Civil War were intended to protect the overland trail from Indian depredations, but they instead made it their business to keep a sharp eye on Brigham Young and the Mormons. The founding of Fort Douglas in 1862 on the east bench of Salt Lake City by Colonel Patrick E. Connor and his California Volunteers was the last thing Young wanted, and the incident is riddled with ironies long forgotten in the century and more since.

For instance, when Shoshoni war parties had raided the overland mail route between the North Platte and Fort Bridger with relative impunity that spring, and it had become apparent that President Abraham Lincoln would have to take action, Young wired Washington: “The militia of Utah are ready and able . . . to take care of all the Indians . . . and protect the mail line.” It was Young’s idea that his offer would be seen as a logical answer to the situation and no federal forces would be necessary—what with the Union husbanding its troops to face Southern armies. But Brigham Young was no longer governor of Utah and could not deal directly with the federal government. He had been replaced by Alfred Cumming, who, in turn, had resigned in 1861 to join the Confederacy.

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John Dawson of Indiana was then appointed chief executive of the territory. He had barely settled in before becoming embroiled in a scandal that sent him packing just six weeks into his term. Next up was Stephen Harding, another Indianan, who arrived in July 1862 just as private citizen Young was wiring Abraham Lincoln his offer to provide militia. Lincoln was well aware of the church leader’s power and influence. He understood that while Young had not been governor since 1857, the mantle of that office rested invisibly, but securely, on Brigham’s shoulders. The Mormon people would listen only to him. And President Lincoln also knew that Young knew it.

Lincoln authorized him to raise, equip, and arm one company of cavalry for ninety days. Young acted within an hour of receiving his answer. The commander of the militia company was to be Lot Smith—the shrewd guerilla leader of the recent Utah War, that standoff between Brigadier General Albert Sidney Johnston’s Utah Expedition and the Mormon Nauvoo Legion that resulted in the establishment of Camp Floyd west of Provo. (Camp Floyd, its name changed to Fort Crittenden because Secretary of War John B. Floyd had defected to the South, was by 1862 deactivated.) The irony in Lot Smith’s appointment was its complete turnaround from the days
when he raided and burned government supply wagons near Fort Bridger. Now he was charged with protecting U.S. property at all costs.

In the long run, Young’s ploy failed, for feisty Patrick E. Connor was on the march for Great Salt Lake Valley and nothing would prevent it. There was a bit of a fuss that October as Connor’s five companies of infantry and two troops of cavalry entered Fort Crittenden. That was where the citizens of Great Salt Lake City wanted the flinty Irishman to station his command, but Connor had no intention of being forty miles from civilization. There were rumors that the dread “Danites,” the so-called Destroying Angels, would prevent Connor from crossing the Jordan River on the outskirts of the city, thus keeping the federal force at a distance.

The challenge—though nonexistent—suited Connor just fine. He had been looking for an excuse to justify marching his men more than seven hundred miles on outpost duty. The colonel let it be known he would cross over the Jordan “If hell yawned below him.” He crossed the river that afternoon without incident, and the following morning struck out due north for the city. But let T. B. H. Stenhouse, who was there, describe the scene: “On the 29th of October, 1862, with loaded rifles, fixed bayonets and shotted cannon, Colonel Connor march the Volunteers into Salt Lake City, and proceeded ‘to the bench,’ directly east of the city. There, at the base of the Wasatch Mountains, they planted the United States flag, and created Camp Douglas.” In a footnote to his book, The Rocky Mountain Saints, Stenhouse remarked, “Connor could not possibly have selected a better situation for a military post, and certainly no place could have been chosen more offensive to Brigham. The artillery have a perfect and unobstructed range of Brigham’s residence, and with their muzzles turned in that direction, the Prophet felt awfully annoyed.”

Connor named the new camp after recently deceased “Little Giant” Stephen A. Douglas. The following January, Connor ordered his command into the field to punish Indians in the Bear River area near present Preston, Idaho. What ensued
There was a massacre of Shoshonis with the toll numbering from 224 to 350, depending on the source. Connor lost 14 dead and scores wounded; he gained a promotion and a reputation as an Indian fighter.

It was after word later arrived at Camp Douglas that Connor had been promoted to brigadier general for his Bear River campaign that exuberant members of his regiment loaded the howitzers with powder and wadding and fired an eleven-gun salute in his honor, rudely awakening Brigham Young. Although express riders were dispatched to rally available fighting men to protect their leader from what they perceived as an "unprovoked military bombardment," the record is silent regarding Young's comments on learning the true cause of the artillery barrage. Fort Douglas stands much as it did 135 years ago, mute testimony to Utah's frontier heritage.

**THE DISAPPEARANCE OF JOHN BAPTISTE**

The violent deaths of three Mormon desperadoes at the hands of the law caused a considerable stir in Great Salt Lake City in 1862, yet it was mild compared to the shock value of the aftermath, which began with the arrest of a serial grave robber and ended with the discovery of a headless skeleton three decades later.

A posse had tracked Lot Huntington, John P. Smith, and Moroni ("Rone") Clawson to Faust's Mail Station, twenty-two miles west of Fort Crittenden (old Camp Floyd). Huntington was wanted on charges of assaulting former Governor John W. Dawson at Ephraim Hanks stage station in Mountain Dell between Little and Big Mountains east of the city three weeks earlier and additional charges of stealing a cash box from an Overland Mail Company employee two weeks later. Smith was also named in the theft of the cash box. Clawson was charged with participating in the beating of the governor.

All three were headed for California when the posse, led by Orrin Porter Rockwell, caught up with them. Huntington resisted and Rockwell killed him. The other two surrendered. Back in the city, Rockwell turned his prisoners over to police and was tendering to his team of horses when gunfire exploded down the street in the direction the outlaws had been taken. At the scene minutes later he found a policeman standing over the bodies of Smith and Clawson. "They tried to escape," the constable explained.

Both outlaws were laid to rest in the city cemetery, and since no one claimed Clawson's body, he was buried in potter's field at city expense. A few days later relatives arranged for his reburial in the family plot in Draper. Then, the unthinkable. When the coffin was opened, the body was naked.

George Clawson, a bitter and indignant brother of the deceased, poured out his anger to Henry Heath, a Salt Lake policeman. "That's a terrible thing to do—to bury a man like that." Momentarily taken aback, Heath rejoined with: "No such thing! No pauper ever had better or cleaner burial clothing than 'Rone.' I bought them myself!" There could be but one answer, and neither man could bring himself to put it in words. But Heath could, and did, begin an investigation, one that would send a wave of horror through the Mormon community. With Probate Judge Elias Smith's blessing, Heath with several other officers questioned cemetery sexton, Jesse C. Little, who gave them the name of John Baptiste, for nearly three years the cemetery's gravedigger.

Baptiste's wife answered the door of their home on Third Avenue. John was at work, she said, but the officers were welcome to come inside and talk. "There were numerous boxes of clothing stacked around," Heath recalled in an 1893 interview with the Deseret News. "Imagine our shock and surprise when we discovered these were the funeral