

Scipio Co-operative Mercantile Institution

“Scipio Co-op”

1869-1922

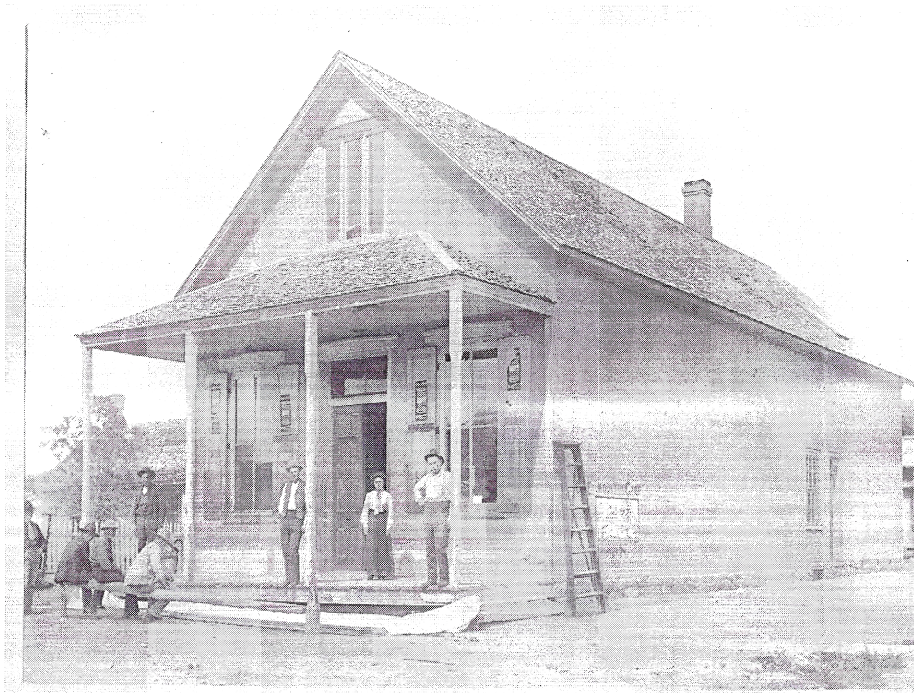
130 North State Street

Scipio, Millard County, Utah

435-253-2544

Prepared By George Lanier

**Thanks is extended to Karen Harris, Janice Robins, Pam Sheridan, Don
Quarnberg and Hal Peterson for valued information**



This early photograph, circa 1910, by a Mr. Matson shows a front and side view of the Scipio Co-operative Mercantile Institution building located in Scipio, Millard County, Utah. The building is on the National Register of historic sites. The people in the photo are: Andreas Peterson on right porch, Orvil L. Thompson on middle porch, and the lady between is Susan Monroe Thompson, Orvil's wife. Other Scipio residents on the left side of the photo are seated on a low hitching rail and standing. The log house to the left (north) of the building was an earlier Co-op store and home of Thomas Yates, the Co-op superintendent, Chairman of the Board, and original property owner.

The Scipio Co-op building, which opened for business in 1883, has the distinction of having the most original store room remaining in Utah. This main store room was restored as a time capsule with the original support columns, counters, shelves, doors, door hardware, molding, drawers, drawer pulls, and etc. Much of the original interior wood-graining is worn but remains. The wood porch was replaced with a cement porch, and the exterior wood was painted green and white over the original burgundy and white in the early 1920's, probably by Mr. E. M. Brown.

The Co-op building has a more interesting history than generally recognized. Many local residents think of it as "Brown's Store". It was originally an independent retail branch of Zions Co-operative Mercantile Institution (ZCMI), an early center of daily socialization, a post office, and all individuals involved in management were early prominent civic and church leaders in the town of Scipio.

