

Joseph H. Spurrier

The first missionaries to be called to the Sandwich Islands were Addison Pratt, Knowlton F. Hanks, Benjamin Grouard and Noah Rogers. The decision to send them was made on May 11, 1843, in the office of Joseph Smith at Nauvoo. They were set apart on May 23rd. and Noah Rogers was appointed as president. Addison Pratt had been to the islands before, having spent six months at Honolulu in 1822. Benjamin Grouard was also an experienced seaman. They sailed from New Bedford, Massachusetts in June but bound for the Society¹ instead of the Sandwich Islands.

A second group was called in the summer of 1850 when Elder Charles C. Rich of the Quorum of Twelve called ten elders from the middle fork of the American River in the gold fields of California. These men had been members of a temporal mission to dig gold to be² taken back to Deseret for use as specie, literally, for making money. They made their way--in wagons, horseback and walking--to San Francisco³ where they worked for money for their passage to the islands. The company arrived in Honolulu on December 12, 1850, dedicated the land for the preaching of the Gospel, and set to work immediately. Assignments were made to send two elders to each of the islands of⁴ Hawaii, Maui, Molokai, Oahu, and Kauai. However, due to the problems of supporting themselves, the difficulty of learning the language of the native population and the fact that most of the white men to be found were either missionaries from New England or whalers--neither group much interested in a new religion--five of the company, including⁵ President Hiram Clark, left the islands in less than three months.

Spurrier, Joseph H.

The remaining five elders: Henry W. Bigler, George Q. Cannon, William Farrer, James Hawkins and James Keeler set to work on Maui and on Oahu. In response to fasting, prayer, and a consuming desire to understand the native tongue, Elder Cannon was given the ability⁶ to hear and interpret the language. In a few weeks more he was able⁷ to speak fluently. Elder Farrer was also blessed in this way and these two led out in a most successful effort among the Hawaiians. The first branches of the Church were organized, on Maui in August,⁸ and on Oahu in December of 1851. In less than three years branches were organized on all major islands, more than three thousand members were reported and the Book of Mormon had been translated into the⁹ Hawaiian language.

The most public account of the earliest days of the Sandwich Islands Mission is that contained in President George Q. Cannon's My First Mission. This work was published as a faith-promoting¹⁰ piece by the Deseret Sunday School Union in 1879. It has succeeded well in that capacity. It falls a little short, however, as a primary record since it was compiled and written many years after the actual events. Journals were kept by others of that first company of missionaries and they are available to us now. Elder Keeler's diary provides interesting detail about the attitudes and personalities of the first missionaries and is especially valuable in that it corroborates the events and experiences chronicled by Elder Cannon in his published account. The record kept by Elder William Farrer provides a record of the progress on the island of Oahu,

Spurrier, Joseph H.

the conversion of a number of important Hawaiians and the organization of the branches on that island. The journal of Elder Henry Bigler is that of an older man--faithful, diligent, competent in the doctrines of the Church but struggling with the language and frustrated by this limitation.

Inasmuch as the record of the life and times of President Cannon is so readily available, attention in these remarks will be given to some others who also made significant contributions to the establishment of the Church in the islands. Elder Henry William Bigler was one of the more interesting of that first company. He was born in Harrison County, West Virginia and came into the Church during the Ohio days. He was called and filled a successful mission for the Church as a young man before the move westward.¹¹ Following the martyrdom of Joseph Smith, he followed Brigham Young and the Council of Twelve from Nauvoo to Winter Quarters. When the United States Government, in one of those peculiar paradoxes with which our history abounds, called upon those who were being driven from its borders for aid, Brother Bigler was one of the 549 who enlisted in the Mormon Battalion.¹²

When the historic march of that unit was completed, Brother Bigler was one of those who remained in California. He, with a number of other young men, moved into northern California and he was on hand at Sutter's Mill when gold was discovered there in 1849.¹³ He joined the group of temporal missionaries sent from Salt Lake City to the gold fields and was among the ten called from there to

Spurrier, Joseph H.

go on a proselyting mission to the Sandwich Islands. On arrival there he was assigned to the island of Molokai with an Elder Morris.¹⁴ This companion, however, found it necessary to go to work in Honolulu to support himself and Elder Bigler decided to go on to his assignment by himself.¹⁵ He travelled to Lahaina, Maui, a stop on the way to Molokai, with Elders George Q. Cannon and James Keeler. There, on December 22, 1850, the elders sought and were given permission to preach in the Bethel, or Seaman's, Chapel in the afternoon. Elder Bigler gave the major discourse and the meeting was reasonably well attended.¹⁶

When five of the missionaries in the first company decided to return home or go elsewhere to labor, those at Lahaina prayed for and received the guidance of the Holy Spirit and decided to remain in the islands to which they had been called.¹⁷ From that time on, they found the way open for the prosecution of the work. Elder Farrer had joined the Maui group and once their decision was made, he and Elder Bigler returned to Honolulu to work on Oahu.¹⁸ There Elder Bigler made the acquaintance and secured the friendship of a prominent judge and Hawaiian of chiefly rank, Mr. I. W. E. Maikai. He was invited to live with the judge and through his influence many doors were opened to the elders, both in securing living quarters and in planting the gospels seed.¹⁹

As the two elders moved to the windward side of the island, Elder Bigler worked in Koolaupoko in the communities of Kaneohe, Kailua, and Waimanalo while Elder Farrer went north to Punaluu,

Spurrier, Joseph H.

