

LAIE LIFE 1850-1883

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What follows is a sort of bird's eye view of the history of Laie from 1850 to 1883. Occasionally we will swoop down to focus on some event which I hope will provide a pleasant respite from this otherwise broad survey. I do not want this to be "sheer chronicity endured," rather I hope you will find a sequence with story, and thus discover something of interest.

I chose these particular years because there was no significant LDS presence in Laie nor Hawaii before December 12, 1850 and 1883 marks the end of my preparation to date for a book on the history of the Church in Hawaii. It is also about the time of the release of Harvey Harris Cluff, Hawaiian Mission and Laie Plantation President from whose journal some of the following information was drawn.

One of our prophets who was intimately involved with Hawaii was Joseph F. Smith. I personally relate to what he said about Laie during his third mission to Hawaii, having lived here now for eight years (and four children).

My brothers and sisters, do not leave this land, for this place has been chosen by the Lord as a gathering place for the Saints of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in Hawaii Nei. Do not complain because of the many trials which come to you, because of the barrenness of the land, the lack of water, the scarcity of foods to which you are accustomed, and the poverty as well. Be patient, for the day is coming when this land will become a most beautiful land. Water shall spring forth in abundance, and upon the barren land you now see, the Saints will build homes, taro will be planted, and there will be plenty to eat and drink. Many trees will be planted and this place will become verdant, the fragrance of flowers will fill the air, and trees which are now seen growing on the mountains will be moved by the Saints and will grow in this place near the sea, and because of the great beauty of the land, inland birds will come here and sing their songs.

And upon this place the glory of the Lord will rest, to bless the Saints who believe in Him and His commandments. And there are some in this house who will live to see all these things fulfilled, which I have spoken from the Lord.

Therefore, do not waver, work with patience, continue on, stand firm, keep the commandments and also the laws of the gathering, and you will receive greater blessings, both spiritual and temporal, than you now enjoy or have enjoyed in the past. May the Lord be with us all.¹

Many of you here today have much more than I, lived to see President Smith's prophecy fulfilled. As I recount some of those things which you and your ancestors have lived I hope your attention will not "waver" but "stand firm" that you will "receive [the] greater blessings" of which he spoke.

It is necessary to say something initially about the Mormons getting to Laie. Everyone knows about the elders arriving in Honolulu under President Hiram Clark on December 12, 1850. You further remember how unsuccessful these ten missionaries were while they labored in Honolulu and how only five of them completed their missions here. Of course, the one we best recall of that group, the missionary who really caught the vision of the work, saw that few of the haoles were ready to listen to the message and was inspired to take the gospel to the Polynesians. What you may not know is that at the same time George Q. Cannon was baptizing his hundreds on Maui, the missionaries on the windward side of this very island were having comparable success. In fact, one historian noted that it was in Laie "where the Oahu elders were most successful in the early years."² Within three weeks of the missionaries' arrival in Honolulu, one of them, Elder William Farrer was baptizing in Laie. That invaluable source of Hawaiian LDS history known as the Jenson Manuscript explains that by 31 December 1851, Farrer himself had baptized over one hundred, mostly on the windward side of Oahu.³

Prior to the gathering of the saints on Lanai in 1854-55, there were congregations of Hawaiian saints in Hakipuu, Heeia, Hauula, Kaaawa, Kahaluu, Kahana, Kaneohe, Laie, and Punaluu, as well as other places, windward.

This is not to suggest that the work was easy, the congregations large or the membership enduring. The Calvinist preacher, Mr. Emerson, was constantly active against the Mormons and both missionaries and newly baptized saints were at least threatened with acts of violence. In addition, smallpox sometimes brought the missionary work to a standstill and whole branches of the Church were snuffed out by this and other diseases. But neither the opposition of the non members nor sickness were as troublesome to the work as was the apparent fickleness of the converts. In fact, the first excommunications in Hawaii appear to have occurred at Hakipuu in November of 1851 because some of the recent converts returned to their Calvinist church.⁴

It became clear to the missionaries that new Hawaiian members needed strengthening in a gathering place just as new converts from elsewhere had been helped by the concept. Of course, other options were tried first, especially since the law in Hawaii forbid the Hawaiians from migrating to the mainland and even those who left temporarily had to post a bond insuring their return.⁵

