

BYU Studies Quarterly

Volume 52 | Issue 3 Article 7

10-1-2013

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Recommended Citation

Woods, Fred E. (2013) "Latter-day Saint Missionaries Encounter the London Missionary Society in the South Pacific, 1844-1852," BYU Studies Quarterly. Vol. 52: Iss. 3, Article 7. Available at: https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/byusq/vol52/iss3/7

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The ship *John Williams* was owned by the London Missionary Society. It was named after John Williams (1796–1839), an extraordinary Protestant missionary and martyr in the South Pacific. Six more ships christened *John Williams* were operated in succession by the LMS. Courtesy Council for World Mission Archive, SOAS Library, University of London.

Latter-day Saint Missionaries Encounter the London Missionary Society in the South Pacific, 1844–1852

Fred E. Woods

In fall 1843, four Latter-day Saint (LDS) missionaries embarked on the ship *Timoleon* from New Bedford, Massachusetts, to launch missionary work in the South Pacific.¹ The quartet consisted of Addison Pratt, who had commenced a career as a whaleman at the age of twenty (1822);² Benjamin F. Grouard, a seaman since the age of fourteen;³ Noah Rogers, the oldest of the group and president of the mission;⁴ and Knowlton F.

^{1.} For the voyage account, see Fred E. Woods, "The Voyage of the Whaleship *Timoleon*: Launching Latter-day Saint Missionary Work in the Pacific," *The Log of Mystic Seaport* 56, no. 1 (Spring 2005): 12–21; Fred E. Woods, "Launching Missionary Work in the South Pacific: The Voyage of the *Timoleon*," in *Go Ye Into All the World*, ed. Reid L. Neilson and Fred E. Woods (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2012), 183–208.

^{2.} On Addison Pratt, see S. George Ellsworth, ed., *The Journals of Addison Pratt* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1990), 1–18; and "Addison Pratt," in *Latter-day Saint Biographical Sketches: A Compilation of Biographical Sketches of Prominent Men and Women in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, comp. Andrew Jenson, 4 vols. (Salt Lake City: Andrew Jenson History, 1901–36), 3:698–99.

^{3.} Benjamin F. Grouard, of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, traveled throughout the world. Because of his oceanic experience, he was well suited to accompany Pratt on a mission to the islands of the Pacific. "B. F. Grouard's Death," *Deseret Evening News*, April 7, 1894, 4.

^{4.} Noah Rogers, of Bethlehem, Connecticut, joined the Church in 1837 and migrated with the Saints to Nauvoo. Ellsworth, *Journals of Addison Pratt*, 116; Douglas S. Pike, comp., "Noah and Eda (Hollister) Rogers & Family," unpublished ms, 2000, 1–2, 76, online at https://www.familysearch.org/eng/library/

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(*left*) Benjamin Grouard (1819–1894), a Mormon missionary. (*right*) Addison Pratt (1802–1872), a Mormon missionary. Both pictures courtesy Church History Library, © Intellectual Reserve, Inc.

Hanks, age twenty-seven and the only bachelor of the group, who hoped being in the islands would improve his poor health. Tragically, Hanks passed away three weeks into the voyage and was buried at sea.⁵ In May 1844, Pratt left the *Timoleon* and began proselytizing on the island of Tubuai, 350 miles south of Tahiti, because there were no Christian missionaries on the island and the inhabitants were eager to have a missionary abide with them.⁶ Rogers and Grouard went on to Tahiti.⁷

fhlcatalog/supermainframeset.asp?display=titledetails&titleno=2060483&disp=Noah+and+Eda+Hollister+Rogers+%26amp%3B+ (accessed on July 19, 2013).

^{5.} Benjamin F. Grouard, Journal, June 1843–September 1846, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, October 8–November 3, 1843, 24–25, notes that Hanks's death was a "source of grief & anxiety" for the group.

^{6.} Addison Pratt, Autobiography and Journals, 1843–52, Church History Library, May 31, 1844.

^{7.} On early Mormonism in French Polynesia, see R. Lanier Britsch, "Beginnings in French Polynesia and Hawaii," in *Unto Every Nation: Gospel Light Reaches Every Land*, ed. Donald Q. Cannon and Richard O. Cowan (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2003), 138–59; S. George Ellsworth, *Zion in Paradise: Early Mormons in the South Seas* (Logan: Utah State University, 1959); S. George Ellsworth, "New Wine and Old Bottles: Latter-day Saint Missionary Work in French Polynesia, 1844–1852," in *Voyages of Faith: Explorations in Mormon Pacific History*, ed. Grant Underwood (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 2000), 13–31; S. George Ellsworth and Kathleen C. Perrin, *Seasons*

Previous studies of the South Pacific mission have relied heavily on the journals kept by Addison Pratt, his relatives, and other Mormons. This study adds to our understanding of this mission by presenting the writings of missionaries of the London Missionary Society (LMS) that discuss their interactions with the Mormon missionaries. Here are one complete letter, parts of seven other letters, and extracts from a journal—all the known writings of LMS missionaries in the South Pacific region from 1849 to 1857 that mention the Mormon missionaries. This information sheds light on the interaction between the English missionaries and the LDS missionaries, showing that there was at times goodwill and friendship as well as the antagonism that has been previously documented.

English Missionaries from the London Missionary Society

In 1795, leaders of independent churches in Great Britain joined forces with Anglican and Presbyterian clergy and laymen to form a mission society whose object was "to spread the knowledge of Christ among the heathen and other unenlightened nations." Missionaries of the London Missionary Society arrived on the Society Islands in 1797 and taught the native Tahitians English, translated the Bible into Tahitian (1835), and abolished human sacrifice. They were generally not supportive of the message the Latter-day Saint missionaries carried to the islanders in the 1840s. These LMS missionaries were a mixed blessing for the proselytizing Saints, who found them both a stepping stone as well as

of Faith and Courage: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in French Polynesia: A Sesquicentennial History, 1843–1993 (Sandy, Utah: Yves R. Perrin, 1994); R. Lanier Britsch, Unto the Islands of the Sea: A History of the Latter-day Saints in the Pacific (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1986).

