Introduction

This brief “journal” is very significant in the history of the Mormon colonization for the Great Basin for several reasons: First, it pictures vividly the Indians in their primitive state, before they had come into any contact with the white man; second, it portrays the dedication and fervor of the missionaries assigned to this hopeless task; third, it gives in minute detail the doings of this group in the physical labor of clearing land, securing water, and planting crops as well as in their religious gatherings, where with song and prayer and exhortation they sustained each other. As a result of the temporary success of this Southern Indian Mission, the leaders of the Mormon Church the following year (1855) established five other missions to the Indians, none of which achieved anything like the results obtained here, and all of which were rather quickly abandoned.

Mormon interest in the Indian dates back to the publication of the Book of Mormon in 1830. This book purports to be the story of the Indian tribes of the Americas, presenting them as being of "the blood of Israel" but fallen and cursed with dark skin because of their wickedness. By accepting the Mormon Gospel and living its teachings, they might be redeemed and become again "a white and delight some people." To bring about this happy condition the missionaries were sent out.

1 Juanita Brooks, "Indian Relations on the Mormon Frontier" Utah Historical Quarterly, XII (1944), 10.

Except for one brief mission in 1830 in which Parley P. Pratt and three companions traveled from western New York to the Missouri River preaching to the tribes en route, the Mormons did no proselyting among the Indians before 1854. They maintained a friendly attitude toward the natives they met on their way to Utah; after their arrival they at once tried to set up friendly relations with Chief Walker as a matter of policy.

In spite of the overtures of the Mormons, the Indians began thieving during the winter of 1848-1849, until the militia was called out to hunt down the thieves and recover the horses and cattle. On March 5, 1849, this was accomplished, the price being five Indians killed but no white men injured.

Now Brigham Young had another series of “talks”, and to make them more impressive, on May 4, 1849, wrote a letter for Walker, recommending him as a man of peace. This “talking paper” was so precious to the chief that two years later he would present it to the leaders in the new settlement of Louisa [later Parowan].

Evidently President Young felt confident that his troubles with Walker were over, for on May 12, 1849, addressing a meeting of the Council of Fifty held in the home of Heber
C. Kimball, the clerk quoted him as saying "... that he did not apprehend any danger from the Indians. Neither did he feel, as some Brethren do, he does not want to live among them and take them in his arms until the curse is removed from off them ... . This present race of Indians will never be converted. It mattereth not whether they kill one another off or Some body else do it & as for our sending Missionaries among them to convert them, it is of no use ... ."

2 For a detailed account of this expedition see On the Mormon Frontier, Diaries of Hosea Stout, Juanita Brooks, ed. (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1964), pp. 344-47.

Brigham Young had ambitious plans for building up this new territory of Deseret, which was to him establishing the Kingdom of God. He wanted to plant a colony wherever the water, timber and arable land would support one. With this in mind, on November 23, 1849, he sent Parley P. Pratt with 50 men, 25 wagons, and 30 packhorses and mules to explore the country south along the Old Spanish trail. The wagons were to keep to the road already marked out by the emigrant train piloted by Jefferson Hunt, while horsemen with pack animals explored the canyons and less accessible areas.

The wagons were taken south as far as the site of the present town of Parowan while Pratt himself with a small party went over the rim of the basin to the confluence of the Virgin River and Santa Clara Creek, returning via the Mountain Meadows to the wagons.

Here on Center Creek near the Little Salt Lake they designated the site of the first southern colony and celebrated the birthday of the new town-to-be in ceremonies which included setting up a liberty pole, hoisting a flag, serving a "sumptuous" dinner, and holding a meeting at which songs, speeches, and toasts were in order. The whole was punctuated by salutes from the cannon, which they had brought along. This was on January 8, 1850.

To send people to live so far as this from headquarters would make all friendly advances to the Indians imperative. Yet the very next month, February 1850, the Indians in the vicinity of Utah Lake had became bolder in their thiefings of cattle. Again the militia was called out, this time to an encounter, which was more like slaughter than real war. The male members of two small tribes were almost annihilated.