To further the work the elders established schools at Hakipuu, Kaaawa and Laie. Elder Farrer worked with Brother Kauwahi in Laie to translate Orson Pratt's "Remarkable Visions" so the Hawaiians could read this doctrinal exposition in their own language. Nevertheless, none of these methods promised lasting results and it was determined after a letter from Brigham Young in 1853 that there must be a gathering, not in California as had been considered, but in Hawaii.⁶ Similar thinking concerning the need for a gathering place had occurred in Tahiti and near the end of July 1854 a conference of mission

leaders in Honolulu decided that Lanai would be the site of that gathering place.⁷

Of course, missionary work went on after the gathering to the Palawai Valley began but historian Margaret Bock has suggested that small as the Lanai settlement was, it drained away many of the strongest members from Laie.⁸ Those who were left behind were often the least committed. Furthermore, in 1857 Brigham Young called all the missionaries home due to the approach of Johnston's army.⁹ Even prior to the departure of the last of the missionaries in 1858, their letters and journals indicated there was real concern that the work was dying out in areas where it had previously been successful. One elder noted that the missionaries "seem to make converts by persuasion rather than by convincing the sinner of the error of his ways and teaching him the plan of salvation."¹⁰ Apparently, in some cases the missionaries issued certificates for forgiveness of sins and even baptized in several different ways.¹¹ These problems were followed by the debacle of Walter Murray Gibson's leadership on Lanai as this "Rascal of Paradise" stepped into the vacuum created by the missionaries' departure. His excommunication in 1864 and the breakup of the Lanai settlement resolved the question of Lanai as a gathering place. Still, it was clearer than ever that a gathering place was required. David W. Cummings in his Centennial History of Laie has explained that Joseph F. Smith had earlier indicated that Laie would be suitable place for colonization.¹² Francis A. Hammond and George Nebeker were among those invited to seek out a new place for gathering. Feeling Laie to be that place, Hammond had a vision in which Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball, both then living, appeared to him taking him on a survey of the property and calling attention to the many desirable

features it presented for the native saints and also saying in a positive manner that this was the chosen spot.¹³ According to David Cummings, Thomas T. Dougherty who had recently bought 6500 acres in Laie had already expressed his wish to sell and George Nebeker left for Salt Lake City to confer with Brigham about the property. Hammond, left behind was told that the deal had to be concluded immediately and so on the basis of prayer and his dream he agreed to the purchase price of \$14,000. This included 1,500 acres of arable land, 500 cattle, 500 sheep, 200 goats, 26 horses, some farm implements, a large frame house called the "mansion," and some small auxiliary buildings.¹⁴

There is some discrepancy in the accounts of how the property was paid for. Cummings indicates Brigham sent Nebeker back to Laie with \$11,515 in cash, the balance of the \$14,000 to be made up by sale of the livestock.¹⁵ The story is also told in the Jenson Manuscript that George Nebeker purchased at least a share in the plantation, or rather one of his wives did. When Nebeker arrived with his missionary company on July 1, 1865 he brought not his first family but 2nd wife Maria Louisa Dilworth Nebeker and her son. Sister Maria Nebeker had been married to John Leonard earlier but after his death she inherited the estate. To Maria Nebeker's great credit, this estate was sold to pay for her new husband's share in the plantation. The story being true, it is plain to see why if George Nebeker was limited to bringing one wife, as he must have been, Maria should have been his choice.¹⁶

With the Nebekers in that first party were the Ephraim Green family, Charles Boyden family, the James Lawsons, Eli Bell family, the Alfred Randalls, William B. Wright family, Philip Pugsley, Caleb World family, and Mary E. Cluff joining her husband Alma. They arrived in Laie July 7 on the schooner

Emeline and apparently came ashore at "Pounders." There were a total of thirty-five in the party and they wisely brought provisions with them. By July 31, 1865 materials had been purchased for houses for the missionaries and lots chosen though a terse remark shows how little we change as human beings, the notation reading "some dissatisfaction on locations."¹⁷

By April 6, 1866 Semiannual Conference could be held in the not quite finished meetinghouse; they were not to be called chapels for some time yet. Journals of the time speak frequently about fears the Hawaiians were dying out as a race. At the conference six months later a Hawaiian speaker Kaohimauna spoke of the lukewarm condition of the Church compared to the time of George Q. Cannon when it flourished. Apparently Jonathan Napela had been part of this "slack time" for it was noted in the Jenson Manuscript that when he joined the saints at the April 1868 conference he had been indifferent until recently.¹⁸ It was at this time that the saints first became involved in the manufacture of sugar in Hawaii by purchasing a small mill.