^{8.} William Ellis, *The History of the London Missionary Society* (London: John Snow, 1844), 26. The movement was officially named the London Missionary Society in 1818. On the London Missionary Society, see the following: The Council for World Missions website at http://www.cwmission.org; Richard Lovett, *The History of the London Missionary Society*, 1795–1895, 2 vols. (London: Henry Frowde, Oxford University Press, 1899) (pages 326 to 351 deal with the history of the Society Islands from 1840 to 1890); Charles A. Maxfield, "The Reflex and Influence of Missions: The Domestic Operations of the American Board of Commissions for Foreign Missions, 1810–1850" (PhD diss., Union Theological Seminary, 2001); Donald Philip Corr, "The Field Is the World: Proclaiming, Translating, and Serving by the American Board of Commissions for Foreign Missions, 1810–1840" (Pasadena, Calif.: William Carey Library Dissertation Series, 2009).

a stumbling block. Along with benefitting from the English missionaries' work translating the Bible and spreading the good news of Christ, Latter-day Saint missionaries also followed the English system for conducting meetings: they held several preaching services each Sunday and also normally had their baptismal services on the Sabbath just before their scheduled meetings. Historian George Ellsworth has explained, "Meetings consisted of hymns, prayers, confirmations, ordinations, and sermons. . . . School was conducted weekdays, with lessons in reading, arithmetic, geography, and, sometimes, chapters of the Bible. On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday evenings, Pratt held Bible study classes."

Difficulties in Tahiti for the Mormons

Rogers and Grouard found Tahiti in political turmoil as the French colonizers were fighting the natives for control of the island. Upon arrival in May 1844, Grouard wrote:

We had a good deal of trouble to get permission from the french government to stay on the island, owing to the great trouble the english missionaries had caused them, in stiring up the natives to fight them, but finely we succeeded. . . . One of the english missionaries lived closes by where we took up our abode, & a day or two after we arived there he called on us. We had considerable conversation together on the gospel, & we also told him the object of our mission—that we were sent of God to prepare the way for the coming of the Son of Man wich was nigh at hand. We soon found however it was useless talking to him, as he positively declared he never would believe our message, though we should raise one from the dead. He believed all the fauls [false] reports about us however, though he had no better evidence than lying newspapers. From this time thay beagan to circulate faulshoods about us among the natives, & to use every means in their power to prejudice them against us. Not being able to speak the language much, we laboured under great disadvantage One month passed away & we had done nothing, & the prospect was still very gloomy.10

In June 1844, Grouard wrote of the difficulties they encountered:

We had several conversations with the [LMS] missionaries, & told them the object of our mission, giving them at the same time an account of the rise of the church, & the doctrines we had come to teach, & them meekly bore our testimony to them . . . but they only mocked it. The devil has

^{9.} Ellsworth, "New Wine and Old Bottles," 16.

^{10.} Grouard, Journal, May 14 and May 24, 1844, 34-37.

managed to import to this Island the corrupt production of John C. Bennets pen,11 & his servents received it as a precious morsel, & diligently circulated it among the natives, in order to destroy entirely our influence among them. We had many sore trials to encounter, & nothing encouraging to look forward to—all was dark & gloomy—No prospect of a termination of the difficulties between the natives & french, but the contrary, of their growing still worse.12

In October, Grouard seemed still tenacious:

It was tough work indeed to plant the Lords standered [standard] on this island—we had to fight hard for every inch of ground we got against the combined opposition of Priest & people—the Devil & his self sanctified & self styled servants of God. Every individual who came forward to be baptized had to, (as it were) run the gantlet of the Devils army—. We however still felt to press forward to the object of our mission.¹³

Ellsworth summarized the difficult situation faced by the early Mormon missionaries in Tahiti: "The natives were interested only in ending the war [between the French and the natives for control of the island] and solving its accompanying problems. The English missionaries excluded the Mormons from the only church facilities and influenced the natives against them. In addition, the Americans had the time-consuming and necessary task of learning the Tahitian language."14

Because of the arduous political and social circumstances encountered in Tahiti, Grouard and Rogers decided to leave Tahiti and head to different islands. In spring 1845, Grouard chose to go east to the island of Anaa in the Tuamotus archipelago in French Polynesia, where he found much success, so much so that Pratt later joined him in the abundant harvest of souls, though Pratt himself had prospered on Tubuai with many

^{11.} The anti-Mormon literature referred to here is a book (over three hundred pages in length) by John C. Bennett titled History of the Saints; or, an Exposé of Joe Smith and the Mormons (Boston: Leland and Whiting, 1842). Before his authorship of this work, Bennett had been a Latter-day Saint and assistant president to Joseph Smith in the First Presidency for a short period of time, but it was soon discovered that he was an adulterer, and he was excommunicated. Shortly thereafter, he commenced this polemic against Joseph Smith and the Latter-day Saints. On Bennett, see "Bennett, John Cook," on Church Historian's Press, *The Joseph Smith Papers*, http://josephsmithpapers.org/person ?name=John+Cook+Bennett.

^{12.} Grouard, Journal, June 30, 1844, 41-42.

^{13.} Grouard, Journal, October 28, 1844, 51.

^{14.} Ellsworth, Zion in Paradise, 9.

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converts. Before leaving for Anaa, Pratt baptized Seth Lincoln, a fellow passenger on the *Timoleon*, who became the Latter-day Saint ecclesiastical leader at Tahiti in the place of Grouard. Rogers chose to go west to proselytize among the Leeward Islands but was forbidden to preach by the English missionaries. Having heard of troubles in Nauvoo, he left for home to protect his family.

