

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received **NY** 7 1986

date entered JUN 12 1986

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Provo Canyon Guard Quarters

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Off U.S. Highway 189 not for publication

city, town vicinity of congressional district

state Utah code 049 county Utah code 049

3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	N/A <input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: vacant; unused

4. Owner of Property

name Utah Power and Light Company

street & number P.O. Box 899

city, town Salt Lake City vicinity of state Utah 84110

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Utah County Courthouse

street & number Center Street and University Avenue

city, town Provo state Utah

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None has this property been determined eligible? yes  no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

## 7. Description

**Condition**  
 excellent     deteriorated  
 good     ruins  
 fair     unexposed

**Check one**  
 unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**  
 original site  
 moved    date \_\_\_\_\_

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Provo Canyon Guard Quarters, built in 1857-58, is an oval shaped stone breastwork approximately 12 x 20 feet with walls ranging from approximately 1 to 2 1/2 feet above ground. It is located on a knoll a few hundred feet above the canyon floor (approximate elevation 5,330) on the north side of Provo Canyon. The walls of the guard quarters, constructed of undressed stones laid without mortar, are somewhat deteriorated with some sections having tumbled down almost completely. Other sections of the wall remain remarkably intact, however, giving clear evidence that the structure was assembled with at least some degree of care and purpose. The guard quarters is still clearly discernible despite its somewhat deteriorated condition and the presence of scrub oak and other vegetation within the enclosure. No subsequent improvements or additions appear to have been made to the structure. Archeological excavation at the site may yield additional information regarding the structure's history.

Future plans for the Provo Canyon Guard Quarters are uncertain at this date. A non-profit group is currently attempting to obtain the property from the present owner, a utility company. This group would like to protect the site, make it available to the public in a controlled manner, and sponsor an interpretive tour of the site. Until this group takes over ownership of the property, if it ever does, the status of the structure will probably remain unchanged. Since the guard quarters is located in a fairly remote area and since it is not well known there is little danger of it being adversely affected in the immediate future.

Total number of contributing structures: 1

Total number of noncontributing structures: 0

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** 1857-1858 **Builder/Architect** unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Built in 1857-58, the Provo Canyon Guard Quarters is historically significant as one of only three remaining fortifications built by the Mormons during the Utah War as a defense against the threatened attack of the U.S. Army. The 2500-man Johnston's Army was sent to Utah by President James Buchanan to quell what he perceived to be a rebellion by the Mormons. Although the confrontation ended peaceably with no open warfare taking place, the event was of paramount significance in the political and economic history of the state. Politically, the Utah War marked the beginning of over thirty years of conflict between the federal government and the Mormon church, and it illustrates the uneasy compromise that was forged between them as each sought to maintain peace with the other while retaining a significant degree of political power. Economically, the "invasion" proved to be a boon for the Mormon settlements as the army, upon leaving the territory at the outset of the Civil War, sold thousands of dollars of its goods and equipment for nominal costs.

The Utah War of 1857-58 was a bloodless confrontation between the U.S. Army and the Mormons, members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who had settled the Utah territory in 1847. The "war" was primarily the result of misunderstandings on the part of both the Mormons and the U.S. government. Some of the reports filed by non-Mormon appointees in the Utah Territorial government painted an exaggerated or wholly fabricated view of the Mormons' opposition to the federal government and the illegal actions of Brigham Young and other church/political leaders. In addition to the effects of those reports, anti-Mormon attitudes in the East were stirred up by the dispute over polygamy. The Mormons claimed the right to engage in plural marriage as part of their religion, while the federal government and the nation as a whole staunchly opposed the practice, identifying it and slavery as the "twin relics of barbarism." As a result of those reports and disputes, President James Buchanan sent 2500 troops to Utah in the summer of 1857 to quell what he deemed to be a rebellion.

News of the impending "invasion" by the U.S. Army elicited a strong determination to resist them by the Mormons. Territorial governor and LDS church president Brigham Young responded:

"Liars have reported that this people have committed treason, and upon their representations the President has ordered out troops to assist officering the territory. We have transgressed no law, neither do we intend to do so; but as for any nation coming to destroy this people, God Almighty being my helper, it shall not be."<sup>1</sup>

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Jensen, J. Marinus. History of Provo. Provo, Utah: J. Marinus Jensen, 1924.

Sutton, Wain, ed. Utah - A Centennial History. New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1949, 3 vols.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 2.0

Quadrangle name Bridal Veil Falls

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UMT References

A 

1	2	4	4	8	0	8	0	4	4	6	5	4	4	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

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D 

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E 

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F 

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G 

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H 

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**Verbal boundary description and justification** Beginning at a point approx. 494.48 feet S and 2921.72 feet W from W<sup>4</sup> corner of Sec 33 T5S R3E; thence S 422.21 feet, W 253.57 feet, N 245.24 feet to a point on the southerly side of a dirt road, thence along said road as follows: N 67°09'40" E 59.91 feet, N 35°24'49" E 68.44 feet, N 49°44'11" E 139.91 feet, N 81°46'03" E 52.48 feet to beg