Descriptions of the mill purchased by Nebeker as "a one horse affair" are slightly inaccurate since the power was furnished by twelve mules used in each twelve hour shift. Twenty-five men and women were employed to strip cane.¹⁹ Five acres were planted which produced sixteen tons of sugar and 1600 barrels of molasses. The first sizeable output of sugar was sent to Utah. This sugar was produced at 15¢ per lb. and for a number of years Z.C.M.I. in Salt Lake City sold it in preference to importing sugar from the east at 26-33¢ per lb.²⁰ Workers were paid both in coin, 25¢ per day, and in Laie script which was redeemable at the company store.²¹ An 1870 report indicated the product was a "good article" but apparently its appearance was against it.²²

The decade of the 70s was a troublesome one for the plantation and mill.

At one time or another the saints in Laie were plagued by broken sugar machinery, earthquakes, drought, floods, sugar prices being higher in Hawaii than Utah causing dissatisfaction with some customers, unreliability of labor, changes in leadership and in 1874, with mass defection from Laie to Kahana over the awa issue.²³ These problems and others caused the leadership in Laie to consider using hay as a main cash crop, raising goats, and even shutting down the plantation entirely when in 1873 Mr. J.T. Waterhouse in Honolulu to whom the plantation was in debt, threatened to foreclose. In conjunction with these first two plans, a hay mower was imported from San Francisco. Relative to the second plan, Nebeker brought in Chasmire goats for breeding.

Someone has said that it is impossible to fully understand the Mormon pioneer experience unless one understands the history of the Mormon pioneer settlements in southern Utah. Having read about the hardships of the first saints in Laie, I wonder if the two colonizing efforts are not highly analogous. Pictures of early Laie, for example, do not show this to have been a desert, exactly, but neither do they indicate the presence of any trees or much water at lower elevations. Isolation, hunger, disease, and natural disasters were characteristic of both settlements. Great courage was essential to the pioneers of both areas.

There was some economic progress during the decade of the seventies despite the steam boiler breaking in 1873 and Alma Smith's observation to Orson Pratt in late 1874 that the mill looked old and in need of repair. There was more sugar cane than the mill could handle but in 1875 Alma Smith wrote his namesake Joseph F. that the plantation was nearly free from debt.²⁴ Then in 1875 the sugar industry was aided by the Reciprocity Treaty and the way prepared for the large scale manufacture of sugar by the Laie plantation if they could just acquire

efficient machinery to process their cane.

During this whole period it is interesting to observe the contact between the cultures, and further flavor is added when one compares the course of his own initial and continuing intercultural and interracial relationships. I have wished I could read Hawaiian so I could obtain a balanced view of these relations. Of course, what is most noteworthy is the change that occurs. For instance, consider the adjustment made by George Q. Cannon and others when they saw their audience was not as they had assumed the "jaded" haoles but the trusting Polynesians. Harvey Cluff of Provo, two time missionary to Hawaii and one of the founders of Iosepa Colony demonstrates this marked shift better than most. He found one of the earliest haole missionaries, an Elder Hawkins, "over free in his associations with the natives, very much attached to them."²⁵ Somewhat apologetically, his journal explains "it may be that I am not very converted to making bosom friends of them."²⁶ This was written by Cluff soon after his arrival in Laie for his first mission. A short while later he observed with embarrassing transparency "I here confess . . . that it was repugnant to my feelings to set in a chair that had been set upon by a native just previously." With the wisdom and understanding provided by hindsight and experience he added "I shall hereafter be under the necessity of recording a changed sentiment." Thereupon he refers to his own dream and the similar one of Peter concerning the taking of the gospel to the gentiles.²⁷ When he left Hawaii for the last time there had obviously been a marked change in his attitude. A picture taken of the Cluffs leavetaking in Laie would have shown a group of Hawaiian women kneeling around his wife, weeping. Elder Cluff was able to maintain his self control only briefly and then he sobbed with the rest, "breaking down entirely, as he described it."²⁸ He had come to convert and had himself become converted.

by the land and people. Numerous others underwent the same conversion process.