Scipio Co-op History Summary

<u>Date (Circa)</u>	<u>Ownership</u>	<u>Name/Management/Operator</u>
1869-1885	Thomas Yates	Scipio Co-op
<p>On March 20, 1869, in a Latter-Day Saint (LDS) church teachers meeting, Bishop Daniel Thompson (first Bishop of the Scipio Ward) suggested the idea of a Co-op in Scipio. A board of directors was elected, \$500 in capital stock was subscribed, and William Memmott was elected temporary superintendent for a year (Historical Record of Scipio Ward, 1890). A temporary Co-op store was opened in the home of Mr. Memmott. The Scipio Co-operative Mercantile Institution (SCMI), a corporation, was organized as an independent retail branch of ZCMI with Daniel Thompson as President (A Citizen, Jan. 5, 1871), Henry McArthur as manager (Milestones of Millard, p. 389) and Thomas Yates as superintendent starting in the spring of 1870. The store moved to the log home of Mr. Yates who later became Chairman of the Board. Under the philosophy of "cheap goods", and with "good management", business grew and the store then moved into the 1 and 1/2-story brick building that was newly constructed on the corner of Mr. Yates's property. The building opened for business in 1883 (Salt Lake Herald, November 9, 1883). In 1874, the United Order was organized in Scipio. Thomas Yates was secretary and store Keeper of the Order. The Scipio branch of the United Order was dis-organized one year later in 1875. The store continued as a general merchandise Co-operative until 1922.</p>		
1885	Scipio Co-op	Scipio Co-op
<p>County records show that Thomas Yates deeded the store property to the SCMI in 1885 for the consideration of \$75.00.</p>		
1885-1897	Scipio Co-op	Scipio Co-op
<p>Thomas Yates was imprisoned for 10 months starting in 1889 for violating the Edmunds Anti-Polygamy Act of 1882. His wife, Lizzie, helped with the store in his absence. Henry McArthur Died in 1896. Henry Thompson (son of Daniel Thompson) was superintendent from 1894-1895 (Henry Thompson's Journals).</p>		
1897-1916	Scipio Co-op	Thompson and Peterson
<p>Thomas Yates Died in 1903. An unrecorded management change occurred circa 1897 when Orvil L. Thompson and Andreas Peterson took over operations of the Co-op, which became known as the Thompson and Peterson Store. (The store remained a Co-op under the ownership of the SCMI). During 1898-1903, token and paper scrip were issued for local inventory purchases (Milestones of Millard, p. 391). This scrip, along with cancelled checks, shows that W. J. Robins was superintendent in 1897 for Thompson and Peterson. William Riley Thompson (cousin to Orvil) was superintendent in 1898-1899.</p>		

1916-1919

Scipio Co-op

O. L. Thompson & Sons

Andreas Peterson died in 1916. After his death, the store operated for a short time under the name of **O. L. Thompson & Sons**, probably until 1921.

1919-1920

Scipio Co-op

ZCMI

County records show that a mortgage of \$8,000 (store debt) was conveyed in a "trust deed" to ZCMI in 1919-1920. Erwin M. Brown was President of the SCMI at the time.

1920-1922

Erwin M. Brown

ZCMI

During the time the store was being sold to Erwin M. Brown, William Riley Thompson was President of the SCMI. Orvil L. Thompson died in 1921.

1922-1931

Erwin M. Brown

E.M. Brown General Merchandise

County records show that E. M. Brown purchased the store in a warranty deed from ZCMI for \$10.00 in 1922, but receipts show he was operating the store in 1921 and did so for approximately 10 years under the name **E. M. Brown General Merchandise**. The mortgage was assigned to George E. Brown (brother) in 1923-1924, who released the mortgage to ZCMI in 1932. In the same year, E. M. Brown granted a mortgage of \$1,000 to Emil L. Peterson.

1931-1941

Erwin M. Brown

Brown & Thompson

Receipts show the store operated under the name of **Brown and Thompson** (E. M. Brown and Lea Thompson) for approximately 10 years starting in 1931. Emil L. Peterson released the mortgage to E. M. Brown in 1940.

