

Guide to Watercolors and Pencil Drawings Related to the Utah Expedition

WA MSS S-3861



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September 2019

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
P. O. Box 208330
New Haven, CT 06520-8330
(203) 432-2977
beinecke.library@yale.edu
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

CALL NUMBER: WA MSS S-3861

CREATOR: Sommer, Henry, approximately 1829-1894 , artist

TITLE: Watercolors and Pencil Drawings Related to the Utah Expedition

DATES: circa 1858-1859

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 1.5 linear feet (1 box)

LANGUAGE: Inscriptions in English.

SUMMARY: Watercolors and pencil drawings created by Henry Sommer related to the United States Army Utah Expedition, including sites, persons, and other activities chiefly in the Kansas Territory and Utah Territory, 1858-1860. An identified site in the Kansas Territory consists of a view of a camp, probably near Fort Leavenworth. Identified sites in the Utah Territory include military camps at Camp Crosman, Camp Floyd (later known as Fort Crittenden), and Fort Bridger. Activities include views of American bison hunting and hare hunting as well as views of soldiers in camps. Includes an interior view of the quarters of Lewis Henry Little as well as an interior view of a Mormon family at their home.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.sommer>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.sommer>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to beinecke.images@yale.edu.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Purchased from Perry Adam Antiques on the MacKinnon Family Fund, 2017-2019.

Custodial History

Formerly owned by Lewis Henry Little.

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

The Henry Sommer, Watercolors and Pencil Drawings Related to the Utah Expedition, is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

Preferred Citation

Henry Sommer, Watercolors and Pencil Drawings Related to the Utah Expedition. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Processing Information

Collections are processed to a variety of levels, depending on the work necessary to make them usable, their perceived research value, the availability of staff, competing priorities, and whether or not further accruals are expected. The library attempts to provide a basic level of preservation and access for all collections, and does more extensive processing of higher priority collections as time and resources permit.

Description of the watercolors and drawings in this guide derives from item-level descriptions provided by the dealer and augmented by the processing archivist.

Henry Sommer (approximately 1829-1894)

Henry Sommer was a German-American artist and soldier in the United States Army. He was born Henry V. A. Von Beckh or H. V. A. Baron de Sommerau-Beckh in Kassel, Kurfürstentum Hessen. Sommer attended polytechnic school and trained as an architect at Kassel and immigrated to the United States in 1857.

In December 1857, Sommer enlisted for a five-year term in the United States Army at New York City and trained at Governors Island, New York. In March 1858, he transferred with a rank of private to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas Territory, and into Company E of the 7th Infantry. His company then traveled through Fort Bridger, Nebraska Territory, in August-September 1858 while en route to the Utah Territory as part of the Utah Expedition. During the winter of 1858-1859, Sommer and his company stationed at Camp Floyd, Utah Territory. In May-August 1859, he joined a surveying expedition led by Captain James Hervey Simpson (1813-1883) to establish a transportation route from Salt Lake City to Carson City, Nevada. Sommer returned to Camp Floyd and served as a clerk for Lieutenant Colonel Pitcairn Valleau Morrison (1795-1887) before acquiring a discharge from the United States Army in March 1860.

Sommer reenlisted into the United States Army in July 1860 and served during the American Civil War in Company E the 2nd Infantry of the United States Army. He rose in rank from private to first lieutenant during the conflict and received a brevet rank of captain. During the Battle of Spotsylvania Court House, Sommer suffered a debilitating wound to his left arm. He resigned from military service in May 1868.

In November 1894, Sommer died in at Kings, New York. He was interred at Cypress Hills National Cemetery, New York City.

Content Description

Watercolors and pencil drawings created by Henry Sommer related to the United States Army Utah Expedition, including sites, persons, and other activities chiefly in the Kansas Territory and Utah Territory, 1858-1860. An identified site in the Kansas Territory consists of a view of a camp, probably near Fort Leavenworth. Identified sites in the Utah Territory include military camps at Camp Crosman, Camp Floyd (later known as Fort Crittenden), and Fort Bridger. Activities include views of American bison hunting and hare hunting as well as views of soldiers in camps. Includes an interior view of the quarters of Lewis Henry Little as well as an interior view of a Mormon family at their home.

Arrangement

Organized into two series: I. Watercolors, 1858-1860. II. Pencil Drawings, 1858-1859.