**List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries**

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
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state	code	county	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Roger Roper/Historian

organization Utah State Historical Society

date April 1986

street & number 300 Rio Grande

telephone (801) 533-6017

city or town Salt Lake City

state Utah

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*A. Kent Powell*

title A. Kent Powell, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer date April 30, 1986

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

*William B. Bushong*  
for Keeper of the National Register

date 6/12/86

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Provo Canyon Guard Quarters

Continuation sheet Utah County, Utah

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Governor Young declared martial law in the territory and the territorial militia, known as the Nauvoo Legion from the Mormons' earlier days in Nauvoo, Illinois, was mustered to help defend the Salt Lake Valley. The majority of the troops, some 1250 men, gathered at Echo Canyon to form the main line of defense at that strategic location. Stone breastworks were constructed on the tops of tall cliffs at the narrowest part of the canyon, and ditches, rifle pits and other fortifications were built below in the bottom of the canyon. In addition to the Echo Canyon fortifications, breastworks were constructed at Mormon Flat, located closer in along the principal route into the Salt Lake Valley, and in Provo Canyon, an alternate route into the valley. Smaller groups of soldiers were sent into Wyoming and Idaho to harass the army as it approached the Utah Territory. Their instructions were as follows:

Proceed at once to annoy them in every possible way. Use every exertion to stampede their animals and set fire to their trains. Burn the whole country before them, and on their flanks. Keep them from sleeping by night surprises; blockade the road by falling trees or destroying the river fords where you can. Watch for opportunities to set fire to the grass before them that can be burned. Keep your men concealed as much as possible, and guard against surprise....

P.S. Take no life, but destroy their trains and stampede or drive away their animals at every opportunity.<sup>2</sup>

By the spring of 1858 the Utah War was well on its way to being resolved. Mormon scouting parties and small bands of militia had harassed Johnston's Army during the fall of 1857 to the point that it was forced to establish a winter camp outside the Utah Territory near Fort Bridger, Wyoming. That hiatus in the "invasion" allowed diplomatic efforts to proceed which eventually brought about the bloodless resolution of the Utah War. Chief among the negotiators for peace was Colonel Thomas L. Kane, a long-time friend of the Mormons and a respected figure among the federal hierarchy. Kane helped convince Brigham Young that the federal troops would not make war on the Mormons and that Young's replacement as governor, Albert Cumming, was trustworthy. Kane also helped convince the federal administration that the Mormons were not in a stage of open rebellion as had been reported. President Buchanan felt additional pressure to quietly resolve the Utah War as public opinion shifted in favor of the Mormons and as charges of ineptness and corruption weakened his administration's position. A peaceful agreement was worked out wherein Brigham Young and the Mormons allowed the installation of new federal appointees in the territorial government but required that the federal troops be stationed forty miles outside Salt Lake City. The troops remained there until the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861. Their encampment, Camp Floyd, was eventually dismantled. Historic archeological work is currently underway at that site.

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The Provo Canyon breastwork was the smallest of the Utah War fortifications and, because of its location, the least likely to be involved in a defense against the army. Ten men were assigned to duty there. The circular breastwork, located on a prominent hill on the north side of the canyon and opposite Bridal Veil Falls, offered a commanding view up the canyon. The facility was very rudimentary, consisting of dry masonry walls approximately two feet in height with no roof and no interior walls. Water for the men stationed there was obtained from a nearby spring, which in later years became known locally as Guard Quarters Spring.<sup>3</sup> It is unknown how long the Provo Canyon Guard Quarters was manned, but considering its meager accommodations it was probably not occupied during the cold winter months of 1857-58 while the Utah War smoldered. The guard quarters was never involved in any of the actual events of the war, since Johnston's Army chose not to come down Provo Canyon and since the war never fully materialized.

The Provo Canyon Guard Quarters, in addition to its role in the Utah War, has also been identified as a lookout station to observe the Indians as they moved up and down the canyon.<sup>4</sup> Indian hostilities in the area virtually ceased with the end of the Blackhawk Indian War in 1868, so it is likely that the guard quarters were used very little, if at all, after that time.

The other Utah War breastworks, those at Mormon Flat and Echo Canyon, are also still remaining and in relatively good condition. The dry masonry construction of those breastworks is similar to that of the Provo Canyon Guard Quarters, and the location of the Echo Canyon breastworks, high above the canyon floor, is also much like the siting of the Provo Canyon structure, indicating their common purpose and construction dates. The Echo Canyon and Mormon Flat breastworks are potentially eligible for the National Register, possibly as part of a thematic resource nomination that might include other resources related to the Utah War. The documentation for such a thematic nomination is not scheduled for completion in the near future, therefore the Provo Canyon Guard Quarters is being submitted for individual consideration at this time at the request of interested parties.

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted in Wain Sutton, ed., Utah - A Centennial History, Vol. II (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1949), pp. 593-594.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>J. Marinus Jensen, History of Provo (published by the author, 1924), pp. 139-141.

<sup>4</sup>Typescript of oral interviews with long-time Provo area residents. Available in National Register File, Utah State Historical Society.