20

Hauula and Laie. In the late months of 1851, in Honolulu, Elder Bigler converted and baptized a Hawaiian school teacher by the name of G. Toma Paku who was to serve as his missionary companion for the next two years. Together these elders brought into being the branches at Kaneohe and Waimanalo.²¹ After forty-three months of faithful labor, Elder Bigler, now in his late thirties, was released to go finally to the Valley of the Great Salt Lake.

Three full years did not pass, however, until he was called to return to the Sandwich Islands. He arrived in Honolulu in September of 1857 and found the elders all preparing to return home in response to the call from President Brigham Young. He was chosen to preside over the mission until it was officially closed in May of 1858.²² Returning to America, Elder Bigler was called to serve a fourth mission and then assigned, in the colonizing effort, to the settlements of Southern Utah. He lived the rest of his life in Utahs "Dixie" and died at St. George in November of 1900.²³

By all accounts, Elder Francis A. Hammond must be reckoned as one of the most influential missionaries in the shaping of the history of the Church in Hawaii. Fortunately, his journal is replete with detail. He recorded his most intimate concerns and feelings as well as his reactions to those events and persons who touched his life. In these records we have a glimpse into the workings of a very human and staunchly Latter-day Saint mind and spirit.

Spurrier, Joseph H.

At the age of fourteen he left his home on Long Island, New York where he had been born on November 1, 1822. He sailed on a coasting vessel, as a crewman, and by the age of twenty-one, held a berth as boatswain on a Pacific voyage.²⁴ It was this voyage that brought him for the first time to the Sandwich Islands. Due to a shipboard injury, he was put ashore at Lahaina where he lived for four years.²⁵ It was during these years ashore that he took up the trade of a cobbler and made many friends and acquaintances who would serve him and the Church well in later years.

In 1847, Francis Hammond went to San Francisco on his way back to New York to take a wife. While in San Francisco earning means to pay his passage, he came into contact with the Latter-day Saints and with the Book of Mormon.²⁶ He was thoroughly converted and was baptized that same year. Changing his plans, he travelled on to Salt Lake City where, at the age of twenty-six, he married seventeen year old Mary Jane Dilworth.²⁷ In just three more years, he was called to return to the Sandwich Islands on a mission. He was given permission to take his young wife and baby son with him. Selling what they had in the valley, they outfitted themselves for the trip to the coast. They took the well-travelled Southern Road, west of the Sevier River, through Southern Utah to Las Vegas and across the Mojave Desert to San Bernadino. Recovering there for a few days, they moved on to San Pedro where they sold their outfit for money to pay their passage to the islands. Elder Hammond also acquired a cobblers bench and materials for use in supporting himself

Spurrier, Joseph H.

28
and his family in part-time work. The trip to the coast had
required two months and was filled with what, today, would be
called "hardships," but such things seemed the natural order of
things for such pioneers and the trip was considered uneventful. 29

The Hammond family sailed on the ship Eagle, arriving in
Honolulu on August 9, 1851. With them had come Brother and Sister
Philip B. Lewis, Brother and Sister Job Perkins and Brother John
Stillman Woodbury. 30
Elder Lewis was to preside in the place of the
departed Hiram Clark. He had had long experience in the Church, had
been close to the Prophet, Joseph Smith as a member of the Council
of Fifty 31 and was accustomed to presiding authority. The younger
Elder Hammond had had long experience at sea and in the islands and
knew somewhat of the language. It was perhaps to be expected that
tension would develop between the two. Elder Hammond, in his dedi-
cation, self reliance and faith seemed willing to act more rapidly
and readily in the work than the president was willing to have him
act. 32

On their arrival, Elder and Sister Hammond were assigned to
Lahaina where they found living space with former acquaintances of
his, some of whom were converted to the Church. 33 He conducted the
affairs of the few saints in Lahaina and travelled about West Maui
in his efforts to spread the word. It was obvious that greater
progress was being experienced in Central and East Maui and that
his help was needed there, so he extended his travels to assist
Elder Cannon, Elder Keeler and some of the Hawaiian elders. 34

Spurrier, Joseph H.

