

Placing the Keystone: George Q. Cannon's Mission of Translating and Printing the Book of Mormon in the Hawaiian Language

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George Q. Cannon's life was focused on the Pacific Basin from 1850 to 1857. Much of this time he spent in the Hawaiian Islands as a missionary for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; there he managed to learn the language in order to preach to the native population. A trained printer, he also desired to make published works of the Church of Jesus Christ available to a wider audience. Following almost four years in Hawaii, Cannon returned home to the Salt Lake Valley but was soon sent to San Francisco, where he directed the affairs of the Church of Jesus Christ in that area for another three years. During his Hawaiian mission years he translated the Book of Mormon into the Hawaiian language; during the earliest months of his assignment in San Francisco he established a church printing office and saw the volume through the publication process. This essay examines his missionary efforts as they relate to translating and then printing the Book of Mormon in Hawaiian, a keystone of his mission and missionary message.

I also discuss the pamphlet that Cannon published in Hawaiian to introduce the Book of Mormon. This short tract was the first imprint of the Church of Jesus Christ in the Hawaiian language and is printed here for the first time in English translation as an appendix to this essay (see pp. 518–29).

Cannon's World: The Early Mormon Print Culture

George Q. Cannon moved comfortably in the world of the print shop.¹ Converted in Liverpool, England, with his family, he immigrated to America, arriving in Nauvoo, Illinois, in 1843. At sixteen years of age he found employment in the *Times and Seasons* office of his uncle John Taylor, in whose home he was living. In this world he associated with various church leaders and broadened his education by reading the varied material that came and went in a busy printing establishment. His education in the world of practical affairs was thus nurtured among people who read, valued literacy, and cherished the printed word. Print shops in early America often functioned as bookstores for recent publications and usually provided areas for a reading room. There can be little doubt that a young man of his intelligence seized the opportunity to learn all he could in this environment and that he noted especially that the press could be a tool both of education and of persuasion.

He also experienced firsthand the effects of the decision of the Nauvoo City Council on 10 June 1844 to destroy the press of the *Nauvoo Expositor*, an event he recalled in some detail on its tenth anniversary while on his Hawaiian mission.² His memory of the deaths of Joseph and Hyrum Smith also remained an important part of his heritage. His own father, a cabinet maker, prepared the coffins of the martyred brothers and made the plaster casts of their faces.

He began to read when he was four years old, and he became an avid reader. Mary Jane Dilworth—a friend of his sister Elizabeth and later the wife of Francis Hammond, a fellow missionary in Hawaii—recalled seeing young Cannon during the westward movement “sitting on the tongue of his wagon reading a book.” She was convinced he would amount to something because he never seemed to waste his time.³ While walking through a wilderness area on his Hawaiian mission, he made comparisons with scenes he had earlier read in a Leatherstocking novel of James Fenimore Cooper, which experience hints at the kinds of books he was reading.⁴ The journals that record this event also reveal his recognition of a good library when he saw one⁵ and his hunger for the printed word: when he had received several numbers of the *Deseret News*, he noted that “they were as welcome as an old friend

and was gladdening in the extreme they being filled with principles and doctrine instructive to me and I have gathered many good ideas from the perusal of this invaluable paper.”⁶

From the beginning of his mission, he read and shared printed literature. He particularly liked the writings of Orson and Parley Pratt, copies of which he regularly read himself and loaned to interested persons. Even before he left California he was trying to gather copies of works by Latter-day Saint writers to take to Hawaii. In Hawaii, he both read and distributed tracts printed by the Church of Jesus Christ,⁷ and, when supplies ran low, helped order more from suppliers in Liverpool.⁸

He also understood the power of the press when used by critics of the Church of Jesus Christ. He monitored the non-Mormon press and responded when he could, a practice he followed the rest of his life. In November 1853 he read John Lloyd Stephens’s description of Central America and suggested its applicability for strengthening the claims for the authenticity of the Book of Mormon.⁹ He obtained a copy of John W. Gunnison’s *The Mormons, or Latter-day Saints, in the Valley of the Great Salt Lake* (1852) soon after it was published and after a quick reading noted his criticisms in his journal.¹⁰ Without doubt, George Q. Cannon contributed to and helped shape Mormon print culture throughout his life. But no book would have an impact on his life comparable to that of the Book of Mormon; it touched the very core of his being, particularly during his Hawaiian mission.

Cannon served in the Hawaiian Islands from December 1850 to July 1854.¹¹ Originally called to preach to the nonnative population, he early concluded that the missionaries would have very little success if their efforts were confined to Europeans or others who spoke only English.¹² It was while learning Hawaiian that he decided to translate the Book of Mormon into that language.

Learning the Language

Most of Cannon’s mission was spent on the island of Maui, where his initial lack of language skills to communicate with the natives and his loneliness from serving most of the time without a missionary companion forced him to turn inward. He recalled years later:

For the first year after I left home I could scarcely think about it without my feelings getting the better of me. ... Their very food was foreign to me and unlike anything I had ever before seen or tasted. I was much of the time separated from my companions, the Elders. Until I mastered the language and commenced preaching and baptizing the people, I was indeed a stranger among them. Before I commenced holding regular meetings, I had plenty of time for meditation, and to review all the events of my short life, and to think of the beloved home from which I was so far separated. It was then that I found the value of the Book of Mormon. It was a book which I always loved. But I learned there to appreciate it as I had never done before. If I felt inclined to be lonely, to be low spirited or home-sick, I had only to turn to its sacred pages to receive consolation, new strength and a rich outpouring of the Spirit. Scarcely a page that did not contain encouragement for such as I was.¹³

In addition to its power to console and strengthen, the Book of Mormon surely had another impact on his life. His love for the native people increased as he spent time in the sacred volume: twenty-five years later he noted, in the context of his Hawaiian mission, “No man can read [the Book of Mormon], partake of its spirit and obey its teachings, without being filled with a deep love for the souls of men and a burning zeal to do all in his power to save them.”¹⁴

While love of the Hawaiian people came early, his appreciation for their lifestyle came only gradually. After a brief visit with some newly arrived missionaries and their wives in August 1851, he reflected on his return to live among the natives:

It seemed like leaving home—after living as I had been used to and associating with sisters of my own color and habits—it made it somewhat of a trial for me to return and mix with the Natives and conform to their manner of living again—but I am laboring for a liberal master who knows that my motives are pure, and that my desire is to bring this people to a knowledge of the great and important principles of life and salvation and ex[a]lt them from their present debased state.¹⁵

Such reserve would broaden into deep love as he moved more deeply into the text of the Book of Mormon. The first reference in his journals to “studying the language” was on 24 December 1850. Three days later he expressed his desire to learn the language in order to teach the gospel to the native people. By 30 December he had ordered two language vocabularies; on 12 January he noted that he began “to understand some little of what is said.” During February he was fasting and praying for heavenly help to assist him in this difficult work.¹⁶

But book study was not enough, so on 2 March he decided to undertake a tramp around Maui to become better acquainted both with the language and the island. Carrying a missionary’s valise for the first time in his life, “the common appendage of a Mormon Elder traveling,” he managed to discuss the gospel with a number of natives but reflected a few days later: “I find that I will require considerable improvement [in the language] before I am able to explain our doctrine to them.”¹⁷ He continued to improve week by week, taking advantage of all opportunities to broaden his skills. In January 1852 he confided in a letter to coworkers, “English is leaving me fast. I sometimes find it difficult to express my thought and ideas with the facility usual to me formerly.”¹⁸ By April 1854 he was so fluent in Hawaiian that he again noted having difficulty speaking in English.