Pratt and Grouard received no additional missionaries from the Church and received few letters, although they sent many. On December 6, 1844, Grouard, still in Tahiti, wrote to his wife, and his letter was published in a Nauvoo newspaper:

My ever dear and respected wife: I joyfully embrace another opportunity of writing you a few lines, knowing you are ever anxious to hear from me; especially when we are so remote from each other. . . . I sometimes think it quite strange that I have never received any communication from you since I left. . . . It is now fourteen months since I have heard a syllable from you or the church. . . . My ignorance of your whereabouts troubles me a great deal, and had I known that it was going to give me so much uneasiness I never should have consented for you to leave Nauvoo, but I fondly hope you are in Nauvoo, and boarding with Brother Schwartze. If I knew that was the case, I should rest quite contented. 17

After receiving no reply from her, Grouard evidently considered the marriage ended. Addison Pratt wrote in his journal on April 17, 1846, that Grouard

had written some 15 or 20 letters to his wife, and he had not received a word from her, that she had not gone to Nauvoo as he had wisht her to. When my wife wrote last, and Br. [Wilford] Woodruff's letters not containing a word about our families, he believed to be because his wife had transgresst, and because he did not wish to expose her, was the reason he did not say anything about any of them. He then in confidence told me his reasons for suspecting his wife, and all the unpleasantness that had befallen them since their first acquaintance, and that he had given her up for lost, that he should never write to her again, that he should stay among these islands till he was either relieved or called home, let it be long or short. And as the Lord had said it was not good

^{15.} Pratt, Autobiography and Journals, September 24, 1846, reveals that there was a conference on Anaa at Putuahara where 651 LDS converts were numbered in this island region.

^{16.} Ellsworth, Zion in Paradise, 12.

^{17. &}quot;Extract of a letter from Benjamin F. Grouard," *Times and Seasons* 6, no. 14 (August 1, 1845): 980-81.

for man to be alone, Jan 2nd 18th [Genesis 2:18], he had tested the truth that for these three years past, and as there was no prospect of his going home for years to come, he should not endure it any longer. . . . I parted with him, and in a few days he wrote me that he was married to Tearo, a fullblood native girl. She is a member of the church, and the prettiest and best girl on the island. . . . She is a rough stone from nature's quarry, but Br. Grouard believes her quality to be of the choicest marble. 18

Grouard's marriage to a native woman was no doubt shocking to the English missionaries, whose English wives accompanied them on their lifelong missions.

Inasmuch as there were no missionary replacements sent during the three years since the missionaries had embarked on their mission from Nauvoo and only a couple of letters received from the Church, Pratt returned to Utah, the new headquarters of the Church, and Grouard remained in the islands. Upon arriving in Salt Lake City in fall 1848, Pratt reported his mission at the LDS general conference session, and the conference decided to send Pratt with fresh missionaries back to the South Pacific as soon as circumstances would permit. Pratt then spent winter 1848-49 teaching prospective missionaries the Tahitian language. During the late summer of 1849, Pratt and James S. Brown left for the Society Islands via California, arriving in Tahiti on May 24, 1850. An additional twenty-one other missionaries and family members departed in this same year. They included Pratt's wife, Louisa; their daughters; and Louisa's sister, Caroline Crosby, and her family. This second surge of missionary work was forced to close in 1852 because of the Roman Catholic French government's influence in Tahiti. 19

The London Missionary Society as Reflected in the **Journals of Addison Pratt**

Among the noteworthy things Pratt described during his missionary work in the South Pacific are the encounters he and his companions had with the London Missionary Society, as attested in his journals (1844–1852). On September 17, 1844, just four months after Pratt landed in Tubuai, he recorded his first meeting with three LMS missionaries, one of whom

^{18.} Addison Pratt, Journal, April 17, 1846, quoted in Ellsworth, Journals of Addison Pratt, 275-76.

^{19.} Britsch, "Beginnings in French Polynesia and Hawaii," 144-47.

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William Howe (1797–1863), an LMS missionary. Portrait from the Annotated Register of L.M.S. Missionaries, register 392. Courtesy Council for World Mission Archive, SOAS Library, University of London.

was William Howe. 20 When Pratt held out his hand to this LMS missionary, Howe responded, "No I shall not give you my hand till we are better acquainted." Pratt further noted that Howe said to him, "I understand you have come to these Islands in the capacity of a preacher. . . . I suppose that you are aware that so many years ago, the English missionary society of London established a mission among these islands at a verry vast expense. . . . We have got the bible translated into this [Tahitian] language." 21

The conversation then turned to questions launched by the English missionaries concerning the Mormon usage of the Bible and a

^{20.} William Howe was "born in 1797 or 8, in Ireland. Ch.m., Manchester (Roby). Was Pastor at Hindley, Lancashire. Appointed to Samoa. Designated, Sept. 10, 1838, at Grosvenor St. Ch., Manchester. Married. Sailed, Nov. 8, 1838. Arrived at Sydney, April 5, and at Tahiti, Aug. 3, 1839, when, instead of going on to Samoa, he proceeded to Moorea, and settled at Afareaitu. At the close of 1844, in consequence of the aggressions of the French upon Moorea and Tahiti, he, with Mrs. Howe, and Mr. and Mrs. Joseph, returned to England, where they arrived, Jan. 27, 1845. While in England, he, with Mr. Joseph, revised and carried through the press the *Tahitian* Scriptures. The French Protectorate of Tahiti being fully established, he proceeded alone to that island. He sailed from England, Nov. 19, 1846, and arrived at Tahiti, Aug. 5, 1847. Mrs. Howe embarked for Tahiti Oct. 18, 1847, and arrived in April 1848. Mr. Howe maintained his position on the island in the face of very formidable obstacles, including criminal and civil actions in courts of law by the Roman Catholic Bishop, both of which were decided in Mr. Howe's favour. In 1856 he visited Melbourne with Mrs. Howe, arriving there on Nov. 28. He returned with Mrs. Howe to Tahiti in 1857, arriving there March 11. Protracted anxiety and failing health compelling him to seek a change, he proceeded to Rarotonga in the John Williams, and arrived there May 7, 1863. He died there, June 9, 1863. Mrs. Howe afterwards went on to Sydney and resided there. She died there, Sept. 3, 1882, aged 85." Annotated Register of L.M.S. Missionaries 1796–1923, register #392, School of Oriental and African Studies (hereafter SOAS), Archives of the London Missionary Society, University of London. See also Lovett, History of the London Missionary Society, 1:327.