By August of 1853, the missionaries felt to begin the gather-
ing of the saints and several possibilities were considered. 35

Elder Hammond, on a proselyting visit to the island of Lanai, formed
a small branch there and saw the basin of Palawai. He thought it
suitable as a place of gathering. 36 In making the recommendation
in the council of elders, he was opposed by President Lewis and
Benjamin F. Johnson and by Elder Nathan Tanner, an older missionary
whose experience included the episode of Zion's Camp. The older
men wished to explore the possibility of gathering all of the Poly-
nesian saints at San Bernadino where they would constitute a work
force for the agricultural effort there. 37 This exploration required
several months and cost the California saints a considerable outlay
in cash only to prove unsatisfactory. 38 It was in the late summer
of 1854 that the Lanai site suggested by Elder Hammond was finally
decided upon and on August 28, after a day of fasting and a prayer
circle in temple robes, Elder Benjamin F. Johnson, High Priest and
member of the Council of Fifty, dedicated the City of Joseph in the
Valley of Ephraim at Palawai on Lanai. 39 By the time the Hammonds
were released in March of 1856, Elder Hammond had been instrumental
in obtaining a lease on the property and it was under cultivation. 40

Elder Hammond was again called to the Sandwich Islands in
December of 1864. In the eight years since his release, the American
elders had been called home due to the unsettled condition in Utah
in the late 1850's and the mission had been closed. Walter Murray
Gibson had come to Hawaii in 1861, had assumed presidency of the

Spurrier, Joseph H.

Church in the islands and had been excommunicated in the spring of 1864 by Elders Ezra T. Benson and Lorenzo Snow of the Quorum of the Twelve. President Brigham Young had decided to establish an agricultural colony in Hawaii and invite the Hawaiian saints once more to gather together. Elder Hammond was sent to accompany Elder George Nebeker to the islands to secure a new site for the gathering.⁴¹

These two brethren visited Kauai to look at some property there but could not agree with the owners on a price. On their return to Honolulu, Elder Nebeker found it necessary to return to Salt Lake City and left Elder Hammond to make a selection and conclude a purchase.⁴² Only three days later a property came to the attention of Elder Hammond and he arranged to inspect it. It was a six thousand acre ranch owned by a Mr. Thomas T. Dougherty, ex-American Consul in Honolulu and it was located in the Koolauloa district at Laie. On the week-end of January 21, 1865, Elder Hammond rode to Laie, attended the branch of the Church there and rode around the property.⁴³ He found the site had two to three miles of oceanshore-line, ten small villages within the boundries and of the six-thousand acres, about one-fifth of it was suitable to cultivation.⁴⁴

On his return to Honolulu he offered Mr. Dougherty the sum of \$12,000 but the offer was refused and a counter offer of \$14,000 was made. Elder Hammond, after some consideration, decided to make the purchase since the price included all improvements and livestock.⁴⁵ Some marvelled that the purchase could be concluded so readily since Elder Hammond had no local assets. He, himself noted

Spurrier, Joseph H.

that two prominent local business men whom he had known in earlier times extended credit to him.⁴⁶ In Salt Lake City, another reason was given credence.

The other reason was based upon an experience which occurred at Laie somewhat earlier. When Walter Murray Gibson was excommunicated in 1861, Elder Joseph F. Smith was left in charge of re-ordering the affairs of the Church in the islands. Assisting him were Alma L Smith and William W. Cluff. Elder Cluff drew the assignment of travelling the Koolau district of Oahu and came eventually to Laie in the fall of 1864. He stopped overnight at the ranch house and the following morning stopped to hold his morning prayer at a hau grove nearby. There he was vouchsafed a vision in which President Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball appeared to him and indicated that Laie was to be the place for the saints of the Hawaiian Islands. As Elder Cluff returned to Salt Lake City, he reported the event to President Young who confirmed it.

The account of this incident was first told in Hawaii at a meeting held at Laie in 1869 by Elder Jonathan Napela. This Hawaiian elder had just returned from Salt Lake City where the event was rehearsed to him. A newspaper reported^y attended that meeting, heard Napela's talk and had it printed in a Hawaiian language newspaper,⁴⁷ The Nupepa Kuokoa for November 13, 1869. Elder Hammond, then, was not left alone in his decision on the selection of a site for the revival of the Church and the Hawaiian people.

Spurrier, Joseph H.