As early as March 1851, during a conversation with local historian David Malo, Cannon expressed his agreement with Malo’s opinion that the Hawaiian people were of the house of Israel.¹⁹ He also noted that the natives among whom he lived wished to read the Book of Mormon, especially because he was teaching them that it was their book. Cannon himself increasingly felt the power of the text he had begun translating. He confided in his journal, “I never could enter into the feelings experienced by the holy men who wrote the Book of Mormon as I can at present; my soul shrinks from the thought of sin and my heart is pained to behold the sins of the world.”²⁰ Later, when he was raising money to purchase a press on which to print the translation, he demonstrated to a native audience “from reason and the scriptures the necessity of such a work coming forth, and the great benefit it would be to them as a people, that it was indeed their book, and full of covenants and promises for them.”²¹

Cannon’s language abilities gradually improved, encouraged in part by several heated discussions with local missionaries of other faiths who were growing concerned with the conversions to the Church of Jesus Christ from among their own congregations.²² His willingness to live among the people not only helped him to acquire the basic language skills but also to earn the trust of those among whom he lived. His love was genuine: “I had no idea that I ever could have loved this people to the extent I have, or that I do; they are very near indeed to me.”²³ He practiced the language out loud as he walked from village to village, and his ear for the language assisted him in picking up nuances when he was with others.

On 15 June 1851 he seems to have preached his first public sermon in Hawaiian, and on 23 June he wrote his first letter in Hawaiian, suggesting that his proficiency continued to improve. Continuing to live among the natives after attending to some church business on Oahu, Cannon reflected that “my desire [was] to bring this people to a knowledge of the great and important principles of life and salvation and ex[a]lt them from their present debased state.”²⁴ So good were his language skills by September 1851 that he confided to his journal his concern that the other Latter-day Saint missionaries were “leaning” on him too much and not learning the language and standing “on their own.”²⁵

Translating the Book of Mormon

Still, the step from fluent speaker to able translator was considerable. A major assistant in Cannon’s work on the translation of the Book of Mormon was Jonathan Napela, to whom he taught the gospel and with whom he was able to hone his language skills.²⁶ Cannon baptized Napela on 5 January 1852 and ordained him a teacher six days later. On 27 January 1852 Cannon first mentioned in his journal that he was “translating the Book of Mormon.” In his later account of the mission, he also suggested that the two events were closely connected:

I was led to commence the translation of the Book of Mormon into the language of the Islands—the Hawaiian language, as it is called. My place of residence was at Brother J. H. Napela’s, [at] Wailuku. He was an educated, intelligent Hawaiian, who thoroughly understood his own language, and could give me the exact meaning of words. The meaning attached to many words depended upon the context. It was important, therefore, in translating, to know that the words used conveyed the correct idea. Unless the language used carried to the Hawaiian mind the same meaning precisely which the words in our translation gave to us, it would not be correct. Probably but few in the nation were as well qualified as Brother Napela, to help me in this respect.²⁷

He continued his normal missionary duties of course,²⁸ but more and more of his time was devoted to translating the Book of Mormon. In January and February he translated the text of the Word of Wisdom (D&C 89) and in April 1853 the 1843 revelation on celestial marriage (D&C 132), since the August 1852 public announcement of the Latter-day Saints’ practice of plural marriage was creating problems for the Hawaiian missionaries.²⁹

Officially appointed by the Hawaiian mission president to translate the Book of Mormon as part of his mission, he received three special blessings as he worked on the project. The first was given to him at a conference in April 1852 and promised

that I should be greatly blessed in regard to the translation of the Book of Mormon[;] that I should have the spirit of prophecy and know the mind of the spirit at all times; that I should have no doubt in regard to the things that I ought to write; that my mind should be clear; that I might write every word correct and that I should be enabled to write it with all plainness unto the understanding of these people and it should be of great worth unto them and they should rejoice in the same. I should be blessed from day to day while I should remain upon these lands for the Lord is well pleased with me and with the course I have taken.³⁰

Cannon received another blessing on 6 October 1852 (recorded on the 9th) and still another on 12 March 1853. In addition to spiritual promises, he was no doubt receiving a greater understanding of the text itself, and from that came an increased love for the people among whom he was laboring. On a day of translating and preaching he revealed his growing love for the native people, a love clearly related to his immersion into the text: “I feel all the anxiety of a father for them; but O how I need wisdom and patience and strength and grace to instruct them and to

enable me to divest myself of every thing displeasing in the sight of My Father. I never could enter in the feelings experienced by the holy men who wrote the Book of Mormon as I can at present.”³¹

The chronology of the initial translation and revisions can be followed in his journals: from 27 January 1852 to 22 July 1853 Cannon and Napela (occasionally assisted by others) produced a first draft; from 8 August to 27 September 1853 they revised and recopied the translation.

The time occupied by me in translation, were the days and hours which were not claimed by other duties. In the beginning, my method was to translate a few pages, and then, when opportunity offered, explain to Brother Napela the ideas, whether historical or doctrinal, in great fullness. By this means he would get a pretty thorough comprehension of the part I was translating. I would then read the translation to him, going carefully over every word and sentence, and learning from him the impression the language used conveyed to his mind. In this way I was able to correct any obscure expression which might be used, and secure the Hawaiian idiom. The spirit of translation rested upon me, and it soon became a very easy labor for me.³²

Such attention to detail had very positive effects:

I obtained great facility of expression in the language and before I got through with the book, I had a range of words at my command, superior to the great bulk of the people. This was a very natural result. Doctrines, principles and ideas were in the Book of Mormon which were outside the ordinary thoughts of the people. The translation of these, called forth the full powers of the language, and really required—that which I felt I had while engaged in this work—the assistance of the Spirit of inspiration.³³

Then, working with William Farrer and a Brother Kauwahi, Cannon went through the whole work again from 24 December 1853 to 31 January 1854. Cannon summarized their methods on the day they finished:

We finished reading the Book of Mormon thro’ this evening and I feel full of gratitude to the Lord for granting unto me this great privilege, that of translating this precious book into this language. I pray that the way may be opened for it to be printed speedily that it may go forth on its mission of life. I have read it thro’ twice with the exception of a few pages; once to Bro Wm. [Farrer] he looking at the English version to see that there were no words or sentences dropped; and then read again to Bro. Kauwahi, he also looking at the English, of which he had a slight knowledge, and all inaccuracies and idiomatic expressions corrected.³⁴

He reflected in his journal that, after he had read the translation a third time, he was then desirous of sending the sacred volume forth on its mission.³⁵

Printing the Hawaiian Translation

The day before a conference scheduled for 6 October 1853 on Maui, the missionaries met to discuss the topics and business for the conference. A printing press was the first item considered, particularly important as the Book of Mormon translation was nearing completion. All present openly discussed their options, “whether we ought to have the Book of Mormon printed by hiring or whether we should purchase a press of our own and publish it and other works necessary for the instruction of the saints.” When concerns were raised that the acquiring of a press would force some of the missionaries to remain in the Islands longer than planned, Cannon strongly insisted, “I did not consider that my mission was fully filled until I saw the Book of Mormon in press, if there was a prospect of it being done in a reasonable time.” He would see the project

through.³⁶ The group decided that it would be best to buy a press, type, and related material; a committee of three was appointed to adopt measures for procuring these items.