^{21.} Pratt, Autobiography and Journals, September 17, 1844.

brief discussion of the Book of Mormon. When things became heated, one of the LMS missionaries (Mr. Jason) stepped in to smooth things over, whom Pratt notes "seemed to be a verry different man from the two [Howe and another missionary]." Pratt then began to take the initiative in asking questions. He bore a strong testimony of the restoration of The Church of Jesus Christ to the earth. Pratt then made a very bold gesture:

I hed [held] up my right hand & called on all the Heavenly hosts to witness, that I knew Joseph Smith to be a good man & a prophet of the Lord, & I knew this work to be preparatory to the second comeing of Christ, & if I lied, I lied in the name of the Lord" eternal damnation, & nothing less, is the penalty of such as a crime, & if I told the truth, & they gave no heed to it, they would have to suffer the consequence. They thought, they dare bear testimony to what they preacht, but did not, in the way that I did. I then advanced some other points of doctrine & offered them my, bible to find scripture to confute it, & their reply was, that they must go on board, but told me, as long as I preacht the truth they could pray for my success, but if I preacht, error they would pray that it might fall to the ground. I told them that our prayers were united, if they would pray thus, & I could make the same prayers for them, upon this they 3 gave me the hand of fellowship. They wisht for a book of Mormon & I gave them one, also a voice of warning & O. Pratt's pamphlet, giving a short sketch of Joseph Smith's life.²²

Pratt then relates that these English missionaries laid anchor for several days but did not continue to preach, adding that Howe asked some of the natives if they would like him to spend some time with them on the island. One native refused the request and said "they had got a man [Pratt] they liked better, for he is satisfied to live as we do & fair [fare] as we fair. But if you stop, we have to go to building you houses . . . and you will want so much waiting & tending on. They were treated verry coolly, to what they had been used to, before."²³

Pratt's next face-to-face encounter with the LMS occurred on September 16, 1845, almost exactly one year later, again on Tubuai. When the LMS vessel *John Williams* came to shore, she had onboard two

^{22.} Pratt, Autobiography and Journals, September 17, 1844. Parley P. Pratt's A Voice of Warning and Instruction to All People (New York: William Sandford, 1837) was a tract widely used by LDS missionaries. The pamphlet referred to was penned by Parley's brother Orson Pratt, titled A Interesting Account of Several Remarkable Visions, and the Late Discovery of Ancient American Records (Edinburgh: Ballantyne and Hughes, 1840). Both men were called to be Apostles in 1835.

^{23.} Pratt, Autobiography and Journals, September 17, 1844.

missionaries: a Mr. George Platt²⁴ and a "Mr. Crowzy" (probably Ernest Rudolph William Krause).²⁵ Concerning these missionaries and their meeting, Pratt wrote the following: "She [the vessel *John Williams*] had 2 missionaries onboard Mr. Platt, an Englishman & Mr. Crowzey [Krause], a german, both attended [attendant] to the English mission, Mr. Platt is an old veteran in that cause [LMS], & has raised a family

^{24.} George Platt was "born at Arnfield, near Tintwhistle, March 15, 1789. . . . Studied at Manchester. Appointed to the *South Seas*. Ordained at Surrey Chapel, Sept. 30 1816. Married. Sailed, Nov. 17, 1816. Arrived at *Moorea* Nov. 17, 1817. Here, at *Papetoai* (Roby's Place), he laboured until 1824, when he removed to *Borabora* to take place of Mr. Orsmond. From Dec. 18, 1829, to March 2, 1830, he was occupied on a missionary voyage to the *Hervey* and *Austral Islands*. From July 31, 1835, to Aug. 20, 1836, he was absent from his station on a visit to *Samoa*, to prepare for the reception of the brethren appointed to that mission, where he received them on their arrival. Before his visit to Samoa, on account of civil commotions at Borabora, Mrs. Platt and her family removed to *Raiatea*. On his return from Samoa, occupied *Raiatea* as his future station. Mrs. Platt died at Raiatea. Oct. 13, 1854. In March, 1856, he left Raiatea on a visit to England, where he arrived Sept. 6. In Aug. 1859 he returned to *Raiatea*. He died at Raiatea, April 4, 1865, aged 76." Annotated Register of L.M.S. Missionaries, register #172, SOAS.

^{25.} Ellsworth, Journals of Addison Pratt, 539 n. 11, suggests that "Crowzy" was probably Ernest Rudolph William Krause. Krause was born "March 3, 1824. Arrived in Tahiti in March 1842, from Guatemala, in Central America. Was appointed provisionally by the Tahiti brethren to Atiu, one of the Hervey Islands. In March, 1842, he proceeded, with Mrs. Krause to Tahaa, Society Islands. In June 1850, he with Mrs. Krause, left Tahaa to visit Sydney for the benefit of his health, and returned to Tahaa in Oct., 1850. In 1851 he removed to Borabora, one of the Society Islands, where he arrived in March, and soon after commenced an Institution for training native agents. Mrs. Krause died April 6, 1855, in Borabora. Soon afterwards he left the island and proceeded, via the Sandwich Islands and United States, to England, where he arrived Nov. 19, 1855. In 1856 he re-married. Having been appointed to superintend the mission and Institution at Rarotonga, he sailed, with Mrs. Krause, Jan. 1859, and arrived at Rarotonga in Aug., 1859. His health failing, he left Rarotonga, with his family, July 20, 1867, and proceeded, via Samoa to England, where he arrived Jan. 17, 1868. Soon after his arrival in England he proceeded to Germany, visiting Carlsbad and other places for the benefit of his health. On his return to England he took part, with Mr. George Gill, in revising the Rarotonga Bible for a third edition. In 1870 he retired from missionary work of the Society, and went to reside at Niesky, in Prussia. Here, in Nov. 1870, paralysis put a stop to his labours at revision. He died at Niesky, Dec. 26, 1873. Mrs. Krause continued to reside at Niesky after Mr. Krause's death. She died there Jan. 29, 1879." Annotated Register of L.M.S. Missionaries, register #449, SOAS.

among these islands that has the name of a verry licentious one. They called on me, & after talking some time, Mr. Platt went out and left Mr. Crowzey with me, who immediately commenced questioning me on my views of the Scriptures &c."26

After a rather lengthy discussion of Latter-day Saint beliefs, Pratt reported the following:

[Krause] said the grand object in which we were both engaged was the same, which is, the conversion of the world & the fundimental principles of the gospel, we both believed alike, & these extra notions . . . aught not to come between us to disturb our good feelings for each other & the union of our labours in the common cause of Christ. He presumed, if the London mission society knew the particulars of my situation, they would be willing to help me to the necessaries of life as I stood in need. At any rate, said he, I will help you, if I have any opportunity to send to you.