Local schools were a part of Laie life almost from the arrival of the missionaries in 1865. King Kalakaua noted during his visit in 1874 something which continues to be characteristic of Laie; one of the plants which does best here is children.²⁹ Laie was frequently reported to have a higher birth-rate than any other district. Seven years after the opening of the plantation there were more than a hundred children enrolled and by 1874 they were undergoing public examination and exhibitions. The early Laie school did not pay its way, perhaps because of the cost, 20¢ per week per child. And this was still five cents less than the rate for the government schools! The government may have recognized a good thing when they saw it for though asked to subsidize the Laie school they politely refused.³⁰

It was in 1871 that the plantation requested the Minister of Interior to move the road from its path across the fields to the seashore, perhaps close to the route of the Kamehameha Highway today. This was completed by 1872. Helpful as this was it did nothing for the problem of the frequent floods in Laie. In 1872 a bowery for 700 people was built in Crater Valley but hail as large as peas fell, the first ever seen here, according to Cluff's journal, and this was followed by a flood which destroyed the bowery. The new bridge built for the Laie stream was carried to sea by the flood and broken up before it could be floated into location. Cluff half jokingly said they used to have confidence in the promise made to Noah.³¹ In February of 1873 another immense flood destroyed 1500 gallons of molasses and made a pond of vinegar. Still the saints forged on and in the same year a hymnbook was being prepared and band instruments were being bought for the plantation.

During the 1870s Jonathan Napela's name was prominent in Laie, in the houses

of royalty in Honolulu, at the Endowment House in Salt Lake City and finally on Molokai. As is generally known he accompanied his leprous wife to Kalaupapa, refusing to leave her, and contracted the disease himself. For a time he could leave the colony and as late as 1876 he was in Laie at a conference.³² But by 1878 he was seriously afflicted himself and Elder Henry P. Richards, seeing him in January of that year at Kalaupapa recognized he would probably not see Napela alive again.

Walter Murray Gibson is another name which was heard often by the saints in Laie throughout the sixties and seventies, both for good and evil. As if to confuse future Mormon historians attempting to assess his character, Gibson visited Laie and donated considerable sums on two occasions for the construction of a chapel here. In 1870 Gibson returned from California with a group he had sold on the possibilities of settling Lanai for a second time but this scheme too, fell through and he attempted to sell his holdings there. He later became involved in the newspaper business in Honolulu publishing Nuhou and admitting publicly in 1873 that he had joined the saints for political motives. By 1880 he had been dismissed from the Priy Council but his career in politics was even then not concluded, though that is another story.

It has been said the more things change the more they stay the same. The relevancy of this statement for residents of Hawaii is supported by the Laie missionaries and plantation workers complaining over a hundred years ago that the prices were too high in the company store. At one point in 1871 President Nebeker raised prices in the store operated by his wife from ten to thirty per cent. About that time it apparently became necessary to require the Elders to trade in the store!

The Mormons were then as now challenged by non members and the former were

not above a little name calling, referring to one local Protestant minister as Balaam's ass. Not coincidentally, he was on trial in 1871 for stealing cattle in Laie but he apparently was exonerated.³³

By 1876 the haole missionaries were being accompanied by local elders. The Desert News was reporting Laie had 80 acres of cane under cultivation, producing one to two tons per acre at a return of \$80 per ton.³⁴ In October of that year there were more Latter Day Saints in the islands than when George Q. Cannon was here and Laie itself had some 400 saints.

In 1877 a problem which had plagued the missionaries for twenty years was brought before the king and this time a favorable response seemed to indicate the possible successful resolution of the problem. Permission to perform marriages had long been denied the elders and in April of 1877 President Ward E. Pack asked Kalakaua about this matter; the response was positive. In consequence, by October of 1877 Henry P. Richards had obtained a license to perform marriages and other licenses had been promised. The first actual marriage performed by the saints in over twenty years was done by Elder Richards, not in Laie, but in Honolulu and involved Kaohela and Maleka from Kalihi.³⁵