A vote of those at the conference the next day agreed to support these decisions. Cannon (who was assigned the chair), along with Benjamin F. Johnson, a member, and Philip Lewis, the new mission president, were appointed as the committee and authorized to begin soliciting donations from members for the purchase of the press.³⁷ Church membership in the Islands, at the time these decisions were made, was placed at 3,008 people organized into fifty-three branches. The press committee decided to undertake a “circuit” among these branches to try to raise the money.³⁸ In July the missionaries “thought it best to commence to preach more about the Book of Mormon” to better prepare the people to assist with donations for the printing of the sacred volume.³⁹

On 10 October other translating assignments were made: William Farrer was to prepare a synopsis of the scriptures; Francis Hammond was to “translate such portions of the Doctrine and Covenants as the Presidency shall see fit”; and John Woodbury was to prepare a selection of hymns adapted “to our form of worship.”⁴⁰

The committee spent the next several months raising money for the purchase of a press. The poverty of most members made their efforts slow and generated only a small amount of cash. The project was greatly assisted with a thousand-dollar interest-free loan in December from Edward Dennis, a tinsmith in Honolulu.⁴¹ Cannon was no doubt inspired to learn from letters received on 31 December 1853 that his mentor and uncle, John Taylor, was overseeing the publication of the Book of Mormon in both French and German.⁴² Cannon also received additional encouragement in a letter from Brigham Young, who cheered his project but counseled caution regarding financial matters associated with the enterprise.⁴³

The committee, having doubts about the possibility of obtaining a press for such a large project locally, initially tried to purchase the press from California,⁴⁴ and by March 1854 they were considering having the translation printed there.⁴⁵ But they persisted and a press was finally ordered from New York; however, by the time the press reached Honolulu, the missionaries had journeyed to California on their way home from their mission. The press and supplies were subsequently forwarded to Parley P. Pratt in California.⁴⁶ In February 1855 Pratt wrote to President Young that the press, papers, and other materials from the Islands would probably reach San Francisco by early April, and then “there will be nothing to hinder going ahead with printing, both in English and in the Island language, provided Elder Cannon [who had gone home to Salt Lake City via San Francisco] can return here to help. I see no way to dispense with him, as he understands both languages, is a practical printer, and has the Book of Mormon in manuscript in the Island language.”⁴⁷

Printing the Book of Mormon in California

George Q. Cannon left Hawaii 29 July 1854 with the understanding that he would continue his efforts to get the Book of Mormon printed.⁴⁸ He arrived in San Francisco on 12 August 1854 and worked with Parley P. Pratt, mostly assisting with the hand copying of Pratt’s autobiography.⁴⁹ Cannon then returned to the Salt Lake Valley. His visit was brief; it lasted about five and one-half months, long enough to marry Elizabeth Hoagland on 10 December 1854 and receive a mission call to return to California to complete the work begun on his first mission, as well as assist Apostle Parley Pratt in that area.⁵⁰

Cannon later provided more details on this assignment:

Soon after my return to the Valley I received an intimation from President Young that I would be called, at the ensuing conference, to return on a mission to the Sandwich Islands. Before this conference was held, however, the news had reached the Valley that the printing press, type and papers, had been removed from the Islands to San Francisco, and, as my labors were likely to be more available at that point, now that the press was removed there, I was called, at the Spring Conference in 1855, to take a mission to California to labor in connection with, and under the direction of Elder Parley P. Pratt. Elder Pratt was to act as editor of the paper, which it was expected we would publish; President Orson Hyde, who had been appointed to establish and take charge of a settlement in Carson Valley, was requested to superintend the financial business of the undertaking; and I was to publish the Book of Mormon in the Hawaiian language and to take charge of the printing and the publication of the paper, writing for it also as I should have opportunity. Being requested by President Young to select two elders to accompany me, to assist me in my labors, I chose Elders Joseph Bull and Matthew F. Wilkie. . . . Starting from Great Salt Lake City on the 10th of May, 1855 . . .⁵¹

Arriving in San Francisco, they found that Parley P. Pratt had decided to return to Utah and had left the city. Cannon rushed to catch up with him, finding him at Brother John C. Naile's ranch across San Francisco Bay.

I succeeded in obtaining an interview with him, ... and from him learned all the particulars concerning the condition of the Mission. Finding that I had been called to labor under his direction, he deemed it wise, as he was leaving, to set me apart to preside over the Pacific Mission, subject to the direction of any of the Twelve Apostles who might visit or be called to labor in that part.⁵²

Brigham Young told Cannon, "I expect that you will publish the Book of Mormon in the Hawaiian language and other works as shall best promote the interest of the cause of our Lord and Master and aid in the rolling forth and building up of the Kingdom of our God upon the earth."⁵³ After getting settled in California, he wrote an extensive report to Brigham Young,⁵⁴ much of which focused on the press and his plans for printing the Book of Mormon and continuing the publishing projects begun under Parley Pratt.⁵⁵

The press, type, and paper had been received from Hawaii and stored by Parley Pratt. Cannon discovered upon examination of the printing press that the ribs were badly damaged.⁵⁶ He also met with Apostle Orson Hyde, who was visiting from Carson Valley, Nevada. Hyde convinced him to procure a suitable building in San Francisco in which to establish a print shop and to concentrate his energies on the publication of the Hawaiian edition of the Book of Mormon before he began a newspaper.⁵⁷

Cannon, Bull, and Wilkie found a brick building in which they could rent two rooms. The building, located at 11812 Montgomery Street just east of Portsmouth Square, was owned by Samuel Brannan, with whose brother they arranged the rental agreement. A fireproof brick building was essential, since a major fire had recently swept through the wooden structures in the city.⁵⁸ After moving their printing material into this building, they were ready to begin the huge printing project. Numerous problems needed to be solved; for example English fonts could be used in the typesetting, but they lacked a sufficient number of the letters *h* and *k*, which were quite common in Hawaiian.⁵⁹

Working with Bull and Wilkie, Cannon turned all his attention to printing the Book of Mormon. A chronology of their progress shows that by 27 July 1855 the first two 8-page signatures (16 pages) were printed;⁶⁰ by 31

August they had printed 128 pages (8 signatures); by 23 September, 240 pages (15 signatures); and by 3 December, 464 pages (29 signatures),⁶¹ with only 56 pages to go, not counting the index, title page, and introductory matter. By 20 December, only 8 pages of the body of the work remained to be typeset.⁶² Elizabeth, Cannon's wife, assisted with the proofreading. They feared that an anticipated paper shortage would slow the project in its final stages, but they finished the printing in January 1856.⁶³

In a letter to Brigham Young dated 26 January, Cannon's pride and relief at the end of the project were clear:

The book is finished, and I hope to be able to send you the first bound copy this mail. I feel grateful to our Heavenly Father for his kindness unto us in enabling us to finish it, and thus help to fulfill His words, spoken by His servants who wrote the Book, that it "should go forth unto every nation, kindred, tongue and people."⁶⁴ These were more especially my feelings when the last form went to press, in reflecting on its completion; for, when the translation was commenced, the Saints were few in number and poor, and there was no earthly prospect then in view of it ever being published; the Lord has most singularly however opened the way.⁶⁵

On 30 January Cannon sent a bound copy of *Ka Buke a Moramona* to Brigham Young and added this postscript to his 26 January letter, which he had not yet mailed:

I have succeeded in getting a copy of this Book bound and forward it this mail; and hope it will meet your approbation. It is a large book, but this was owing to the size of the paper sent, as you will also see the type is large and open. This was thought to be best suited to the people as it is very rare for them to use spectacles and their amphibious habits very frequently injure their eyes when comparatively young.⁶⁶

Brigham Young's response upon receiving the volume was surely gratifying to Cannon:

I sincerely thank you, not only for the Book, but for the persevering assiduity, privation and untiring exertion which has been necessary to accomplish this enterprise. I also feel exceedingly gratified at the manner in which it is got up. ... The print is very plain and altogether well executed. I feel proud of the Book and trust that it will be of great benefit to the islanders, who it most particularly concerns. It will also prove very beneficial to our Elders who go there to preach the Gospel.⁶⁷

Binding the Hawaiian Translation

The first Hawaiian translation of the Book of Mormon was printed in an edition of two thousand copies, but because of the high costs of binding most were left unbound, a practice common among nineteenth-century printers. Translating and printing the volume were challenging enough, but getting the book bound proved to be even more difficult. Cannon addressed his concerns to Brigham Young as early as October 1855:

I have been making inquiries for the last few days in relating to binding the Book, and find that the lowest I can get it done is 75 cents per volume; some have asked me as high as \$1 per volume, and say that is the lowest it can be done. This is the price for plain, strong binding, nothing extra whatever. On the islands they have only one bindery, and that is a missionary concern, and consequently they will not do anything of the kind for us, even if we wished it. In thinking the matter over I have thought that it would be well, if it met with your approbation, to get the few tools that would be necessary to do the kind of binding needed for the majority of them, which would not be expensive, and try and do them within ourselves without having to pay out so much money. ... But to do this it would be necessary to have a young man sent out

from home who would have a tolerable knowledge of binding, it would not take a very extensive knowledge to do what is wanted the chief requisite being strength.⁶⁸

President Young thought Cannon's idea was good, but that plan for binding the books was never executed.⁶⁹ In September 1856 Cannon borrowed one hundred dollars from a Brother Meder. When he added ten dollars to this amount, he was able to pay for the binding of two hundred copies of *Ka Buke a Moramona*, a cost of fifty-five cents per volume.⁷⁰

Cannon reported to his leader:

They have been sent to the Islands. They were bound in full sheep[skin] and make a handsome appearance. I have put them as low as possible (one-third of the number at 1.25, they were bound in red an attractive color among the natives, and the remainder at \$1.00) as from all I can learn times are so hard there that they can not pay a high price. The scarcity of money and the languishing state of some of the branches will, I fear, make their sale somewhat dull & tedious.⁷¹

Brigham Young had counseled that the volumes should not be given away.⁷² Despite this advice, the contemporary records indicate that the missionaries in Hawaii were unable to sell very many books.⁷³ Cannon had planned to keep the unbound volumes in San Francisco, binding them as the demand in Hawaii required, but by August 1857 he thought otherwise.

It has been suggested to my mind to transfer the whole edition to the S.I. [Sandwich Islands] Mission, and for the elders now going to take them down with them. Binding materials can be obtained at tolerably reasonable rates, as well as the tools necessary to put a plain binding on them; and as Bro. Wm. Wright, who is now on the Islands, has a tolerable knowledge of the binding business, they can be bound and placed within the reach of the natives at a very low figure, and by that means obtain the general circulation necessary and which is denied them by the present plan. I do not think that it would be a good idea to give them away, as it would have a tendency to render the Book valueless in the eyes of many—they would not appreciate it as they would if they had to pay for it; but the price might be much reduced. A tanner by the name of Field, who left the Valley a year or two ago, has hinted he would furnish all the skins needed for the binding and donate them to the mission. If he should do this, the expense apart from the labor, would be very trifling.⁷⁴

As it turned out, this was a good decision. With the coming of the Utah War, Brigham Young wrote to Cannon suggesting that the printing office in San Francisco be closed, the office materials disposed of, and the people working in the office return to Salt Lake City.⁷⁵

Cannon sent twelve cases of the unbound copies to Hawaii, which Henry Bigler reported receiving on 24 November 1857.⁷⁶ These volumes were to be bound as needed in the Islands. Exactly how many were eventually bound is not known, although the existence of a variety of bindings on surviving copies of this first edition testifies that several were. Bigler reported in October 1857 that 114 copies of the 200 originally bound copies had been sold.⁷⁷ A report at a mission conference in Hawaii on 25 April 1858 stated that eighteen hundred copies remained unbound. There is some evidence that Walter Murray Gibson was selling the Hawaiian edition of the Book of Mormon for \$1.00 each in August and September 1863.⁷⁸

In December 1855, Cannon published the first Mormon imprint in Hawaiian, an eight-page tract entitled *He Olelo Hoolaha*.⁷⁹ Printed during the lull in their work on the Book of Mormon because of a shortage of lowercase fonts, the tract was printed on the same press as the Book of Mormon. Cannon told Brigham Young in January 1856 that he had issued fifteen hundred copies of a pamphlet giving a short history of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, which he had just sent to the missionaries in Hawaii: "I thought it would be a good idea to publish something of this kind and prepare them to comprehend and rightly estimate the Book when they obtained it."⁸⁰

This short work presented a summary of Joseph Smith's early life, especially of the "discovery of the plates, their contents, and the applicability of the Book to them as a people."⁸¹ Much of the early history of Joseph Smith was taken from Orson Pratt, *An Interesting Account of Several Remarkable Visions, and of the Late Discovery of Ancient American Records* (Edinburgh: Ballantyne and Hughes, 1840), which had been reprinted a number of times by 1856. Cannon regularly used this text on his mission. Brigham Young responded positively to the translation of the tract and its distribution: "I trust that the little work which you mention that you have written and sent out as a forerunner will be instrumental in drawing the attention of the Natives to the importance of this work, it was a good idea."⁸²

Conclusion

George Q. Cannon remained in California for less than three years and presided over the church in that area. Using the same press on which he had printed the Hawaiian edition of the Book of Mormon, he also issued a broadside, *Prospectus of the Western Standard*, and then edited a weekly newspaper, the *Western Standard*.⁸³ The Hawaiian edition was the seventh language in which the Book of Mormon was published, and it remained the only Hawaiian edition of the Book of Mormon until 1904.

Cannon remained a strong advocate of the Book of Mormon in the church.⁸⁴ He was ordained an apostle in 1860; served a number of missions, including establishing a church printing office in Liverpool, England;⁸⁵ and served as a counselor to four presidents of the church, during which time he exercised a great influence in the church. He also served church interests in the nation's capital for ten years as Utah's official delegate to Congress. Bringing his publishing experience to these various callings, he served as an editor of both the *LDS Millennial Star* and the *Deseret News* and established the *Juvenile Instructor* in 1866 as a periodical for young people; he was also very active in the Deseret Sunday School Union. His own publishing house, George Q. Cannon and Sons, continued his contributions to the Mormon print culture. The first item in his Faith-Promoting Series was his own amplified account of his Hawaiian mission, and his press issued a number of works that focused on the Book of Mormon.⁸⁶ Following his death in 1901, his publishing business was acquired by the Church of Jesus Christ and was eventually (in 1919) renamed Deseret Book Company. It remains the flagship for publishing in the church.