1941-1950

Erwin M. Brown

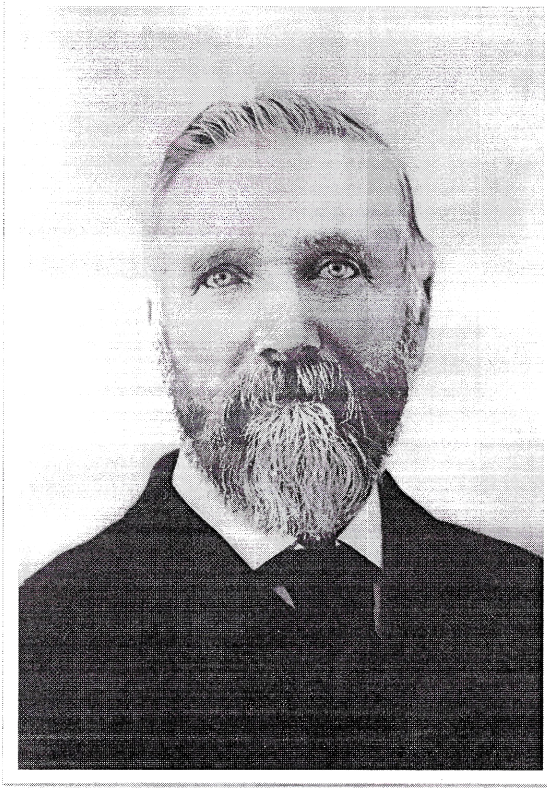
Erwin M. Brown Store

Per Mr. Don Quarnberg (personal communication, 10-11-2019), "Brown's store" was operated by Bevan Brown (son of E. M. Brown) during and after World War II, possibly until circa 1950. Mr. Hal Peterson remembers the store being closed in 1952 (personal communication, 10-15-2019). Erwin M. Brown died in 1965. The store sat vacant for some 50 years until 2002 when a metal roof was installed by Mr. Don Beese - saving the building. During the period of vacancy, it was looted, vandalized, and received considerable water and animal damage.

Store Management and Operators

Much of the information given below is from the Daughter of the Utah Pioneers' book *Milestones of Millard* compiled by Stella H. Day and Sebrina C. Ekins. Some other specific references are cited.

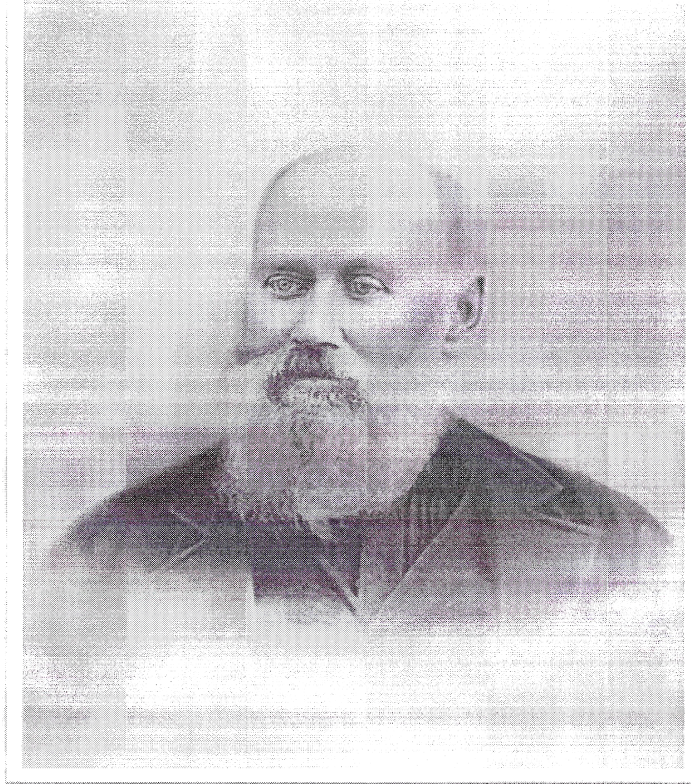
DANIEL THOMPSON



December 25, 1834 - July 29, 1912

- 1853: Served in the Utah militia
- 1855: Became a naturalized citizen of the United States
- 1856: Counselor in the Latter-Day Saint (LDS) Fillmore Ward Bishopric
- 1868: Served as the presiding church Elder over the Scipio branch
- 1869: Ordained first bishop of the Scipio Ward and served as bishop for 14 years
- 1870: President of the Scipio Co-operative Mercantile Institution
- 1874: President of the United Order
- 1882: Ordained first counselor in the Millard Stake Presidency
- 1880's: Served two terms as a representative in the Utah Territorial Legislature
- 1905: Made a Patriarch of the LDS church
- Of interest, President Brigham Young and party would stay at the home of Bishop Daniel Thompson on his visits to and from Saint George (Twelve Mormon Homes, E.W. Kane, 1974).