In the same year the first anniversary of the organization in Hawaii of the Hui Opio (MIA) was observed.³⁶ Just a year earlier than that, 1875, the Hui Hoola a Hulu (Relief Society) had been established, an organization in which Queen Kapiolani took a personal interest. Proceeds for Relief Society were raised by the women working in the fields one day per week and donating the money earned to their organization.³⁷ The interest of Hawaiian royalty in the Church was not limited to Relief Society as Ken Baldrige has observed in his work.³⁸ Not infrequently the King, Queen, princes and princesses were present in Laie for the semiannual conferences or other celebrations and this was the

case in March of 1878. By the same token, mission presidents from Laie were frequently summoned to the palace to speak with or even to administer to some royal personage. Such was the communication between plantation and palace that Elder H. P. Richards baptized the captain of the king's troops and his wife in October of 1878.³⁹

The year 1878 was remarkable in several other ways. It was noted at the conference in Laie in October of that year that there had been no soaking rains for fourteen months. One result of this drought on the plantation was several of the local people leaving to find work elsewhere. Clearly, even with the limited machinery the mill then had, an additional source of water was needed to successfully produce sugar. No doubt this discouraging news was partially offset by statistical evidence that the frightening decline in the Hawaiian native population was about to end. Deaths had outnumbered births by over 1300 in 1874-75 but in 1876-77 the total was only 300. What was hard for the missionaries then was the apparent inability of non members to see what a role the Church played in this improving ratio between births and deaths and furthermore, the influence for good of the Church generally in Hawaii. Thus when just prior to the April conference in 1879, Horno, a local policeman summoned three haole missionaries including the redoubtable Elder Richards to appear before the District Judge at Kahuku for not paying \$5 poll tax, the saints saw this as further persecution. Richards showed his ire by labelling Judge Kaluhi "a pompous, little, native ignoramus."⁴⁰ What irked the missionaries was the exemption of "Christian" ministers from the tax. Kaluhi and Horno claimed that the Mormons were really not ministers and had come to Hawaii to make money, a charge which might have surprised some of the frequently destitute missionaries. What is more, whatever money left Laie to benefit either the Church or individual

elsewhere must pale in comparison to the evidence supporting the cliché that certain other Christian ministers came to Hawaii to do good, and did very well indeed!

The missionaries felt Horno had chosen his moment carefully since in order to appeal the tax they would have to travel to Honolulu, a seven to ten hour journey in those days and that rather than do that they would pay. The ruling was pay in two days or go to jail. Of course, this was a matter of principle more than money for the missionaries and they fooled Horno by traveling immediately to Honolulu to file an appeal. The records show the money was paid and then later refunded. Still, the principle was unresolved and a Brother Kaleohano visited the king to explain the Mormon position; the king was indignant and supported the Mormons. Nevertheless, Judge Kaluhi ruled the tax must be paid. The Mormons employed Lawyer Hartwell and finally won the case, though it required a deposit with the judge of \$8-10 and to Hartwell payment of \$50.⁴¹

In the meantime, Richards and others were continuing to lobby for easement in the immigration laws and occasionally were granted permission for certain Hawaiians to go up to Utah either for their endowments or even to stay. A real breakthrough occurred in 1878 when after long negotiations, M.M. Kepena, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Acting Governor of Oahu, gave permission for five Hawaiians to emigrate at one time. Jensen shows that Kamakaoopiooio, Mahonalu, J. B. Kane, Mose, and Makaula left Hawaii at that time.⁴²

The 1880s are a kind of watermark for the Laie plantation. There was a sign of new commitment from Salt Lake City, perhaps because of new leadership in the Church. Whatever the cause, from 1880 Laie was to undergo a change from the relatively unproductive and sleepy town it had been and assume a new

degree of productivity. Harvey Cluff returned as mission and plantation president and wrote President John Taylor requesting new machinery, informing the prophet that failure to allocate money for new machinery would require abandoning the sugar business and perhaps raising cattle, instead. The Church was under considerable attack at this time from the federal government over plural marriage and the President recommended cultivating arrow root, coffee, oranges, bananas, and limes, but nevertheless gave permission for the purchase of new machinery for sugar production. A new boiler was ordered from the Honolulu Iron Works. The effort involved in moving into place this sixteen foot long, six feet in diameter pot with its 45 four inch tubes was little short of heroic. It was transported by steamer to Laie Maloo where it was dumped overboard in the bay. Moving it to shore was to solve only part of the problem. A permit had to be obtained to transport it across the Laie Maloo bridge but it was finally dragged into place at the mill where on July 12, 1881 Margaret A. Cluff pushed the button to start the new mill working.