Cannon's work on the Book of Mormon in Hawaii proved to be the foundation for both his personal and institutional life. His missionary work with this volume marked his pioneering efforts in taking the gospel to a non-Western, non-English-speaking native audience. He was a strong advocate among church leaders at the end of the century of taking the gospel throughout the world and even concerned himself with the opening of the mission in Japan in 1901.⁸⁷ The early decisions in Hawaii to establish a special gathering place for natives in their own lands surely provided a model for Cannon's later counsel for members to stay in their country of origin and to build up the church there.⁸⁸ His missionary work with the Book of Mormon increased his love for the people among whom he was called to work, broadened his own faith in the life and mission of Joseph Smith, and clearly deepened his own understanding of the life and mission of Jesus Christ. For him, the Book of Mormon was what Joseph Smith had proclaimed it to be: the keystone of Mormonism.⁸⁹ The translation and publication of the Book of Mormon

was, in very fact, the keystone of George Q. Cannon's missionary work in the Hawaiian Islands and a foundation for the rest of his life.

Appendix

He Olelo Hoolaha⁹⁰

An Announcement

To the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Hawaiian Islands and to all people who love the truth,

Dear Saints and Friends:

I have some matters to write to you about, and so I decided that I should have these thoughts printed and distributed to be announced among all of you so that all may hear. I had hoped that I would be able to actually come to you and meet with you so that I can tell you these things myself face to face, but so far this has not been possible as I am consumed by other matters that prohibit me from taking leave.

In the year 1850, on the 12th of December, a number of us Elders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints arrived in the Hawaiian Islands from Salt Lake City to preach to the people the gospel of Jesus Christ, to tell them that the prophecies of the prophets and disciples of Jesus have begun to be fulfilled because of the marvelous things the Lord has done in the latter days, and to say that God has spoken to man once again from heaven and He has called some as He has done in the past and given them the authority, indeed, the Holy Priesthood, to go out and establish His Church properly, and to bring into it, by baptism, believers in Jesus Christ, His Son, that they may repent of all their sins.

Some of the inhabitants of Hawaii were astonished that we would travel there "because," as they said, "it was useless since there already were elders and scriptures printed in Hawaiian as well as general availability of knowledge among the people." However, this was not God's thinking because His servants were not only sent among the people of Hawaii, but He also commanded them to go out among those of all lands to preach those things that were preached among those of Hawaii. God saw that all churches were in error before Him and had left the straight path; and all have proceeded according to their own dictates, establishing churches and teaching men according to their own commandments; and as Isaiah had said in chapter xxix, "They draw near to Him with their lips, but their hearts are far from Him."

Joseph Smith was the one chosen by God to commence this work and become a prophet for Him and to become the one to once again establish His Church here on earth in these days. He was born in the United States on the 23rd of December 1805. In his fourteenth or fifteenth year, he began to greatly ponder how he could prepare himself for the next world, but it was not clear to him what he should do. He knew that it was very important, so he was not comfortable simply relying on what men would say he should do to gain eternal salvation. If he attended a particular religious sect and inquired about it, each one would prescribe what he believed, saying, "Here is the way, come this way," each way contradicting the other. He knew that God could not approve of all ways because there were many hundreds of religious sects. If any of these sects was the Church of Christ, which was it? This is how he thought. What should he do? If he went and joined himself with any particular sect simply because of the words of a man, it would be wrong. So he determined to read the Holy Scriptures so that he could gain knowledge about such things. When he read the book, he found the verse in James, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God,

that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.” His heart was filled with hope at these words because he knew that if he would ask God, the knowledge would be given him. So he went to a secret place in the woods, and he called upon God to show him the true way. He was tempted greatly at the onset, but after praying to God, the darkness of his heart was dispersed and he prayed to God with great intent and faith. As he prayed thus to God, desiring Him to answer him, he saw a bright and beautiful light in the heavens above. He continued in prayer and the light descended from above and fell upon him, and when it came close to him the brightness grew in intensity and size and the woods around him became illuminated; the leaves and branches were not burned, however; because of that, his heart was filled with hope that he would be able to endure the experience. When it came upon him, his whole body felt strange and he was taken in a vision and he saw two beautiful personages, both of them appearing alike. He was told that his sins were forgiven him. He was also told that all religious sects believed in false teachings that were not in accordance with the word of God and for that reason none of those sects was recognized by God as His church and kingdom. And he was commanded not to follow after those sects because at some time in the future the true teachings or, in other words, the gospel of power and truth, would be revealed to him. After hearing these things, the vision was taken away; however, his heart was filled with great joy.

He saw angels frequently afterwards; and many things were shown to him from time to time to prepare him for the great work he was to do. It was shown to him that he was called and chosen to become an instrument in the hands of God to fulfill marvelous works in this last kingdom. And it was shown to him that the native inhabitants of the Americas, the Indians, are descendants of Israel; and at the time they traveled to America, they were a learned people and they knew the true God and they had many blessings from His hand. The prophets and righteous men among them who were inspired by the Holy Ghost were commanded to keep a sacred record of great events that occurred among them, and that record was given from one generation to the next up until the time they fell into apostasy and sin. Because of sin, the greater part of them were destroyed and the records were hidden (according to the commandments of God to some of their last prophets) so that they would not fall into the hands of sinners. It was shown to him that these plates (because these records were engraved on plates like gold in appearance) were filled with holy revelations pertaining to the gospel of the kingdom as well as prophecies regarding great events that would occur in the last days and that they would be published to all men so that His covenants would be fulfilled to the people who made the records pertaining to the restoration of their descendants to the knowledge of Him.

These records were hidden in a hill which was called Cumorah by the people of old, in New York, a state of the United States. On the 22nd of September 1827, these things were given to him and he began to translate them into English because he was given the power to do so. It was printed in the United States by him in 1830 and made available among the white race. After he received it he was given the Holy Priesthood with the authority to preach the gospel of Christ and to establish His Church. On the 6th of April 1830, the Church was first organized on earth in these days; there were only six members that day. From that time until today, the Church has grown in all lands and there are many thousands of people who can testify at this time to the truth of these things because they have this knowledge by the Holy Ghost. Many have been ordained as Priests and Elders in the Church, and they have gone forth and preached these things with power.

In these great records the account of the ancient inhabitants of America has been written from the time it was settled by people who came from the tower, to the time the word was done away with, up until the year 420. We have been shown that two different nations of people existed in ancient times in America. The first nation, which came from the tower, was called the Jaredites. The second nation of people, the ancestors of the native inhabitants of America, the Indians who inhabit the land, came from the city of Jerusalem at the time of Zedekiah,

king of Judah, six hundred years before Christ's coming; they were from Israel, but the greater part of them were descendants of Joseph. The first nation of people, the Jaredites, were destroyed close to the time the descendants of Israel arrived from Jerusalem—those who obtained the land after the former people. The second nation, the descendants of Israel, were divided into two different groups after arriving in this land. This division came about after half the people, because of their righteousness, were persecuted by the remaining portion of the people. Those who were persecuted found a place to live and left the sinful part of the people, separating themselves from those people. The righteous people were called Nephites since they were led by a prophet whose name was Nephi. The sinful part of the people were called Lamanites because they were led by a sinful man whose name was Laman.