Soon after this, the idiom "It is cheaper to feed than to fight them" was coined, and from this time on was widely used, as the new outposts of Zion were set up. The southern-most site so dramatically established must be peopled, the call being issued in the fall of 1850. They rendezvoused at Provo, where they organized into companies under Apostle George A. Smith with Joseph Horne, pilot; Thomas H. Wheeler, interpreter; John D. Lee, clerk; Henry Lunt, assistant clerk.


The journey was like none before. The company consisted of 120 men, 30 women, and 18 children traveling in 101 wagons and carriages. With characteristic Mormon attention to detail, each name is listed with age and rank in the Priesthood; the food, supplies, tools; the animals from the 368 oxen to the 18 cats and 121 chickens; their arms and ammunition from the one cannon to the last ounce of powder. Each day's travel, the "sideling" canyon roads where all hands were required to keep the wagons from tipping over, the doubling teams up-hill and hanging onto rages behind going down-hill. Every detail is chronicled by one or the other clerks.

After some little discussion, the group decided to plant their colony on the site dedicated the year before, and set about build-first a public house and then laying out a fort.

Before either could be finished, an advance runner from Walker=s band camped some forty miles to the south brought in the letter given him by Brigham Young on May 4, 1849, and requested that George A. Smith write another to go with the first. Walker was returning from California with a band of about 100 horses and mules, which he had purchased or stolen. Though only a part of the letter, which Apostle Smith wrote remains, that bit is eloquent:

"Louisa, Iron County, Deseret, Friday Feb. 28, 1851 Brother Walker, Indian Chief;
We received a letter from you by one of your men ( Tanterbus) on the 19th inst. dated Salt Lake City May 4th, 1849, written to you by our first President Brigham Young who sent me here with 100 wagons with seeds and farming tools.

We come here heavey loaded and brought but little provisions . . . .


The remainder of the letter was evidently lost, but Walker went in to visit Brigham Young. The “Journal History” for June 9, 1851, notes that:

"Monday, June 9. Pres Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Willard Richards and others met with the Indian Chiefs Walker, Sowiette, Arrapene and Unhoquitch, and interpreter Elijah ["Barney"] Ward in G.S.L. City. The four chiefs named were ordained Elders in the Church.

During the year 1851 same families settled at Nephi and some at Fillmore, which had been designated as the site for the state capitol. In 1852 a group of Mormon missionaries, bound for different parts of the world, came over the road in fifteen wagons, and several kept account of the trip. Some emigrant trains passed also.

In 1853, during the summer, the threat of war by Walker's band drove Brigham Young to order the settlements to "fort up" for their mutual protection, evidence enough that no matter what attempts at establishing friendly relations had been made, the Mormons still feared Walker, and felt that the cooperation of the small local bands was essential for their safety.
This was the condition when the Indian missionaries started on their assignment. The roads were the typical country ones, muddy or dusty, with two mountain ranges to cross, and gullies to go around, but still much improved. These young men had to push the frontier only a few miles ahead so far as physical distance was concerned, but they were embarking on a new social experiment. Young men all of them, with a third scarcely out of their teens, they accepted their assignment with the attitude that they would give it their best efforts.

In more than a century since this experiment was carried on, nothing comparable to it has been attempted again, here or elsewhere in the west. Perhaps the most important single item to come out of it all is this manuscript history written by Thomas Dunlop Brown, picturing so vividly the conditions of the primitive Indian tribes and the problems of attempting to civilize them.

THOMAS DUNLOP BROWN

Thomas D. Brown was born 16 December at Stewartown, Ayrshire, Scotland, the son of James Galt Brown and Agnes Dunlop Brown. Since no brothers or sisters are mentioned anywhere, we must assume that he was an only child. In later years his father taught school in Salt Lake City, so it is certain that the son had goad early training, bath in his home and in the grade schools.

His obituary says that “He left home when about 17 years of age, and proceeded to Mussleboro where he supported and taught himself by teaching school, walking to Edinborough to gain at night the knowledge he imparted to his scholars the next day.”

Evidently he succeeded as a teacher sufficient to be head master of a private school, for among the treasures found in an old trunk was a medal . . . “shaped something like a German cross on a short chain. It locked as though it was made of the old type pewter or vermeil. On one side it read, ‘Mr. T. Brown's Academy’ and under it the year 1834. The ether side carried only the name ‘Edinburgh’.”