Pratt, obviously impressed by this remark, recorded on this occasion,

I have met with but few men that were so warm hearted in the cause of Christ. He had voluntarily spent his patrimonial estate, to get to these Islands without encouragement from any boddy, & had sacrifised the society of all his kindred in the flesh for Christ's sake & was for some time on his own expense among these Islands, but is now supported by the London mission society—I was much interested with him, & had I oppertunity with him for a few days, & he was from under the influence of that old hypocrite Mr. Platt, I have but little doubt that he would become a Saint. It is Mr. Platt that has written to all of these Islands to reject us, & Br. [Noah] Rogers felt so severely the evil effects of it.²⁷

Before Mr. Platt and Mr. Krause went on board their ship, Pratt noted that Platt sent Krause "with a bundle of papers, which contained lessons for scholl [school] children, catechisms, &c., & said he had a few requests to make, for they had learned from the natives that I taught some things that were not according to their views." Pratt wrote, "As thes men have the staff in their own hands, as to influence among these Islands, & they are going from Island to Island, & had promised to aid me, I thought it policy to adhere to the Savior's advice, 'Be wise as serpents & harmless as doves."28

^{26.} Pratt, Autobiography and Journals, September 16, 1845.

^{27.} Pratt, Autobiography and Journals, September 16, 1845.

^{28.} Pratt, Autobiography and Journals, September 16, 1845.

Letters from the London Missionary Society (1849–1852, 1857)

The LMS missionaries regularly reported to their headquarters by letter. The LMS preserved these letters, and they are now housed at Council for World Mission archives at the library of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. Research has found eight letters that mention the Mormon missionaries in the South Pacific in the years 1844 to 1857. The letters were sent to the Reverend Arthur Tidman, foreign secretary of the London Missionary Society. These records provide a glimpse from another perspective of Mormonism in the South Pacific and an example of the strong influence of the LMS in the region during this period.

The earliest of these letters was written by Mr. George Platt, referred to by Pratt above, in mid-January 1849 from the island of Raiatea; it concerns the native islanders wanting to gather to a Latter-day Saint American Zion:

It grieved me much while on this voyage, to see that while the brethren have had their attention directed to the state of affairs on Tahiti and their own stations the Mormons have set a machinery to work that will soon take away all the Paumoutes [residents of the Tuamotu archipelago]. Of course they being without means, have no books, either elementary or of other kinds, except those we furnish. They have our edition of the scriptures, but in some things they pervert them, and fill the peoples minds with idle tales. One man asked me, where Zion was? Whether it was not in America. I told him he read in the scripture of one Zion, and symbolical of another. I knew of no other. He said they were going to Zion. I replied it would be well if they were found in the Heavenly Zion. He said they were going to America.²⁹

Six months later (July 1849), two other LMS missionaries who were checking up on mission activities also wrote to Reverend Tidman from Raiatea to report their findings on the Austral Islands, which included mention of the Mormons and particularly Grouard. This letter is presented in its entirety:

Raiatea July 10. 1849 To Rev. A. Tidman. Dear Sir,

^{29.} George Platt to A. [Arthur] Tidman, January 16, 1849, Council for World Mission Archives, SOAS.

On Monday 28 May we left this place on the J. Williams to visit the austral islands. On 31 we reached Rurutu. We were welcomed on the beach by a number of persons who conducted us to the house of the chief "Te-ao." He expressed his pleasure that we had reached his island.

We were engaged till midnight with a crowd in his house, who came to inquire the meaning of passages of scripture.

On Friday morning, early, we attended the schools. Both at the adults' & children's a good number attended. There were about 30 girls & young women, who could read in the bible. Not any of the boys had made so much proficiency.

At the church-meeting 3 persons were admitted, & several children baptized.

We did not find things as we could wish among the Deacons in consequence of jealousies among them.

The people had almost finished a new schooner; & they informed us that the principal reason for building it was, to visit an island not far from them, & convey teachers to the inhabitants, who have not as yet received the Gospel.

On Rurutu all external appearances impress upon the mind that once a better state of things existed. Relative to intelligence, & scripture knowledge, they appear stationary.

There we met the Mormon Teacher [p. 1] Grourart [Benjamin Grouard] & another American, whose object was to make proselytes to the systems.

On June 2nd we landed at Rimatara & the same gladness was manifested by the people as at Rurutu; & as on that island, we were engaged most of the night explaining portions of scripture.

At the church meetings 2 were excommunicated & 3 admitted. Several children were baptized. In the schools there were 30 girls and 25 boys, 12 of whom could read.

Although the people are so few, we found them disunited. This is in consequence of a person who wishes to make himself great: He & his party, are opposed to the chief, & the laws.

We perceived there, as at Rurutu that some of the people had "itching ears" respecting Mormonism.

From Rimatara we sailed for Tupuai [Tubuai]. On that island the two mormons we met at Rurutu have been living for some years; & most of the people had embraced their doctrines. There were a number, however, who had not joined them, & some who had, were "tired" of it.

The next island at which we called was Raivavae. We spent the sabbath with them. Several children were baptized & 2 persons were received into the church. The children in the schools have made but little progress, & the people in general are not so far advanced, as at Rurutu & Rimatara. There we met a Tahitian whom Grounart [Benjamin Grouard] had taken as teacher of Mormonism; & no doubt he will succeed to a certain extent, as several were disposed to adopt his system. [p. 2]

Leaving Raivavae we proceeded to Rapa. We found the old Teacher Hape well & cheerful. He expressed a desire to visit Tahiti but decided to wait till the vessel call again. There was not much sickness among the people but they were not well supplied with clothing, as but few vessels call there.

From Rapa we sailed to Anaa & landed on [June] 21. We were struck with the contrast in the conduct of the people to that of those on the other islands. Only one man came down to the boat, & the people on the beach appeared as though they were suspicious of us. Some inquired "for what are you come hither? We have another Teacher". We told them our interest in their welfare continued, & on that account we visited them. They replied "that is good." Anaa is the principal residence of the Mormon teachers, & most of the people are proselytes to their system.