In this ancient account, it is shown that the Nephites prospered in the land according to their righteousness, and they spread across to the east, the west, and to the north, building cities, synagogues and temples; they also built fortresses and watchtowers and walls around the cities to defend against their enemies. They tilled the earth and grew a great many fruits. They fed their many flocks, and they were rich because there was much gold, silver, brass, and metal, and all manner of things among them. They made all kinds of clothing and weaponry to protect themselves from their enemies. And they also were a learned and blessed people in the days of their righteousness.

It also is shown that because of the hardness of the hearts of the Lamanites, they brought upon themselves many great punishments; however, they were not completely destroyed, but the Lord God sent upon them curses and they became a filthy nation, grotesque in appearance and their skin was dark. Before the division, they were fair and delightful in appearance like unto the Nephites, but God cursed them in appearance and they were made dark in appearance, and they became a wild and bloodthirsty people. They were enemies to the Nephites, and they sought from time to time to destroy them. And there were many terrible wars among them; and there were many thousands of people who were killed on both sides, and the dead were piled up into a great pile on the face of the earth and covered with earth. These hills probably are the hills that are often discovered in America filled with the bones of men.

The prophets prophesied among the Nephites about many things, and many things were recorded by them. They saw many things of the kingdom of God, and great power was given to them so that they could perform many miracles. They prayed to God for mercy upon their brethren, the dark-skinned people, and the Lord made covenants with them that He would bring the knowledge of Him back to them in the last days.

The gospel of Christ also is written in this Book in truth and plainness and contains the teachings of Jesus Christ because Jesus showed Himself to them after His living in the flesh in Jerusalem and after His death and resurrection from the dead and ascension to heaven. He taught them many things, expounding the holy scriptures to them and performing miracles among them. He chose twelve disciples for Himself as he did before His death in Jerusalem, and He gave them the authority to go and preach His gospel and to establish His Church among the people. He did away with the law of Moses, He broke bread and administered it with wine to them, and He commanded His disciples to keep that authority among them. All that Jesus taught was engraved on the plates; however, not all of them were published in the Book of Mormon, but they will be revealed in time to the Saints.

After Jesus served among them and ascended to heaven, the disciples went about preaching the word among men, baptizing those who repented that their sins might be forgiven. Afterward, they lay their hands upon them that they might receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Many miracles also were performed by them. All people on the face of the earth were converted, Nephites and Lamanites alike, to the Lord, and they became a righteous nation. And thus they dwelt on the land for three hundred years, but after that time, they began to fall away from God and do

all manner of wickedness, and for that reason, God allowed punishments to fall upon them. Because a great and terrible war ensued among the Nephites and Lamanites, because the Nephites fell into great sin and resisted the teachings and words of God given down through the prophets, and despite the great enlightenment they received, they all were utterly destroyed in their last battle, except for Mormon and his son, Moroni, and some other people, as well as those who left the Nephites and joined themselves with the Lamanites.

Mormon was a holy prophet, and he kept an abridged account of the record of his ancestors that was engraven on the gold and brass plates, and he called the record the "Book of Mormon." Because of the commandments of God, he hid all the records of his ancestors which he had in a hill called Cumorah. He himself was not the one to bury the abridged record he made, but before he was killed by the Lamanites, he gave the record to his son, Moroni (also a holy prophet), for him to write the remaining portion. Moroni was the last survivor of his people; all the rest who had not joined with the Lamanites were killed by the Lamanites. And he kept a record until the year 420; then he hid the records in a hill called Cumorah (according to the commandments of the Lord) at a place where an angel revealed the plates to Joseph Smith, which he translated, by the gift and power of God, into the English language.

I have joy in these days that the printing of this Book has been completed in the Hawaiian language; it will not be long until you all will receive this Book. When this Book is made available to you, I desire that each of you purchase the Book and make it known among all your friends in all places so that they too can purchase it so that they can see and hear it and so that they cannot be left with a reason to say that they did not know about it. The price of the Book is low; it was not printed to make a profit but rather to fulfill the word of God to leave His word with all of you in your own tongue so that you may have it.

From the time of the white man's coming into possession of America and the isles of the sea, learned people have wondered where the peoples of these places sprang from and the reason for the darkness of their skin. Many books have been written by intelligent men attempting to explain these things. Some believe that the Indians are descendants of the tribes of Israel which are lost because there are many customs and practices that are done by the Indians that are the same customs and practices that are done by the Israelites. Other learned people doubt such things and they suppose that the dark-skinned people of America do not originate from there but rather that they come from other races of people. The speculations continue among some until this day. But in the Book of Mormon, these mysteries are explained; the origins of the inhabitants of America are made known as well as the reason their skin color is dark. It is not actually stated in the Book that you are descendants of them, but there are many encouraging words to those of the isles of the sea; and I believe (and to such do the words of the prophet of the Lord in these days attest) that you are descendants of the Israelites. The reason the skin of the forefathers of the Indians is dark is the same reason the skin of your forefathers is dark; and ways by which the darkness of their skin will cease are the same ways by which the darkness of your skin will cease.

Therefore, you are truly blessed by this Book, because you are the first dark-skinned people to have this Book in your own language; some of the dark-skinned people among the Indians have read this Book in English, but finally it has been printed in the language of a dark-skinned people. It is a necessary book for dark-skinned people because it was written by ancient prophets with the intent that it would be received by a race of dark-skinned people, so there are many and greatly encouraging words that were written for them in the last days. It reveals that the time will come when they will be restored to the knowledge of the things of God and His gospel of power and truth and that they will become (after they repent and forsake all their sins) a delightful and blessed people; and the curse that came upon them because of the transgressions of their forefathers, meaning the dark skin, will begin to be taken away from them.

It will be said among some of you when the Book of Mormon will be made available among you that “The Mormons have another Bible and they will want to bring this book to replace the true Bible, and these Mormons will forsake it [the Bible]”; maybe this is what our enemies will say in derision. I want to let you know so that such a misunderstanding may be alleviated because truly it is slanderous and has no truth. This is what Mormon—one of the prophets who wrote a portion of what is contained in this Book—said to the dark-skinned people who receive the Book, “Therefore repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus, and receive the gospel of Christ, which will be shown you, not only in this record [the Book of Mormon] but also in the record which will come to the Gentiles by way of the Jews [which is the Bible], and this book [the Bible] will come by way of the Gentiles to you. Because this is written [the Book of Mormon] that you may believe that [the Bible]; and if you believe that you would believe this also; and if you believe this, you would know of your forefathers and also of the marvelous things done by God among them; and you also would know that you are a remnant of the seed of Jacob.” We know by these words that the Book of Mormon was not written to deny and replace the Bible but to justify and support it, to reveal the dealings of God among the ancient people of America, and to show that Jesus is the Christ, the eternal God, revealing himself to all men.

This Book does not teach anything erroneous; rather, it strongly forbids such things, and it teaches men to believe in Jesus Christ and repent of their sins. If this is wrong, then the Bible and the Book of Mormon are equally in error since they are alike in this respect. And this is what I have to say to all, Be careful and do not resist these things supposing it to be wrong because if you misjudge these things, then you also misjudge the Bible; rather, this is what you can do: “ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will reveal the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost. And by the power of the Holy Ghost you may know the truth of all things.”

If the people of Hawaii do not repent and abandon their sinful ways, there will be many curses and trials upon them in the time to come because we shall be judged not only by the Bible, but by the Book of Mormon as well; and it is said that by the mouths of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. You now have two witnesses of Christ and His gospel, and so if you rail against Him and harden your hearts and resist His commandments, you cannot escape the punishments.

