

JOHN BROWN | Father of Harriet Brown Ward

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WHO WAS INTERVIEWED by CHARLES DICKENS

JOHN BROWN was born December 13, 1816, in West Lavington, Wiltshire, England to Henry Brown and Ann Davies Goding. John was a plain industrious laborer, working for 25 years on the same farm for eight shillings (about \$2.00) a week. He married Sarah Mundy and to them was born six children, three dying in infancy. The living were Harriet, Sarah, and Eliza. The family was the first to accept Mormonism in their locality.

The mother died in 1850, 27 February, and one year later Mr. Brown married Jane Wilkins. To this union was born two sons: Issac, who died in infancy and George. Sorrow came into this home again in the death of the mother, Jane in 1861.

John heard the call to go to Zion and on May 20th, 1863, left England for America with his son George and his youngest daughter, Eliza. His other daughter, Sarah remained in England with her family of nine children and her husband. She never came to America. Harriet preceded them to America with her husband, James Ward.

The father set sail from London 4 June 1863, on the ship "Amazon" in company of 882 emigrant Saints under the direction of William Bramwell. Before the ship sailed, as was the custom, President George Q. Cannon was making a farewell address to the saints when the noted novelist, Charles Dickens came aboard the ship. The purpose of his visit was to observe the emigrants. President Cannon met him and a most interesting interview followed. After President Cannon left him to attend to duties Mr. Dickens turned to talk to one of the emigrants who stood near him watching new emigrant arrivals on the ship. The emigrant who stood near him was John Brown, the subject of this sketch:

The interview as given below is taken from Dickens "Uncommercial Traveler". Mr Dickens addresses John Brown as "Wiltshire and himself as "Traveler",

similar under this same head the "Uncommercial Traveler" underwent discomforture from Wiltshire" labor, a simple, fresh collared farm labor of 38 who stood beside him looking on at the new arrivals and with whom he had this dialogue:

"TRAVELER": Would you mind me asking you what part of the country you are from?

"WILTSHIRE": Not a bit,-- I've worked all my life on Salsbury Plain right under the shadow of the Stone Hedge. You wouldn't believe it, but I 'ave.

"TRAVELER": And a pleasant country it is.

"WILTSHIRE": O 'tis a pleasant country.

"TRAVELER": Have you any family on Board?

"WILTSHIRE": Two children, a boy and a gal, that's my gal, sixteen. (pointing to a girl who is writing on a boat) I'll go and fetch my boy here. (Wiltshire disappears and presently comes back with a big boy. He is shy with a super abundance of boots, a boy 11 years, who is not at all glad to be presented) He is a fine boy too and a boy for work. (boy having undutifully bolted Wiltshire drops him.)

"TRAVELER": It must cost you a great deal of money to go so far.

"WILTSHIRE": A power of money, three strong, eight shillings a week, eight shillings a week, put out of our wages for ever so long.

"TRAVELER": I wonder how you ever did it!

"WILTSHIRE": (Recognizes in this a kindred spirit)

JOHN BROWN

See there now how I did it, but with a bit of subscription here and with a bit of help there, it was done at last; though I don't know hardly how. Then it was unfortunate for us, you see we got kept in Bristol so long on account of mistake, swallowed up money it did when we should of gone on.

"TRAVELER": You are of the Mormon Religion, of course?

"WILTSHIRE": O, Yes, I'm a Mormon, I'm a Mormon, (then looking around the ship, sees a particular friend and evades the "TRAVELER" forever after.)

Mr. Dickens further states that he went on board ship to bear testimony against the Saints or Emigrants, but to his great astonishment they did not deserve it. He said, "I went over the Amazon side and it was impossible to deny that some remarkable influence had produced a great result in the conduct of the emigrants." I learned after, that a dispatch by her captain, "said he, "before he struck out across the Atlantic, "Highly extolling these emigrants behavior and the perfect order and propriety of all their arrangements."

John Brown arrived in New York with his family July 10, 1863 and was warned of difficulties attending further travel through the States because of the strife of Civil War.

After a long hard journey with limited rations and sickness, riding in cattle cars through Missouri from Albany, New York to Florence, Nebraska, they met the church train for Utah. They arrived with the Thomas Ricks Co. in Utah about 4 Oct. 1863. They came to Ogden, arriving about 7 Oct. 1863. Mr. Brown soon found land out in the North part of Weber County, (North Ogden) and there engaged in farming.

He was industrious, thorough, and most orderly in his work, as a result he was considered one of the best farmers in the community. His methods were copied by other farmers. Later he married a widow, Mrs. Levy Jensen. No children were born.

After a most useful life as a community builder and a faithful Latter-Day-Saint, Mr. Brown died at the age of 74 in 1891.

He left a large posterity scattered throughout Weber County and Idaho.

Received from Maxine Brown Smith,  
275 E. 15th Street  
Idaho Falls, Idaho