6 Salt Lake Tribune, March 23, 1874.
7 Mrs. Dorothy Monson Letter, 8 April 1969.

Whether he had an earlier marriage we do not know, but about 1840 he married Sarah Godwin Sherratt, the widow of Smith Sherratt, who had died about 1833. Mrs. Sherratt lived at Scholargreen, Cheshire, England, on a landed estate, whether hers by inheritance of birth or from her husband we do not know. She had two sons, William and John.

Of the Widow Sherratt we learn mast from the research of Mrs. Gwen Heaton Sherratt, who wrote a pamphlet, “Tobats, the Silent One”, to tell the story of John Sherratt, the family ancestor. According to her, the widow Sherratt, or “Lady Sherratt”, had a palatial home with many luxuries and certainly with all the comforts - servants in the house to wait an every need, farm hands to care for the fields and orchards. Treasures saved from that long ago time bear this out.

John Sherratt was born January 25, 1828. While still an infant, he suffered an attack of Scarlet Fever, the complications from which left him deaf and dumb. He and his
older brother William joined the Church, being baptized along with their mother, by Elder Orson Hyde on 6 December 1846. Simon Carter confirmed him. He wrote of his conversion and his faith in the Church in a letter printed in the Millennial Star, 13 December 1846, under the title, "Reflections of a Deaf and Dumb Young Man." This is an interesting article indeed.

They were evidently converted by their foster father, who had been baptized two years earlier, on June 9, 1844, by Elder Thomas Ward. They also had a little half-brother, James and a sister, Sarah Godwin Brown.

By this time the family were living at Liverpool, where Thomas D. Brown taught school for many years, and later became cashier of the British and North American Mail S.S. Company.

It would seem that the father of Thomas D. Brown also joined the Church about the same time, for the Millennial Star for 15 November 1848 carries an article signed James Galt Brown, 60 Clark Street, Airdrie, October 12. Under the title, FAITH AN EFFECTIVE REMEDY FOR CHOLERA, it relates the instant healing of Mr. Archibald Geddes and his wife by administration of the Mormon Elders. Brother Eli B. Kelsey was presiding there and offered the prayer.

Thomas D. Brown came into prominence in the Church during the General Conference held at Manchester in the Hall of Science, April 6-7-8, 1845. At this time a group of ten was selected to draw up the rules to govern a new joint Stock Company. They were excused from the meetings on Monday and worked through until Tuesday afternoon, when T. D. Brown read the articles one by one to the congregation for their consideration and sustaining vote. The forty-five propositions were accepted, providing that fifteen shareholders act as directors of the company, and that the seven who resided at Liverpool be the regular directors, with Thomas Ward president and corresponding secretary, Thomas Wilson secretary and book-keeper, Reuben Hedlock and Thomas Dunlop Brown trustees and cash-keepers for the same.

Immediately following this action, it was voted that Thomas Dunlop Brown be ordained an Elder, and "a vote of thanks was cheerfully given him for his un-wearing and active services in this conference."

Through the next three years the name of T. D. Brown appears often in the pages of the Millennial Star in advertising books, reporting conference activities, and submitting excerpts from other reports. His most impressive contribution was a LETTER TO W. CUNNINGHAM, ESQ., which filled the first pages of the November 18 and December 1st issues of 1848.

As the family prepared to emigrate to America in late 1848, Sarah Brown wrote a farewell letter to relatives and friends, setting forth her beliefs and reasons for joining the Mormon Church. It was printed under the title MRS. T. D. BROWN'S FARE WELL LETTER' It is well written, indeed, an explanation of her own faith and an appeal to her friends to investigate Mormonism.

At the end is a statement signed by her two sons, William and John Sherratt, which begins, "We willingly concur in the sentiments, doctrines, and testimony of our beloved
mother, as recorded above, and having obeyed the same Gospel, we have received a measure of the same spirit."