You know, brothers and sisters, the things we, the white people from Salt Lake City, have done among you while we lived with hardship in your islands to expound these things to you without compensation by man. You also know that God has justified our works by giving His Holy Spirit to the believers and those who obey, and their hearts have been filled with unspeakable joy and gladness; hearts have been widened and eyes have been opened so that they now know and understand the holy scriptures in ways that never have been known before among the people of Hawaii; and the marvelous signs pertain to them as Jesus promised because [there were many] miracles that were performed among the believers and [their] hearts were made joyous in those things and their faith was made strong in [the things] pertaining to the Lord. Some of you have the Holy Priesthood, which is the power given by God to man to serve [in his capacity] here on earth. And so, because of all these things you have received and seen, you have inherited a work and we are blameless before God should you fall again into error and return to your former sinful ways because you are no longer ignorant as to the power of these things, and you know that they are true. And when you did righteous works, God filled you with the gift of the Spirit, and you were able to have joy from the time of the rising of the sun until the sun’s setting at night. Therefore, brothers and sisters, how can you escape the judgments of God should you go in opposition to these things? Oh, how I desire to see you being steadfast and flourishing in these things so that you may become a people unto the Lord—a blessed people in things temporal and spiritual. Because of this desire of mine, I have labored with all my might to make these things known unto you and to translate and print the Book of Mormon in your tongue, so that you can read the uplifting

words of the Lord unto you and His dealings among another people, and so that your knowledge will increase in the things pertaining to His gospel. I feel you will be held greatly accountable in having the Book of Mormon should you turn a deaf ear toward it, and should you hearken to it, you will be blessed greatly. Therefore, read it praying to God to reveal unto you the things that are written, so that you may become a knowledgeable and enlightened people in the things pertaining to his kingdom. Furthermore, do not find fault with the things contained in the Book, but, rather, love God that he may reveal unto you the errors therein that you may be instructed to be truly enlightened.

As I have always said to you while I lived among you, so I say now unto you that I know surely that the Book of Mormon is true and that it is from God, and that Joseph Smith was raised by God to do his work here on earth, and that the gospel of Jesus Christ that has been preached unto you at this time by the Elders of the Church is true and that it has been given for us all to embrace. I know that whoso should fight against it also fights against God, and he shall be cursed; but whoso should humble himself and ask God, in the name of Jesus, to reveal unto him the truth of these things, he shall know of the truth of all these things.

This is all I have to say unto you at this time, and I pray unto God to give His Holy Spirit unto you to help you to always hearken unto His words in all things, that you may be found at the last day at His right hand.

With love to all of you,

Sincerely,

Your elder brother,

George Q. Cannon

San Francisco, Dec. 27, 1855

Notes

An earlier version of this essay was presented at the Pioneers in the Pacific Conference, Brigham Young University—Hawaii, 7–11 October 1997. This essay has benefited from several conversations with Chad Orton, who also shared some of his own research notes from his forthcoming edition of the George Q. Cannon Hawaiian mission journals.

1. In Hawaii, when Cannon first tasted poi, he was reminded that “the smell of it and the calabash in which it was contained was so much like that of a book-binder’s old, sour paste-pot that when I put it to my mouth I gagged at it, and would have vomited had I swallowed it.” George Q. Cannon, *My First Mission* (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor Office, 1879), 25. Cannon did eventually come to love poi.

2. George Q. Cannon journal, 10 June 1854, MS 1202, Family and Church History Department Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Unless otherwise noted, all citations to manuscripts and letters are from this repository, which hereafter will be cited as Church Archives. I have had access to only the first three of Cannon’s forty-seven journals. Volume 1 covers October 1849 to April 1852; volume 2, April 1852 to October 1853; and volume 3, October 1853 to October 1854. The citations herein to the Cannon journals will be to dates rather than volume numbers.

3. As suggested in Joseph J. Cannon, “George Q. Cannon,” *Instructor* 79 (May 1944): 210.

4. George Q. Cannon journal, 23 July 1851. Cannon specifically says he was reminded of Cooper's scenes "in his tales of the backwoods." See the allusion to this in Cannon, *My First Mission*, 37.
5. Cannon journal, 12 November 1851. Upon examining the library of the late William A. McLane, Cannon indicated "it was a very good collection of books for this country."
6. Cannon journal, 21 July 1853. Compare the entry for 5 August 1853 in which he notes staying up all night to read the newspapers he had just received in the mail.
7. In addition to the scriptures, Latter-day Saint works he referred to in Hawaii, at least those specifically mentioned in his journals, included Orson Pratt, *An Interesting Account of Several Remarkable Visions* (1840); Orson Pratt, *Divine Authority, or Was Joseph Smith Sent of God?* (1848); Orson Pratt, *The Seer*, various numbers (Washington, D.C., 1853); Parley P. Pratt, *Voice of Warning* (1837); W.W. Phelps, *Deseret Almanac* and various issues of *Zion's Watchman* (Sydney, Australia) and of the *Deseret News*. While he never specifically mentioned it, he must have had access to a Hawaiian translation of the Bible, which had been issued before the arrival of the Mormon missionaries. His journals speak of teaching Bible classes to the natives, most of whom were literate in their own language.
8. Cannon journal, 11 March 1853. For the orders, see "European Publishing Account Ledgers and Journals," CR 271 22, MSS, Church Archives, esp. 8:370, for a listing of the printed items sent to Philip B. Lewis, the mission president. The order was dated 24 June 1853. The shipment arrived in Hawaii in October 1853.
9. Cannon journal, 24 November 1854. The work referred to is John L. Stephens, *Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas, and Yucatan* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1841).
10. Cannon journal, 15 April 1854.
11. He arrived back in Salt Lake City on 28 November 1854. The best sources for details of his mission are the Cannon journals and correspondence and the records of his coworkers in Hawaii. The published sources include 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); Britsch, *Moramona: The Mormons in Hawaii* (Laie, Hawaii: Institute for Polynesian Studies, Brigham Young University—Hawaii, 1989); and Davis Bitton, *George Q. Cannon: A Biography* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1999), 1–32. These volumes will lead the student to the rich published and unpublished sources.
12. This is clear in his journal entries January–February 1851 when his mission companions were concluding to leave the field as they had taught all the English-speaking people they could. See also Bitton, *George Q. Cannon*, 4–5.
13. Cannon, *My First Mission*, -58.
14. *Ibid.*, 59.
15. Cannon journal, 26 August 1851.
16. *Ibid.*, 24 December 1850 (first reference to "studying the language"); 27 December 1850 (expresses his desire to learn the language in order to teach the gospel); 30 December 1850 (sent for two vocabularies); 12 January

1851 (begins to “understand some little of what is said”); 10 February 1851 (fasting and praying for divine help to learn the language).

17. Ibid., 2 and 6 March 1851; Cannon, *My First Mission*, 14–15.

18. George Q. Cannon, letter to Henry Bigler or William Farrer, 12 January 1852, in “Letters to and from Missionaries in the Sandwich Islands, 1851–1860,” typescript, p. 48, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.

19. Cannon journal, 18 March 1851; compare entry for 17 May 1854.

20. Ibid., 8 December 1852.

21. Ibid., 17 May 1854. As early as 20 March 1851 Cannon reported in his journal that the natives had expressed a desire to read the Book of Mormon.