Elder Francis A. Hammond, having been responsible for both major property acquisitions for the Church in Hawaii, returned to Utah. He served both the Territory and the Church well for the rest of his life and was presiding in the San Juan Stake in Southern Utah at the time of his passing, at age 78, in November of 1900.⁴⁸

Many other anecdotes can be related about any and all of the missionaries who served the Church in the Sandwich Islands. The list of names resembles a hall of fame in the history of the Church—Ephraim Green; the Allred twins, Reddick and Reddin; several members of the Smith family, including Joseph F. Smith whose journal was destroyed in a fire which burned the storage building at the Lanai settlement; John R. Young and John T. Caine; and in later years the Beesley's, the Gate's, the Cluffs, Richards brothers, and the Woolley's. The events related here, however, have been more than enough to point out the value of the records, diaries and journals which were kept, again by commandment, by these early elders.

Spurrier, Joseph H.

FOOTNOTES

¹"He Moololo Pokole no ka Ekalasia," Ka Elele Oiaio, Published by the L. D. S. Hawaiian Mission, Honolulu, T. H., Vol 1, No. 13, May 1909, p. 308.

S. George Ellsworth, Zion in Paradise, Early Mormons in The South Seas, Twenty-First Faculty Honor Lecture, Published by The Faculty Association, Utah State University, Logan, Utah, 1959. p.6.

²Andrew Jensen, "The Hawaiian Mission," bound typescript, 6 volumes, unpagged, Library, BYU--HC, Vol. I, September 25, 1850.

³William Farrer, Diary 1821-1906 Containing Journal 1849-1854. Typescript, Library, Brigham Young University, Provo. entry for December 12, 1950.

⁴Ibid, entry for December 14, 1850.

⁵George Q. Cannon, "My First Mission," Three Mormon Classics, Compiled by Preston Nibley (Salt Lake City: Stevens & Wallace, Inc. 1944). p. 143.

⁶Letter, George Q. Cannon to Aunt Leonora Taylor, Lahaina, Maui, S. I., August 22, 1851 (reprinted in "The Sandwich Islands," Millennial Star, vol. XIV, September 11, 1852, p. 493.

⁷Farrer Diary, entry for June 10, 1851.

⁸Diaries of James Keeler, 1850-55, BYU-MSS 436, entry for August 6, 1851.

Farrer Diary, entry for November 2, 1851.

⁹Ralph S. Kuykendall and A. Grove Day, Hawaii: A History, From Polynesian Kingdom to American State. (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1948) p. 79.

¹⁰Cannon, Op. cit., p. ix.

¹¹Jensen, Op. cit., vol. I, Catalogue of missionaries, taken from Biographical Encyclopedia, Vol 1.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Cannon, Op. cit., p. 133.

Spurrier, Joseph H.

¹⁵Journals of Henry William Bigler 1846-1899, Microfilm of Holograph, Library, Brigham Young University--Hawaii Campus, entry for December 19, 1850.

¹⁶Cannon, Op. cit., p. 133.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 139

¹⁸Bigler Journals, entry for May 5, 1851.

¹⁹Farrer Diary, entry for June 16, 1851.

²⁰Bigler Journals, entry for June 28, 1851.

²¹Ibid., entry for June 28, 1853

²²Diary of John Stillman Woodbury 1851-1877, typescript of document in 3 vols., BYU, entry for October 4, 1857.

²³Jensen, Op. cit., Catalogue of missionaries, volume I.

²⁴Francis A. Hammond Autobiography (1843-1849), MsD 1430, Church Historical Department, Salt Lake City, Utah.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Journals of Francis A. Hammond, 1852-1893, Microfilm of holograph at Library, BYU--HC. Entry for July 23, 1851.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Farrer Diary, entry for August 19, 1851.

³¹Andrew F. Ehat, "It Seems Like Heaven Began on Earth": Joseph Smith and the Constitution of the Kingdom of God," Brigham Young University Studies, Vol. 20, Number 3, Spring 1980. p.267.

³²Farrer Diary, entry for October 5, 1853.

³³Hammond Journals, entry for August 12, 1851.

³⁴Ibid., entries for October through December, 1851.

³⁵Jensen, Hawaiian Mission typescript, entry for October 6, 1853.

Spurrier, Joseph H.

³⁶Hammond Journals, entry for September 28, 1853

³⁷Farrer Diary, Entry for October 5, 1853

³⁸Jensen, Hawaiian Mission Typescript, entries for March 28, to August, 1854

³⁹Andrew F. Ehat, Op. cit., p. 267

⁴⁰Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin Johnson (1818-1905) 1822-55, Typescript, 340 pp. MsD 1289 CHD, Salt Lake City, Utah. entry for August 28, 1854.

⁴¹Hammond Journals, entry for December 23, 1864.

⁴²Ibid., for December 29, 1864.

⁴³Ibid., for January 21, 1865.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Ibid., for January 27, 1865

⁴⁷"Na Olelo O Jonatana Napela a Koolauloa," Nupepa Kuokoa, Honolulu, H. I., November 13, 1869.

⁴⁸Jensen, Op. cit., Volume I, Catalogue of Missionaries.

Spurrier, Joseph H.

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