8 Millennial Star, 7 (1846), 185-187.

Although we do not have the name of the ship or the date of the sailing of this family, we know they were established in Kanesville by midsummer, for the Frontier Guardian for August 22, 1849, carried an impressive announcement. In large headlines it declared, that a LARGE IMPORTATION OF ENGLISH & FRENCH DRYGOODS, HARDWARE AND CUTLERY was this day opened for sale to the Ladies and Gentlemen of Kanesville. The list included groceries, yardage, ready-made, tools, spices, liquors, with brandy by the gallon, powder, lead, vinegar, and tinman’s solder - in fact, almost anything “all offered cheap for cash”, by BROWN & BARHAM. August 22, 1849 9

By October 14 following, the business had changed hands, and was now Brown & Miller’s store at a location opposite the first, the Miller being Henry W., well-known frontiersman. Now the stock is not listed in such detail and the public is informed that:

“We have re-marked all goods . . . Our motto in business is and shall be 'Small profits and Quick Return.' “ 10

A note at the end tells past customers that “All accounts due to the late firm - Brown & Barham, will be received, settled and accounted for by Thomas D. Brown at Brown and Millers store.” 11

One other announcement tells of tragedy in the family. The Frontier Guardian for March 20th, 1850, notes:

Died - in this town on the 7th last, of quick consumption, Mr. William Sherratt aged 28 years, from England.

Since no mention is made of a family, we assume that William was unmarried, and perhaps had been in poor health even before the family left England. Without following the merchandising activities of T. D. Brown in detail, we observe that he remains in partnership with Miller, but they again move their stand, this time to the Bluffs. By late 1851 he had added violins and accordians to his list of merchandise.

9 Millennial Star, 11 (1849), 5.
10 See appendix I.
11 Appendix 11.

The Frontier Guardian, for Nov. 12, 1851, notes that:

“People here say that Bro. T. D. Brown has been absent from this place for about two months on business to England...”

This trip might well have been tied up with the position he had held in the organizing of the emigrant companies for the four years before he sailed to America, or with the settling of business of his own. Perhaps it was just to help his parents emigrate, for according to the family genealogist, Mrs. Gwen Heaton Sherratt, we learn that, “On
January 26, 1852, T. D. Brown baptized his mother, Agnes Dunlop Brown, and she emigrated March 6, 1852. T. D. Brown is listed on the same sailing.

The L.D.S. Church Chronology on that date says:

“The ship Rockaway sailed from Liverpool, England, with 30 Saints and machinery for the Deseret Sugar Manufacturory, under the direction of Elias Morris. It arrived in New Orleans after seven week’s passage.

Apostle John Taylor, accompanied by about twenty Saints, sailed from Liverpool for Boston, on his way home.”

The second ship was not named. The Browns could have been on either; we know that by November 5, 1852, Thomas D. Brown was operating his store on Salt Lake City Main Street, for on that day Lorenzo Brown was trying to buy a record book from him.

Records of the various companies across the plains differ widely, some giving in great order and detail the names and genealogical information of all, and others being very brief. Of the later kind are the records of Capt. Robert Weimer, of the 15th Company for ‘1852. He names James Brown, Agnes Brown, and T. D. Brown, but makes no mention of the wife or children. Whether or not they had taken at least a part of the goods from Council Bluffs and gone ahead earlier, we do not know.”

12 Journal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Dec. 31, 1852, Supplement p. 100.

The Salt Lake County Assessment Roll for 1853, J. Y. Hutchinson, Assessor, gives much interesting information as to the economic status of the residents of the county, at least the comparative wealth of the citizens in goods and chattels. Names are listed alphabetically with locations within the various Wards.

Brown, Thomas [no initial] 14th Ward
- Waggon & carriages: 120
- Horses: 150
- Mules: 60
- Oxen & steers: 25
- Cows: 150
- Watches & clocks: 6
- Sheep: 300
- Pigs: 6
- Farmer & Merchant tools: 120
- Money Loaned or on rent: 150
- Household furniture: 25
- Other personal property: 300

Total amount of tax: $19.45
Territorial tax: $1.00

It is clear that here is a man of some substance, compared to his neighbors in this section. Only Seth M. Blair would rival him - or exceed him - in the matter of household
furniture, while having less in wagons and teams.

The first home of T. D. Brown was evidently in connection with his place of business on First West, as is shown on an early map of the city preserved at the Utah State Historical Society office. Later he would build his permanent home at 522 East Second South, a well-planned, two-story structure, finished with quality materials, a fine stair-case, and decorated windows. This building was remodeled (1967-68) for offices.