On [June] 27 we reached this place [Raiatea]. During the whole time we had fair winds & & particularly fine weather.

The people on Rurutu, Rimatara, & Raivavae stated "we do not desire any more Tahitian teachers, as we are "fin roa" thoroughly tired of them, but wish one of you to remain, or send us European teachers. We will build dwelling houses, give land to cultivate, & supply them with food."

It is indeed a cause for deep regret that they are left so destitute [p. 3] of instruction. And they inquire as the Eunuch of old "how can we understand unless some one instruct us"?

Although the Mormons have been so successful on Tupuai [Tubuai]; & Anaa, we have no doubt, that if the Directors could place European teachers among them they would be re-gained. Indeed, the people say "we embraced the new system, because our old Teachers neglected us." Some are tired, & the majority say "we desire the word of God, & if we had European Teachers connected with yourselves, we should adhere to them."

It is a cause for joy that on all the islands their desire for the Sacred Scripture continues. May he who gave that holy book, send his Spirit, & Teachers after his own heart, to enlighten & instruct the inhabitants of those islands.

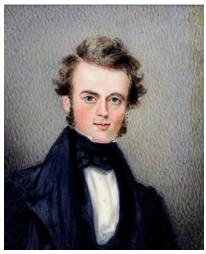
We remain Dear Sir, yours truly, G. Charter E.R. W. Krause

of instruction and they inquire as the Eunuch of all " how can we understand unless some one instruct us?? although the Junmons have been so successful on Tupnai, Lanaa, we have no doubt, that if the Directors could place European teachers among them they would be re-gained Indeed, the people say we embraced the new system, because our all Teachers neglected us" Some are tirely the majority say we desire the word of God, sig we had European Teachers innected with " yourselves, we should adhere to them. It is a cause for joy that on all the islands their desire for the laced Scripture continues. May he who gave that holy book, send his Shirit, & Teachers after his own heart, to enlighten in Street the inhabitants of those islands. We remain Dear Lin yours truly P.S. The following is an account of what we received at the islands. For Bibles - 20 - 15-0 · Pilgrims haid to M. flowe to whose account you will place it. Put on board the & Williams arrow wort value - 5-19-0 For Bibles + 4 Pilgrims.

The final page of a letter from George Charter and Ernest R. W. Krause to Arthur Tidman, July 10, 1849. LMS/South Seas/Incoming Correspondence/box 22, fd. 1, jacket C. Courtesy Council for World Mission Archives, SOAS Library, University of London.

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(*left*) George Charter (1811–1898), an LMS missionary. Portrait from the Annotated Register of L.M.S. Missionaries, register 373. (*right*) Alexander Chisholm (1814–1862), an LMS missionary. Portrait from the Annotated Register of L.M.S. Missionaries, register 452. Both pictures courtesy Council for World Mission Archive, SOAS Library, University of London.

P.S. The following is an account of what we received at the islands.

For Bibles £ 20 - 15- 0

" Pilgrims - 9 - Subscriptions 2 - 7 -

23 - 11 - This we paid to W. Howe, to whose

account you will place it.

Put on board the J Williams arrow root

Value £ 5 - 19 - o For Bibles & 4 Pilgrims.

Oil
$$\frac{-19 - 0}{6 - 18 - 0^{30}}$$

30. G. [George] Charter and E. [Ernest] William Krause to A. [Arthur] Tidman, July 10, 1849, LMS/South Seas/Incoming Correspondence/box 22, fd. 1, jacket C, Council for World Mission Archives, SOAS, details their visit to the various islands of the Austral Islands. George Charter was "born in 1811, at Melbourne, Cambridgeshire.... Studied at Turvey. Appointed to *Raiatea*. Ordained Feb. 6, 1838, at Melbourne. Married Martha Unwin. . . . Sailed, April 11, 1838. Arrived at *Sydney*, Sept. 10, and at *Huahine*, Feb., 1839. He thence proceeded to *Tahaa*; but being unsuccessful in establishing a school there, he joined Mr. Platt in *Raiatea*. Early in 1841 he visited Sydney, with Mrs. Charter, for the benefit of his health, and in July 1841, sailed from Sydney to return to *Raiatea*. In March

In December of 1850, English missionary William Howe wrote to LMS headquarters in London, noting among other things the arrival of Mormon missionaries (family of Pratt and others) in Tubuai less than two months earlier:

Our out stations are suffering much for want of being visited—whether the Mormons have got the notion that Jerusalem is to be found somewhere about our Missions, I do not know, but they are pouring fast upon our out stations in considerable numbers. 11, men women and children landed at Tupuai [Tubuai] and have obtained permission from the Governor to locate themselves there to commence an agricultural establishment. They have made considerable progress in baptizing the people at the Paumotus.31

Two months later (February 1851), LMS missionary Alexander Chisholm³² wrote a report describing a meeting with a Mormon elder named Dunn, who had been called on a mission in the fall of 1850 to the South Pacific:

"Simeon A. Dunn Elder in the church of Jesus Christ of latter day saints has written a lay epistle full of the most absurd assumptions, he says they are wholly dependent on the bible for their knowledge, but they

^{1853,} he left *Raiatea* with his family to proceed to Sydney on account of failure of health; after which his connection with the Society terminated. He settled in Sydney, where he died in 1898, aged 87." Annotated Register of L.M.S. Missionaries, register #373, SOAS.

^{31.} William Howe to A. [Arthur] Tidman, December 11, 1850, LMS/South Seas/Incoming Correspondence/box 23, fd. 3, jacket D, Council for World Mission Archives, SOAS.