The mill's new equipment required technical skills beyond the missionaries and at various times Mr. Fritz, Mr. Moore, Mr. Cushingam, and Mr. Conder were employed to work on the machinery. The last was discharged, apparently for incompetence but the others all made willing or unwilling potential investigators of the missionaries serving in Laie and some seem to have participated in village life, Mr. Moore even singing "Pinafore" from Gilbert and Sullivan before a group of the missionaries.

None of this is to suggest that things went smoothly in Laie, then or now. Equipment continued to malfunction. Hyrum Woolley reported on July 14, 1881 that the sugar they were eating was miserable stuff. The water supply continued to be a pressing problem. Thus it was determined to construct a flume from

Waikele or Koloa Gulch. By August 2 of 1881 the steamer Mokolii on its weekly run had brought lumber for the construction. Eighteen days later water was flowing through the flume, in places twenty feet high, v shaped and constructed of 1/12 inch boards. The men had raised as many as twenty-six of the twenty foot lengths in a day but the structure was continually being knocked down by errant cattle, high winds, or floods. A short time later an additional flume, smaller this time, was built, again to run from Koloa Gulch. But even this new supply of water was insufficient. After all, sugar has been called the thirstiest plant in the world, requiring approximately, by one estimate, 4000 lbs or 400 gals of water to produce one lb of sugar.⁴³ Consequently, Mr. Arnold the well-driller arrived on the Mokolii and began an artesian well. Either the artesian well improved the situation or the missionaries decided to take time out anyway for Woolley's journal records that on Saturday, December 31, 1882, President Cluff bought a croquet set.⁴⁴

Some statistics may be helpful in order to see just how much sugar actually was produced with the new mill. On Tuesday, October 4, 1881 the Mokolii shipped 13 tons of sugar. Three weeks later on October 25 another 16½ tons were shipped and less than a month after that nearly 16 more. Whether there was a hiatus at this point in sugar production or journal writing is not clear for none is transported in December but in January (10) of 1882 another 15½ tons was put aboard the Mokolii.⁴⁵

Apparently there was land not usable by the plantation for sugar production for in 1880 some acreage was leased to a Chinaman, his name not mentioned in my sources. What is noteworthy concerning this business venture is the terms of the lease; lawyer Hartwell called in to draw up the agreement felt it was the most binding he had ever seen. Provisions included the leasing of

forty-eight acres for a rice mill at approximately \$250 per year. No liquor or opium could be sold there; well enough, but a fine was also assessed should the leaser commit adultery. The leaser's employees were to forfeit \$30 for commission of the same offense. It is not clear that the legality of the lease was ever questioned, probably just as well.

Harvey Cluff was an outstanding pioneer and his career of church service is an illustrious one. We can learn much from his journal about life during the early 1880's in Laie. He realized that the additional Church investment in Laie placed him under considerable pressure to prove both himself and the plantation. His earnestness cannot be questioned as the following story makes clear. Cluff saw that there was a strain of sugar cane superior to the Calico type which the plantation had used previously and acquired some of the new Lahaina strain. This he planted himself, on his knees. So concerned was he with the success of this crop that it was known as Cluff's pet cane. When he found the cane to be dying he was beside himself. For some unexplained reason, the water resources were still not adequate in January of 1882, if the dating in his journal is correct, and the drought was again destroying the plantation's crops. Elder Cluff rode up into the mountains behind the plantation and there obtaining the solitude he sought he dismounted and raised his hands as high above his head as possible, crying out loud "Oh Lord, take my life rather than this cane should perish." He apparently felt some self consciousness about recording this, knowing others might well read it for he went on to write that he was afraid his journal reader might not think he was in earnest but, he added, later events would show he was in earnest, indeed. (All this took place on the round mound at the head of Laie Maloo Gulch.) Elder Cluff gathered a heap of stones together and

knelt for an hour in prayer. He told the Lord he was trying to create a sense of industry in the people of Laie and his failure would discourage them. Concluding his prayer he remounted and rode the two miles home. It was then around three o'clock and there were no clouds in the sky. His journal reports that by six o'clock it began raining and continued for twelve hours. His journal then reads: "I praised the Lord. Was not that marvelous? It was the most delightful steady rain I ever witnessed in the Sandwich Islands." He further goes on to note that while the mill had never produced more than two tons of sugar per acre, this crop produced six.⁴⁶