Collection Contents

Series I: Watercolors, 1858-1860

English

Arranged alphabetically by title.

b. 1, f. 1	<p>Exterior View of American Bison Hunting <i>1 watercolor, 25.8 x 36.5 centimeters, on sheet, 25.8 x 36.5 centimeters 1 pencil drawing, 25.8 x 36.5 centimeters, on sheet, 25.8 x 36.5 centimeters</i></p> <p>Watercolor that depicts an American bison hunting scene and landscape. The foreground includes a wounded bison as well as a United States Army captain in uniform riding on the side of a horse and holding a revolver. The middle ground includes a man wearing civilian clothing astride a horse and pointing a revolver at the wounded bison in the foreground. The background includes another man riding a horse carrying a rifle as well as seven other bison.</p> <p>The verso consists of a pencil drawing, likely a preparatory sketch for the watercolor. It includes elements of the foreground and middle ground of the watercolor consisting of the United States Army captain in uniform riding on the side of a horse, the man wearing civilian clothing astride a horse, and the wounded bison.</p> <p>Subjects: American bison hunting -- Pictorial works</p>	1858 August-1860 March
b. 1, f. 2	<p>Exterior View of Camp Floyd, Utah Territory <i>1 watercolor, 8 x 16.1 centimeters, on sheet, 10.5 x 18.5 centimeters</i></p> <p>Camp Floyd was a United States Army post established in August 1858 at Cedar Valley, Utah Territory, named for then Secretary of War John B. Floyd (1806-1863) and then renamed Fort Crittenden in 1861 after Kentucky Senator John J. Crittenden (1787-1863). The 7th United States Infantry was assigned to the installation from September 1858 to April 1860. The military installation was abandoned in July 1861.</p> <p>Watercolor that depicts Camp Floyd, Utah Territory, and the surrounding landscape from an elevated position. The foreground includes buildings surrounding a parade ground with a United States of America flag. The background includes rock outcroppings.</p>	1858 September-1860 March
b. 1, f. 3	<p>Exterior View of Hare Hunting <i>1 watercolor, 18.7 x 28.6 centimeters, on sheet, 18.7 x 28.6 centimeters</i></p> <p>Watercolor that depicts a hare hunting scene and landscape. The foreground includes a man wearing civilian clothes and a bayonet scabbard running with two dogs chasing after a hare. The middle ground includes figures holding rifles posited along a dirt road as well as a figure mounted on a horse. The background includes a large group of figures as well as three figures riding horses.</p>	1858 August-1860 March

- b. 1, f. 4 Interior View of a Mormon Dwelling in Utah Territory 1859
1 watercolor painting, 13.1 x 20.8 centimeters, on sheet, 19.4 x 25.4 centimeters
- Interior view of a single-room dwelling of a Mormon family with adobe walls and a wooden roof as well as a fireplace and stove. The family includes two infants, a toddler, two young boys, three women, and a man as well as a cat and dog. One woman nurses an infant while the other infant lays in a cradle and another woman plays with the toddler. One young boy wearing a dress plays with the dog while the other boy sits on a bench with his back to the viewer. The third woman stands with her back to the viewer while the man sits in a chair. The room also includes laundry drying on a clothesline and corn drying on a rack as well as tables and a bed.
- Manuscript inscription on recto: "Interior of a Mormon house."
- Signed and dated in the lower left corner of the drawing: "H. V. A. Baron de Sommerau-Beckh 1859."
- Manuscript inscription on verso: "#300 dark blue & gold."
-

Series II: Pencil Drawings, 1858-1859

Arranged alphabetically by title.

b. 1, f. 5	<p>Exterior View of a United States Army Camp, probably near Fort Leavenworth, Kansas Territory <i>1 pencil drawing, 14.8 x 20.2 centimeters, on sheet, 14.8 x 20.2 centimeters</i></p> <p>Exterior view of a camp, probably at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, that includes four tents as well as men and horses interspersed among the structures.</p> <p>Many items and individuals in the scene include letters from "A" through "I" applied to them and a legend that describes each. Most of the identified persons were members of the United States Army 7th Infantry.</p> <p>Descriptions include: (A) the tent of "Munro," probably Lieutenant Colonel John Munroe (died 1861) of the United States 4th Artillery (he commanded Fort Leavenworth May 1858-June 1859) as well as "Pa" and Lett" sitting under the tent fly; (B) tent of Captain Little, probably Captain Lewis Henry Little (1817-1862); (C) tent of Lieutenant Ryan, probably Second Lieutenant George E. Ryan (1836-1864), which also depicts him under the tent fly writing; (D) tent of Lieutenant Hancock, probably David F. Hancock (approximately 1833-1880); (E) tent of Lieutenant Brooks, probably Edward J. Brooks, who served in the United States Army from June 1855 to May 1861; (F) Miner's tent; (G) a horse named "Cheyanne"; (H) an orderly; (I) wagon master mounted on a horse.</p> <p>Sommer executed the drawing on a sheet of ruled paper.</p>	1858 March-August
b. 1, f. 6	<p>Exterior View of Fort Bridger, Utah Territory <i>1 pencil drawing, 12.2 x 19.5 centimeters, on sheet, 12.2 x 19.5 centimeters</i></p> <p>Fort Bridger was initially a fur trading outpost established by Jim Bridger (1804-1881) and Louis Vasquez (1798-1868) in 1842 at the Blacks Fork of the Green River in Oregon Country, which later became Utah Territory and then Wyoming. The site became a resupply point for wagon trains on the Oregon Trail, California Trail, and Mormon Trail. In 1858, the United States Army converted the trading outpost into a military post during the Utah Expedition. The Army abandoned Fort Bridger briefly at points, including 1861-1862 and 1878-1880, and officially closed it in 1890.</p> <p>Exterior view that depicts Fort Bridger, Utah Territory, including the façade of the installation as well as figures in the foreground standing and on horseback as well as tents and wagons.</p> <p>Manuscript inscription on recto: "Fort Bridger. 4 Septbr 1858."</p>	1858 September 4