^{32.} Alexander Chisholm was "born July, 1814, at Turriff, Aberdeenshire. Ch.m., Cresent Ch., Liverpool, Nov., 1834 (Kelly). Studied at Blackburn Academy. Appointed to Tahiti. Ordained, July 14, 1842 at Crescent Ch. Married Elizabeth Davies, born Dec. 23, 1822, Ch.m. Oswestry (Reeve). Sailed, Aug. 11, 1842. Arrived at Tahiti, March 13, 1843. His appointment having been changed to Samoa he proceeded to that Group, and arrived at Upolu, April 1843, and settled in June at Salailua, Savaii, as arranged by the Samoan Committee, he was instructed to join the Tahiti Mission, and in Dec., 1846, left Samoa, and proceeded to that island, and settled at Hitiaa. In 1849 he removed to Papara, Tahiti. In Sept. 1852, in consequence of the arbitrary measures of the French authorities, he retired to Raiatea, where he continued to labour until April 1860, when he proceeded with his family to England, and arrived Oct. 2. After his return to England he was chiefly engaged in carrying through the press a revised version of the Tahitian Scriptures. He died at Oswestry, May 29, 1862. Mrs. Chisholm continued to reside at Oswestry." Annotated Register of L.M.S. Missionaries, register #172, SOAS.

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have also a more sure word of prophecy—he also advocates dipping in baptism the same Gent had an interview with W [William] Howe."³³

The following month (March 1851), Chisholm expressed concerns that the natives were having problems with alcohol and the influence of Mormon missionaries:

We are very sorry to say that intemperance is on the increase, & that month after month calls us to the painful exercise of discipline on those who have become the slaves of intoxicating drinks.—There are also a number of Mormonite teachers now going by anointing with oil but as they can only exercise on those who have been baptized unto their faith, they present a strong [?] inducement to those who are afflicted with a desire [?] to unite with them, & if they once do so, there is generally, some means found for retaining them although the pretenders miracle be not wrought.—From these and other causes which need not be mentioned, we feel our circumstances to be very trying and difficult & therefore beg a special interest in the prayers of the Directors, and our Christian friends generally, that we may be supported and directed aright by the All wise & all mighty—Believe me dear Brother.³⁴

One of the Mormon missionaries laboring alongside Addison Pratt, Simeon Dunn, and others at this time was James S. Brown. Brown recorded that he met with Mr. Chisholm during this same month (March 1851) at Papara and noted the aftermath of Dunn's teachings referred to above:

While at Papara, many people came to see us . . . but showed great reluctance in shaking hands with me. I learned that the cause of the indifference was that they were afraid of the Protestant [LMS] ministers. For a while they kept very shy of me. I called on their minister,

^{33.} A. [Alexander] Chisholm to A. [Arthur] Tidman February 3, 1851, LMS/ South Seas/Incoming Correspondence/box 24A, fd. 1, jacket A, Council for World Mission Archives, SOAS. Dunn had been called on a mission September 28, 1850, to the South Pacific. Although his health had been poor for nearly a year, his family lacked resources, and he did not have the money to finance his mission, Brigham Young promised him the Lord would bless him if he would accept this calling. Dunn served faithfully in Tahiti until 1852, when the French caused the Mormon missionaries to leave the island region. See also "History of Simeon Adams Dunn" at Leon Wilde, Leon Wilde's Genealogical Research Website, http://dkwilde.com/Genealogy/Dunn/Histories/Simeon_Adams_Dunn.htm.

^{34.} Alexander Chisholm to Rev. A. Tidman March 21, 1851, LMS/South Seas/Incoming Correspondence/box 24A, fd. 1, jacket B, Council for World Mission Archives, SOAS.

Mr. Chisholm, and presented him with a Voice of Warning, which I asked him to read; but when I held it out to him he said no, he would not read it or anything that the Mormons had; 'but,' said he, 'I want to exhort you and show you that you are deluded.' I asked what he knew about our Church to cause him to be so excited. He said that he had had a letter from Simeon A. Dunn, one of the Elders, and that public opinion was enough to satisfy him that we were false teachers and deceivers of the people.35

Brown further notes that two days later (March 16, 1851) he converted a young, sickly, native woman who proclaimed at the time of her baptism that she had been healed. This caused quite a stir. Brown then explained that he was taken to the Protestant mission station by a French police officer and there interrogated:

I was ushered into the presence of Messrs. Chisholm, Howe and Davis. All of them were what were called English or Protestant missionaries. Mr. Howe acted as chief spokesman or prosecutor, while Chisholm filled the role of justice, Mr. Davis appearing to be his assistant. Thus arrayed, they told me that I had been arrested and brought before them because I had raised a very unusual excitement among the people, and I could not produce a permit from the government as a resident of the island . . . and the decision they had come to was that if I would not agree to leave the place by 8 a.m. next day I would be locked up in a dungeon until I did agree to leave. Of course I consented to depart, thinking I could get my permit and return in a few days.³⁶

Brown had another close call the following year at the village of Tatake when he was nearly roasted at a native barbeque on July 4, 1852. He explained how the event was ignited: "Two young Protestant ministers came and made three or four inflammatory speeches, telling the people that they had admitted a wolf into the fold, and if they did not get rid of him [Brown], the [LMS] ministers would not call again. . . . Thus the wild and heathenish passion was fanned into a lively flame of renewed persecution." Brown further noted that at the very time he was taken to the "log heap, which was then at the zenith of its burning," he boldly challenged the natives and said, "I defy ten of your best men, yea the host of you, for I serve that God who delivered Daniel from the den of lions, and the three Hebrew children from the fiery furnace!"

^{35.} James S. Brown, Life of a Pioneer: Being the Autobiography of James S. Brown (Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon and Sons, 1900), 185-86.

^{36.} Brown, Life of a Pioneer, 186-88.

The natives then began to fight among themselves; according to Brown, his deliverance was later explained by one native who told him, "At the moment that you defied us there was a brilliant light, or pillar of fire, bore down close over your head. . . . We thought that you had prayed to your God of power, and that He had sent that fire to burn us and our people if we harmed you." ³⁷

This same year, George Platt wrote a second letter to Tidman describing his anxiety over the influence of the Mormons among the natives. Platt had further concerns regarding their intermarriages with the islanders and the news that they had been driven by the French from the Chain Islands (the Tuamotu Archipelago):

We began to be anxious about the Austral group. The Mormons are diligent there. . . . These mormons take native wives and live as the natives do. Some of them are runaway sailors and some from the great mormon body. When I had opportunity I used to write to the deacons and churches to encourage and direct them for a long time [and now] we have been deprived of this. Whether the brethren on Tahiti have written or not, I cannot tell, I understand there have been several opportunities. Some of the Islands would not receive the Mormons, and some have, where the [they] have formed parties. The french authorities have driven them from the Chain Island, where they had come in contact with the priests. The Lord reigneth. 38

Platt and preceding LMS missionaries had worked hard to teach the natives to abandon sinful practices including infanticide, elder abuse, cannibalism, and polygamy. It was abhorrent to them that one of the Mormon elders would take a native wife, which the LMS missionaries may have conflated with polygamy.