The mill itself was not the only aspect of Laie life in need of and receiving rejuvenation in the early 1880s. The Church meeting house was proving inadequate and plans were made to construct a new one. The subscription for the raising of \$2000 was begun and the King was invited for the laying of the foundation. Elaborate preparations were made for his visit and upon his arrival President Cluff gave the welcoming speech reminding Kalakaua his subjects were diminishing and pointing to the best natural resource of Laie, the children, as a reminder to royalty that our birthrate was higher than any in the kingdom. The king responded, preached against unchastity, his speech followed by conversation, songs and legendary tales. Seven companies of missionaries names were then placed in the cornerstone.

One of the most entertaining Laie stories from this period occurred during the time Elder Cluff was mission president. A problem arose over the leasing of plantation land to a Chinaman. Two local female members of the LDS Church brought a suit of ejectment against Cluff for leasing what they felt to be their land. They maintained the land was owned by Laie and it was not Cluff's right to lease it. Finding neither Cluff nor the law as immediately sympathetic

as they felt necessary they physically drove off the Chinese who were laboring to clear the land. The angry Chinese then came to Cluff for assistance. Exactly who should receive credit for the solution is not clear; Cluff claims it but it is possible lawyer Kupau was really responsible. In any event, it was Kupau who told the Chinaman to scatter his workers so that they occupied each of the corners of the land. When the women and their allies attacked, the Chinese were to retreat while the aggressors moved their assault into the next corner. As soon as the women had vacated the first scene of battle a safe distance those workers were to return to that spot and commence working again. It was either follow such a plan or bring counter suit and the latter Cluff was unwilling to do. Consequently the battle was engaged and Cluff reported the noise was overwhelming. The two women raged around the field and only the roaring of the sea prevented the din from being heard in the mountains. Wrote Cluff: "After revolving around the field after the little brown men a few times and finding themselves just where they began and the Chinamen still masters of the situation they abandoned their efforts and went home."⁴⁷

To go home was not to be defeated, however. Instead the conflict assumed even more interesting dimensions. Physical means were obviously not going to bring satisfactory results so court action was the only avenue, ostensibly. But thought the disgruntled women, why leave anything to chance? So they hired a Kahuna to pray (kahuna pule) their enemies to death. Sacrifices of little black pigs and chickens were made, incantations and awa involved, though we have only Cluff's account that his adversaries' intoxication resulted from the quaffing of awa and wine. The women were further instructed to catch the haole missionary before he arrived in court, express their unbounded love and affection for him all the while gently stroking him down from the shoulder to the hand.

This they dutifully did. Cluff reported he found such familiarity in the streets of Honolulu both unbecoming and impudent. He struggled to free himself from his assailants, calling them deceivers and hypocrites. "You have no love for me or the Church to which you claim membership. You are "hoo kamani loa," he told them. During the trial he apparently was conscious that many eyes in the crowded courtroom were upon him, perhaps even more than normal in such a situation. Possibly he wondered at the time but he did not know until after the trial about the priests' instructions to the women. He later learned that the local saints were praying for him all the while using the situation as a kind of test, to see whose prayers were strongest. When Judge Allen announced the verdict in favor of Cluff another verdict was also decided. The Lord had triumphed. It was a sort of male Kapiolani on the mountain, successfully challenging once again the pagan god of the volcano.⁴⁸

Elder Cluff left Hawaii late in July 1882 to be succeeded by the son of the first Bishop of the Church, Edward Partridge. Cluff later was jailed in the Utah penitentiary. This final story needs to be told for it ties directly back to the Laie that he loved. As is commonly known, Joseph F. Smith was here on three different occasions, one of which, at least, was to hide from federal marshalls who wanted the apostle on charges of practicing polygamy. Cluff did not escape the marshalls, for about six years after Cluff left Laie he served for several months in the Utah prison on polygamy charges. During that time he was model prisoner and was given a special room in the jail as a result. In addition he enjoyed privileges which made his stay in the "pen" far from typical. Upon his release on September 5, 1888 he went to the hiding place of George Q. Cannon, Joseph F. Smith, and Wilford Woodruff and made a report. So well did he sell the features of room 120 at the prison that rather

than stay on the underground any longer, Elder Cannon gave himself up the following day and was not disappointed when assigned to room 120.