That the Thomas D. Brown family was well set-up in Salt Lake City when he left to go on this Southern Indian Mission is shown by an excerpt from a letter written by George A. Smith on 27 February 1855.

Since I last wrote you, another association has sprung into existence, entitled the Deseret Philharmonic Society, whose object is the cultivation of vocal and instrumental music. Elder James Smithie is their president and their meetings for the present are held in Elder T. D. Brown's large room.

These items show that not only was the Brown family well-to-do, but that Mrs. Brown was a woman of culture, interested in music and probably the owner of an organ and other musical instruments. With the help of her son James, she would manage the business at the store.

For Thomas D. Brown himself, this “Journal” constitutes a personal diary as well as an official history of the mission. His complete loyalty and devotion to the church is evident in every line, as is also his accuracy in recording the missionary activities.

CONCLUSION

(Journal of the Southern Indian Mission - Diary of Thomas D. Brown, Edited by Juanita Brooks (Utah State University Press, Western Text Society Number 4, Logan, Utah) 1972 p.139 Conclusion)

“The record here reproduced, “The History of the Southern Indian Mission”, is eloquent not only of Thomas D. Brown’s ability as a writer, but of his complete loyalty to the Church. The brief summary of his continued activity after he returned to the Salt Lake City area is accurate. From the time of his call to the Southern Mission until his visit in Salt Lake City in 1856, he had been completely dedicated. Now he expected to return to the young wife he had left there, if not to remain, at least to move her to the North. From his various assignments, following each other in such quick succession, it would seem that he had to write for her father to arrange transportation for her or to bring her north in his own outfit.

We find no record or folklore concerning this; we know only that Mary Lucretia Willis Brown was set up in a home at Kaysville, where her two sons were born. Evidently the children of the first family had no knowledge of this marriage.

By 1859 Thomas D. Brown had become disillusioned and critical. On the 23rd of December that year he was excommunicated “for apostasy and for writing anonymous letters.” On 9 January 1862, he was re-baptized into the Church.
When Thomas D. Brown came to Utah, he was unable to transport all the goods in his store. His diary mentions letters written to one and another person regarding them. In early 1862, with Sarah, he went back to Kanesville and helped Henry W. Miller to close out the business and come west. The record shows that “T. D. Brown and his wife crossed the plains to Utah with the wagon train of Henry D. Miller.” A wagon train is usually at least twenty wagons; whether more or less, this was the final closing out and settlement with Henry W. Miller.

Brown evidently became alienated from the Church again, for his name is signed to the letter of Gentile merchants offering to leave the state if the Mormons would settle their outstanding accounts and buy up the stock at cost. This was in 1869.

The rule of the Mormon Church was that even though a woman’s husband left the Church, she must remain in; she must take her children and leave him. Though Mary Lucretia hated to do this, she moved back south to her family in 1864, or early 1865. That year on the 10th of October, she was married to Elisha Samuel Groves, who was born September 14 [1840], at Far West, Caldwell County, Missouri.

Thomas D. Brown carried on his business in Salt Lake City and opened a branch store in Stockton, which his son James managed. He became a part of the group of dissenters of the early 1870’s who insisted upon investing in mining stock, and became active in the Liberal Party.

When he died, 20 March 1874, of gastric fever, his funeral services were held at his home. This was on Sunday, March 22, the speakers being Judge McKean, E. L. T. Harrison, T. B. H. Stenhouse, John Chislett, Dr. Conger, and W. H. Shearman.

… Many of the friends were unable to find even standing room in the house, and a long train of carriages followed the hearse to the City Cemetery, where the remains were deposited in the family plot…

Mr. Brown was well known throughout Utah as one of the earliest and most fearless advocates of the republican principles in opposition to theocratic rule;… but… he avoided the bitterness of spirit and expression which are apt to characterize earnest natures… and maintained that gentlemanly courtesy towards all men that commanded the respect of foes, as well as friends… (Salt Lake Daily Tribune, March 24, 1874).

A brief summary of the descendants of Thomas D. Brown seems to be in order here.

His wife Sarah G. Sherratt Brown continued to live in the family home until her death 16 July 1881.