Later that same year, Brown met up with Platt on the island of Rapa when the bark *John Williams* had come to shore on October 17. Brown recalled the confrontation:

Mr. Platt... was a man of fine address. He came ashore and preached, then sprinkled all the infant children in the village. Though very pleasant, he refused to talk with me in the Tahitian language, saying that if we did so on the Scriptures, it would cause a split among the people.

^{37.} Brown, Life of a Pioneer, 246-51.

^{38.} George Platt to Rev A. [Arthur] Tidman, January 7, 1852, LMS/South Seas/Incoming Correspondence/box 24B, fd. 6, jacket A, Council for World Mission Archives, SOAS.

I insisted that he show the natives the scripture for his mode of baptism, but he declined to do that, and boarded his vessel and sailed away.

In early 1852, Krause wrote from Bora Bora, noting that other Latterday Saints who had arrived in the islands from California were creating additional confusion among those laboring on behalf of the London Missionary Society:

A number of Mormons from California have arrived and gone to the Austral group which has perplexed the people not a little, 2 letters have been received by the brethren from Raivavai begging for a visit to advise them what to do. We should have been glad to send the brethren at once to those distressed places but have no opportunity and are therefore compelled to wait for the John Williams, hoping that there will be no objection of those brethren going down with us when we visit those outstations that may have the advantage of a person[al] introduction from us.39

Yet it would be the American Mormon missionaries who would ultimately be distraught at this juncture: they were forced by the French government to leave the islands in 1852. Just before his departure, Brown described a sympathetic meeting with Mr. William Howe, "the presiding official of the Protestant mission on the islands." Brown explained that Howe had invited him to dinner and "made me a present of the Tahitian Bible, also of a Tahitian and English dictionary. He is the same Mr. Howe spoken of before, when he was so radically opposed to me, but now he seemed charitable and kind." Soon thereafter, Brown went aboard the Abyssnia and commenced sailing to San Francisco on November 24, 1852.40

Several years later, Alexander Chisholm reported that natives of Tubuai had returned to the LMS fold and that Mormonism was no longer a problem in this island region:

We spent yesterday at Tubuai; it is a larger island than either Rurutu or Rimatara, but very thinly peopled, as if it is now under the Protectorate Flag. we [sic] doubted whether we would be received. on going on shore however we found the chief & people glad to see us. There is no French officer resident amongst them—they have got tired of Mormonism and

^{39.} E. [Ernest Rudolph William] Krause to A. [Arthur] Tidman, January 13, 1852, LMS/South Seas/Incoming Correspondence/box 24B, fd. 6, jacket A, Council for World Mission Archives, SOAS.

^{40.} Brown, Life of a Pioneer, 282-83.

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have all returned to the old fold, we had about 120 hearers and 27 communicants many were scattered round the island.⁴¹

That is the last known mention of the Mormons in LMS records of the South Pacific in the mid-nineteenth century.

With the missionaries out of the area, many of the native Mormon converts returned to other religions, but some remained committed to Mormonism.⁴²

Conclusion

The London Missionary Society workers in the South Pacific, who preceded the Mormon elders by several decades, did indeed regain their turf at this time. Although there was a vying for native converts, the LDS missionaries benefited from the preparatory work of the LMS, which had launched Christianity in this region at the end of the eighteenth century. Further, primary evidence reveals that although there was certainly friction between representatives of these two denominations, some degree of mutual respect occurred when the missionaries from each party discussed their personal beliefs while meeting in private.

This study also demonstrates the diverse impact of Christian proselytizing among those who journeyed to the islands of the sea. Furthermore, it summons an investigation of descriptions sketched by missionaries of varied denominations and the impact they had on each other. The LMS missionaries performed a godly work that was certainly visible to the Mormons; for example, George Platt's 1850 records show his charity and goodwill: "Have got the children to try the making [of] their letters on sand. Had a bible class. In the afternoon took a visit walk to see the lame and blind." "This day 33 years ago we landed on Eimeo [Mo'oorea], to commence our labours, of all our company only two remain. . . . On a review of the Islands, which since that time received the Gospel, we have

^{41.} Alexander Chisholm to [Arthur] Tidman, September 29/October 5, 1857, LMS/South Seas/Incoming Correspondence/box 27, fd. 1, jacket B, Council for World Mission Archives, SOAS Library.

^{42.} The LDS mission to Tahiti and adjoining islands was closed for four decades (1852–92). For discussion of the Church's reestablishment in French Polynesia in the 1890s and growth in the ensuing decades, see Ellsworth and Perrin, Seasons of Faith and Courage, and Britsch, Unto the Islands of the Sea, 21–36.

^{43.} George Platt to A. [Arthur] Tidman, November 14, 1850, Council for World Mission Archives, SOAS Library.

reason with amazement to say what God hath wrought!!!"44 "We labor to have a conscience void of offense toward God and toward man."45

Surely the Mormons recognized how LMS work laid the groundwork for their own, just as Paul wrote: "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase" (1 Cor. 3:6). Later, Orson F. Whitney recognized the benefit of cooperation of religious sects: "Providence is over all, and ... he holds the nations in the hollow of his hand; ... he is using not only his covenant people, but other peoples as well, to consummate a work, stupendous, magnificent, and altogether too arduous for this little handful of Saints to accomplish by and of themselves."46 The Latter-day Saints clearly benefited from the labors of the LMS missionaries as they worked side by side to bring the gospel to the people of South Pacific.

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^{44.} George Platt to A. Tidman, November 18, 1850, Council for World Mission Archives, SOAS Library.

^{45.} George Platt to A. Tidman, December 3, 1850, Council for World Mission Archives, SOAS Library.

^{46.} Orson F. Whitney, in Annual Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1921), 32-33.