Though President Joseph F. Smith's experiences in Laie is material for another paper, I thought a pleasant way to conclude this one would be with a little story about one of his experiences on the plantation. In 1886 his sense of humor if not his skill as a versifier was illustrated when he prepared two fleas in school and mailed them to Utah with this verse about the paradise in which he and his wife were then living.

Accept the dying embers
Of this festive little flea
As a token of remembrance
From Tottie J. and me.
How often he has nipped our shins
While lurking in our house,
And tickled us beneath the ribs,
The tyvel only knows.
But at last J. caught him napping
In the folding of her stocking,
And the way she squeezed his life out
Was particularly shocking.

This poem cannot capture President Smith's feelings about Hawaii any more than this paper can the real history of Laie as anyone who has lived here and read about Laie's past knows. But if the affection behind the poem, and the paper serve to remind us of the pleasantly indelible memories of Laie any of us has who lived here, one of the purposes of record keeping in general and the MPHS in particular will have been served.

ENDNOTES

¹ Richard Clarence Harvey, The Development of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in Hawaii (Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 1974), M. A. Thesis, p. 41.

² Margaret Comfort Beck, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Hawaiian Islands (Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 1941), p.56.

³ Andrew Jenson, ed., History of the Hawaiian Mission of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City, 1935), 31 December 1851.

The Jenson Manuscript is not paginated. Subsequent references to this work will cite Jenson and the date.

⁴ Jenson, 18 Nov., 1851.

⁵ Jenson, 5 Oct., 1855.

⁶ Jenson, 18 Aug., 1853.

⁷ Jenson, 26 July, 1854.

⁸ Bock, p.56.

⁹ Jenson, 16 Oct., 1857.

¹⁰ This lost footnote reference must remain a source of embarrassment to a forgetful scholar. While I have no doubts as to the authenticity of the information I cannot relocate it. Hawaiian history scholars Ken Baldridge and Joseph Spurrier concurred that the information was correct but neither could recall the exact source.

¹¹ c.f. footnote 10.

¹² David W. Cummings, Centennial History of Laie, 1865-1965 (Laie, Hawaii: Published by the Centennial Committee, 1965), There is no pagination in this brief booklet.

¹³ Cummings.

14 Cummings.

15 Cummings.

16 Jenson, 7 July, 1865.

17 Jenson, 7 July, 1865.

18 Jenson, 11 Apr., 1868.

19 Jenson, 1 Dec., 1868.

20 Presidents of the Church, Slide Set I, Explanatory Material for frame 69.

21 Cummings.

22 Jenson, 27 Jan., 1870.

23 Lance D. Chase, "Character as Destiny: The Hawaiian Mission Crisis of 1874." Proceedings of the First Annual Conference, Mormon History in the Pacific (Laie, Hawaii: Brigham Young University-Hawaii Campus, 1980), pp. 87-97.

24 Jenson, 31 Jan., 1875.

25 Harvey Harris Cluff, Journal and Autobiography, 1868 to 1912, p.120.

26 Cluff, p.120.

27 Cluff, p.122.

28 Cluff, p.197.

29 Cluff, p.157.

30 Jenson, 21 Sep., 1874.

31 Jenson, 20 Nov., 1870.

32 Jenson, 6 Apr., 1876.

33 Jenson, 4 Oct., 1871.

34 Jenson, 30 Aug., 1876.

35 Jenson, 31 Oct., 1877.

36 Jenson, 7 May, 1877.

37 Jenson, 6 July, 1875.

38 "The Monarch and the Mormons: Kalakaua and the Latter-day Saints."

per presented to the Hawaiian History Society by Ken Baldrige.

39 Jenson, 21 Oct., 1878.

40 Jenson, 4 Apr., 1879.

41 Jenson, 11 Apr., 1879.

42 Jenson, 5 Dec., 1878.

43 Cummings.

44 Jenson, 31 Dec., 1881.

45 Hyrum Albert Woolley, Journal, Feb. 25, 1881 to Jan. 14, 1882, pp.

5, 185, 203, 237.

46 Cluff, p. 185.

47 Cluff, pp. 194-195.

48 Cluff, p. 195.