John Sherratt, his step-son, remained to make his home in Cedar City. On February 1856 he married Christina Bullock, avoiding her father’s authority by slipping away with her and a group of their friends to Hamilton’s Fort, where the ceremony was performed. Since Christina’s mother was dead, she remained as mistress in her father’s house for several years. She had nine children, seven of whom grew to maturity and married. John Sherratt drew Lot No. 3 of Block 24 in the town survey. Here they later built
a spacious house. They also had a ranch home on the mountain where they operated a dairy during the summer. John Sherratt died 18th January 1899, age 71, much respected and loved in spite of his handicap.

His son James G. Brown, born 7 November 1842 at Liverpool, England, had been in partnership since he helped to teach the school in Cedar City the winter of 1855-56. In Salt Lake City the store was T. D. Brown & Son, even after a branch had been set up in Stockton with James in charge. He died at the family home in Salt Lake City 3 March 1886. His three children were James G. Brown II, Nellie B. Lemmon, Salt Lake City, and Rosa B. Robinson, Pioche, Nevada.

His daughter, Sara G. Brown, taught school in Salt Lake City for many years. She was married to a Mr. Goodwin, and with him moved to Logan, where she became a member of the first staff of the Utah State University, then the State Agricultural College. She taught music and served as librarian. She had no children.

From his second wife, Mary Lucretia Willis, Thomas D. Brown had three children:

A daughter, Emily, was born at Cedar City and died at the age of six weeks.

His son John William Brown, was born 2 November 1858, at Kaysville, Utah. He returned with his mother to Southern Utah, grew up in Kanarraville, and married two of the Berry sisters. During the general emigration to Arizona, he took his families there, settling at St. Johns. From 1886 to 1888 he labored as a Mormon Missionary in Great Britain. On November 3, 1926, he was set apart as Second Counselor to the Stake President of the St. Johns Stake. He had a large posterity, with many distinguished people among them.

The second son, Frank E. [Francis Alonzo] Brown, was also born at Kaysville, and came south with his mother. He married Amy Jane Middleton, and made his home at Hamilton’s Fort, where he built a large home. His family of nine children also had teachers, doctors, and professional people among them, all proud of their grandfather, Thomas D. Brown.

For those who are interested in the family dates, we include here inscriptions on the large stone in the Brown plot, Salt Lake Cemetery.

Orson Smith Sherratt – Died 1852 Age 3 yrs.
James Galt Brown – Born 1786 Died 1860
Agnes Dunlop Brown – Born 1786 Died 1860
Thomas Dunlop Brown – Born Dec. 10 1807 Died March 7, 1874 – Born Ayrshire Scotland

Editor’s Statement

In the spring of 1936 I came from St. George to Salt Lake City in search of information on my family history. I must wait for audience at the Church Historian’s Office, so I picked from a shelf of loose-leaf holders, each labeled with a stick-on marker, the one
marked “History of the Southern Indian Mission”. The very thing I had been looking for!
But it was written by a Thomas D. Brown, not Jacob Hamblin.

Leafing through it, I saw such titles as “The Medicine Man”, “The Supper”, “An
Indian Wedding”. The writing was beautiful, the spelling and punctuation perfect,
everything as exact as if it were ready for the printer.

I have never seen this item since. But some years later, when Dale L. Morgan was
working in the L.D.S. Church library, I wrote him describing this record and urging him, if
possible, to copy it. I was more than delighted when he sent me a carbon of this record.

His description was of a hard-backed ledger and of a document done at the time,
with abbreviations and misspelled words:

*Coy, waggons, Brors, and usually & for and,* so I knew at once that the manuscript I
had seen was one done by a copyist, probably A. Milton Musser, who spent years in the
Historian’s Office “Rewriting Church History”, as he said in his Diary.

Dr. A. R. Mortensen planned to print this Diary in serial form in the *Utah State
Historical Quarterly,* but one thing or another moved to prevent it. In the early 1960’s I
prepared it for the University of Utah Press. Again it was a delayed, but in the meantime
the actual ORIGINAL was located, proving that both the others had been made as part of
the program to preserve history.

In order to keep the flavor at the times we have retained the spelling of the words
mentioned above, but on occasion have inserted periods and capital letters for clarity and
ease in reading.

It is a great satisfaction to me, after some 35 long years, to have this important
record made available... Juanita Brooks