HENRY MORROW McARTHUR



February 21, 1829-March 5, 1896

- 1846-1847: Served with the Mormon Battalion in the Mexican-American War
- Ca. 1848: Worked at Sutter's Mill on the American Fork River, California, and found gold. Some of the gold was made into cufflinks that have been passed down through the family to present (Mark Monroe personnel communication, 5/30/2022).
- Commander of the military post in Scipio during Indian troubles
- Served as a pioneer doctor pulling teeth and setting broken bones
- House carpenter as occupation
- 1865: Hired as teacher of the Scipio School
- 1866-1869: Sold general merchandise from his home
- 1869-1896?: Manager of the Scipio Co-operative Mercantile Institution
- 1873: Elected president of the Board of Trustees for the Scipio Irrigation Company
- 1883: Appointed president of the Seventies (LDS church organization) (T. Memmott Journal)

THOMAS YATES



June 6, 1840-February 21, 1903

- Early school teacher in Deseret, Utah (*Milestones of Millard*, p. 442)
- 1870: Appointed President of the Elders Quorum of the LDS Church
- 1870-1889: Original property owner, superintendent, and Chairman of the Board of the Scipio Co-op
- 1874: First president of the Scipio MIA (Mutual Improvement Association)
- 1874: Elected President of the Scipio Ecclesiastical Organization
- 1874-1875: Secretary and store keeper of the United Order
- 1876: Served as secretary of the Scipio Sunday school
- 1877: Appointed first counselor to bishop (Daniel Thompson) (Thomas Memmott Journal Vol 1)
- 1882-1902: 2nd Bishop of the Scipio Ward
- 1889-1890: Served a 10 month sentence for an infraction of the Edmunds-Tucker Act

ORVIL LORENZO THOMPSON



ORVIL L. THOMPSON.

December 11, 1865-October 2, 1921

- 1875: Superintendent of Scipio LDS Sunday School
- 1885-1887: Served a mission for the LDS church in Scotland
- 1887: President of the YMMIA (Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association)
- 1888: Appointed Judge (Justice of the Peace)
- Clerk of the LDS Scipio Ward
- President of the 111th Quorum of Seventies
- 1897-1916: Operated the Scipio Co-op with Andreas Peterson
- 1901- 1921: Postmaster of Scipio (the Co-op building was used as the Post Office)
- 1902-1904: President of Scipio Town Board
- 1902-1907: 3rd Bishop of the LDS Scipio Ward
- 1912-1921: President of Millard Stake
- 1919: Secretary of the Scipio Irrigation Company
- School trustee
- Served four terms in State Legislature as Senator for Millard County
- Member of the Constitutional Convention before statehood
- Secretary of the Melville Irrigation Company (Delta area)

ANDREAS PETERSON



April 12, 1854-January 8, 1916

- Brick mason who worked on the Brooklyn Bridge, Manti Temple, Scipio ward chapel, many homes in Scipio (from Edith S. Callister, May 1977), and possibly the Co-op building
- Appointed deputy registration officer by the Utah Commission
- Purchased the merchandise, displayed it, and trained the clerks at the Scipio Co-op (per Nana Monroe from Edith S. Callister, May 1977)
- Orvil L. Thompson and Andreas Peterson operated a general store in Scipio also referred to as the Thompson and Peterson store prior to operating the Co-op
- 1897-1916: Operated the Scipio Co-op with Orvil L. Thompson

ERWIN M. BROWN



March 30, 1889–November 19, 1965

- 1914-1916: President of Scipio Town Board
- 1917: Justice of the Peace
- 1919: President of the Scipio Co-operative Mercantile Institution
- 1920-1922: Served on the Scipio Town Board
- 1922: Purchased the Scipio Co-op property from ZCMI
- 1932-1934: Served on Scipio Town Board
- 1912-1936: Secretary of the Scipio Creamery Company (Nola Quarnberg Wasden, Feb.; 1999)
- 1934: A 1934 Scipio City business license shows that E. M. Brown operated a service station. It is thought that it was a Texaco station (based on the Texaco sign on the south wall of the Co-op building) located across the street at the old Doty Garage and Service Station.
- 1935-1958: Auditor for the Utah State Liquor Commission

LEAMON THOMPSON



September 3, 1889-February 3, 1969

Recovered store receipts through the 1930's are labeled Brown and Thompson for E. M. Brown and Lea Thompson. Lea Thompson, or Leamon Thompson, was the son of William Riley Thompson. He served as a sergeant in World War I and was awarded the Purple Heart.