b. 1, f. 7	<p>Interior View of the Quarters of Captain Lewis Henry Little <i>1 pencil drawing, 16.1 x 30 centimeters, on sheet 19.9 x 33.7 centimeters</i></p> <p>Lewis Henry Little (1817-1862) was a United States Army officer, 1839-1861, as well as an officer in the Confederate States Army, 1861-1862. He was born in Baltimore, Maryland, the son of Catharine Levely Little (1788-1867) and Peter Little (1775-1830). Little enlisted as a second lieutenant in the 5th Infantry in July 1839 and promoted to first lieutenant in 1847. He received a brevet rank of captain for service during the Mexican War and earned the full rank of captain in August 1847. During the Utah Expedition, Little commanded of Company E of the United States 7th Infantry. He resigned from the United States Army in May 1861. During the American Civil War he served as an adjutant general for Sterling Price (1809-1867) in the Missouri State Guard of the Confederate States of America. In April 1862 he became a brigadier general and commanded the 1st Division in the Army of the West. Little died during the Battle of luka in Mississippi in September 1862.</p> <p>Interior view of the quarters that includes a figure sitting in a chair and reading in front of a fireplace as well as a dog. The room also include a field desk, bed, storage chest, and trunk as well as hats, swords, and a long gun hanging on the walls.</p> <p>Manuscript inscription on recto: "Interior of Cap Littles quarters at Camp Floyd UT, January 11th 1859."</p>	1859 January 11
b. 1, f. 8	<p>Interior View of Twelve Men in a Tent at Camp Crosman, Utah Territory <i>1 pencil, ink, and wash drawing, 12.3 x 18.8 centimeters, on sheet, 16.8 x 22.7 centimeters</i></p> <p>Camp Crosman was a temporary United States Army post established in November 1858 at the Salt Creek Valley, Utah Territory, approximately six miles west of Nephi.</p> <p>Interior view that depicts eleven men sitting on bundles and on the ground in a tent as well as one man standing. The men wear a mixture of civilian clothing and military uniforms. Other items in the scene include a stove and folding cook fire tripod.</p> <p>Manuscript inscription on recto: "Interior of a Private Soldiers (sic) Tent at Camp Crosman in Salt-Creek-Valley, U.T. (Decbr 1858)."</p>	1858 December
b. 1, f. 9	<p>Interior View of Two Men in a Tent <i>1 pencil drawing, 12.4 x 20 centimeters, on sheet, 12.4 x 20 centimeters</i></p> <p>Interior view that depicts two men sitting on cot in a tent. Other items in the scene include a folding camp table and wooden crates as well as a Sibley stove and folding cook fire tripod.</p> <p>The artist executed the drawing on paper manufactured by Platner & Smith firm in Lee, Massachusetts.</p>	approximately 1858-1859

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Functions

Utah Expedition (1857-1858) -- Pictorial works

Subjects

American bison hunting -- Pictorial works

Hare hunting -- Pictorial works

Mormons -- Utah Territory -- Pictorial works

Geographic Names

Camp Crosman -- Pictorial works

Fort Bridger (Wyo.) -- Pictorial works

Fort Crittenden (Utah) -- Pictorial works

Kansas Territory -- Pictorial works

Utah Territory -- Pictorial works

Wyoming -- Pictorial works

Genres / Formats

Drawings (visual works)

Pencil drawings

Watercolors (paintings)

Names

Brooks, Edward J.

Hancock, David F.

Little, Lewis Henry, 1817-1862 -- Homes and
haunts -- Pictorial works

Munroe, John, -1861

Ryan, George E

Corporate Body

United States. Army -- Utah Territory --

Pictorial works

Acquired From

Perry Adams Antiques, bookseller