22. See *ibid.*, 30 March 1851, for his reaction to an anti-Mormon lecture; compare his entry for 23 May 1851.

23. Ibid., 9 June 1854.

24. Ibid., 26 August 1851.

25. Ibid., 3 September 1851.

26. Ibid., 13 April 1851, reports their first talking long into the night.

27. Cannon, *My First Mission*, 59. According to his journal, 18–19 October 1850, Cannon obtained a copy of the Book of Mormon for his mission in October 1850 from Andrew Cahoon, whose family he was staying with in California. Cannon apparently based his translation on the 1849 (second European) edition prepared by Orson Pratt and published in Liverpool, England. This edition followed the 1841 (first European) edition, which was a reprint of the 1837 Kirtland, Ohio, edition issued by Parley P. Pratt and John Goodson. Orson Pratt had made several format changes in the 1849 edition that also appear in the Hawaiian edition. The index (really a table of contents) was moved to the front of the volume as were the statements of the Witnesses of the Book of Mormon. In a letter from Cannon to Brigham Young, 3 December 1855, Cannon noted that they had typeset the twenty-ninth signature (through page 464), which corresponded to page 503 of the “English edition,” leaving fifty-six pages to typeset, excluding the title page and index. This corresponds with page 503 of the 1849 edition and the Hawaiian edition, i.e., Mormon 2; whereas in the 1837 edition it is 3Nephi 5; in the 1840 edition it is 3Nephi 5; and in the 1841 edition it is 3Nephi 4. No other printed edition would correspond to or explain the relationship of the 1849 edition and the Hawaiian edition. See the comments in the letter of Joseph Bull to John G. Chambers, 3 December 1855, in the *Deseret News*, 30 January 1856, 373. Both Bull and Cannon wrote their letters on the day the twenty-ninth signature was sent to press, and both noted fifty-six or sixty pages left to typeset. Since the number of pages in the 1849 edition was 563, it would seem to best match this edition as the volume from which Cannon made his translation.

28. For example, on 15 February 1852, he organized on Maui the Makawao Branch of the Church of Jesus Christ.

29. According to his journal, Cannon learned of the *public* announcement (28 August 1852) of plural marriage on 11 November 1852. He received a copy of the *Deseret News, Extra* containing the text of Orson Pratt's 28 August discourse, which offered the first Mormon public defense of plural marriage. It also contained the text of the 1843 revelation later printed as D&C 132. Cannon preached a discourse on 7 April 1853 on the doctrine of plural marriage in order to prevent any misunderstanding in the public perceptions of the Church of Jesus Christ. Cannon made it clear that the members in Hawaii were not to meddle in these things. For the larger context, see David J. Whittaker, "The Bone in the Throat: Orson Pratt and the Public Announcement of Plural Marriage," *Western Historical Quarterly* 18 (July 1987): 293–314. A missionary companion, Benjamin F. Johnson, would write a defense of the practice, much of which grew out of his Hawaiian experience as a missionary forced to defend the teaching (Cannon journal, 13 July 1854). See Whittaker, "Early Mormon Polygamy Defenses," *Journal of Mormon History* 11 (1984): 43–63, esp. pp. 50–53; and Cannon journal, 18 April 1853.

30. Cannon journal, 13 April 1852.

31. *Ibid.*, 8 December 1852.

32. Cannon, *My First Mission*, 60.

33. *Ibid.* See Cannon journal, 31 January 1854.

34. Cannon journal, 31 January 1854. See Cannon, *My First Mission*, 60–62.

35. Cannon journal, 31 January 1854.

36. *Ibid.*, 5 April 1853. For an account of their earlier discussions about the possibilities of obtaining a printing press, see the letter of Philip B. Lewis to William Farrer, 26 March 1853, in "Letters to and from Missionaries in the Sandwich Islands, 1851–1860," typescript, pp. 122–25, esp. p. 123.

37. Cannon journal, 6 and 8 October 1853.

38. The membership statistics are in the "Manuscript History of the Hawaiian Mission," Church Archives. Cannon journal, 6 October 1853, indicates 3,008 members in fifty-three branches. His journal has a chart that breaks the membership down into specific branches and identifies priesthood holders. By July 1854, when Cannon was released from his mission, the membership was placed at 4,025, organized into seventy-five branches. See Philip B. Lewis journal, MSS, Joseph F. Smith Library, Brigham Young University—Hawaii, typescript, p. 69 (copy in L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University). All citations to this source will be to the typescript copy by date and page number.

39. Cannon journal, 25 July 1853; compare entry for 7 September 1853.

40. "Manuscript History of the Hawaiian Mission," 10 October 1853; Cannon journal, 10 October 1853.

41. Cannon journal, 2 December 1853; see entries for 17 January and 24 July 1854. Dennis also sold his tin shop to the mission for half of its value, taking a note for ve hundred dollars. According to Lewis's journal: "Concluded a bargain with Bro Dennis to purchase his stock in trade for the benefit of the mission for which we the committee agree to give him \$500, payable on demand, an[d] on Wed 25 I commenced the tinning business to raise means to establish a press and other expenses of the mission, the business has been prosperous thus far and I hope by the

blessings of the Lord to be able to accomplish the object for which it was began.” 24–25 January 1854, typescript, p. 64. The missionaries also received five hundred dollars from Levi Haalelea. Philip Lewis reported baptizing Eduard [Edward] Dennis on 23 April 1852 and on 13 June 1852 told of the healing of Bro. Dennis’s daughter after a serious fall. See Lewis journal, typescript, pp. 22, 25. The Dennis family later moved to California, and Lewis does report attempts to repay the money owed him for his tin shop. Because Cannon refers to him as Edward in his journal, this is the spelling followed herein.

42. Cannon journal, 31 December 1853, describes receiving the 29 May 1853 letter from John Taylor. The French edition was actually translated by Curtis Bolton, but Taylor’s name appears on the title page ahead of Bolton as a translator. For details, see the Curtis Bolton journals, Church Archives.

43. See Brigham Young, letter to George Q. Cannon, 30 September 1853.

44. The money they had gathered was carried to John M. Horner in California by a returning missionary, William McBride. Horner then actually ordered the press from New York. See Cannon, *My First Mission*, 62. On Horner, see Doyle L. Green, “John M. Horner, . . . California’s ‘First’ Farmer,” *Improvement Era* 54 (April 1951): 244–46, 302–3; (May 1951): 340–45.

45. Cannon journal, 20 March and 26 May 1854. In a letter from Parley P. Pratt to Brigham Young, 18 May 1855, Pratt reported, “the press and paper has arrived in San Francisco to my charge, and is duely [sic] stored, and awaits the action of Bro. Cannon, who I am glad to learn is coming out to use it.”

46. On 6 October 1854, 190 reams of paper and the press arrived in Hawaii on the ship *Living Age*. Lewis journal, typescript, p. 73. Lewis reports receiving a letter from Parley P. Pratt on 30 December 1854 giving instructions about the press, etc. (ibid., 75). On 8 March 1855 another letter from Parley Pratt came ordering Lewis to send the press and other materials to San Francisco. Lewis indicates that on 20 March 1855 the printing materials left the Islands for California (ibid., 77–78).

47. Pratt to Young, February 1855, Brigham Young collection, Church Archives. Benjamin F. Johnson had written to George Q. Cannon on 15 October 1854 indicating that the press and seventeen large bales of printing paper had arrived in Honolulu on 8 October. Copy in “Journal History” of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, a multivolume scrapbook of historical documents housed in the Church Archives.

48. The manuscript of the translation was brought to San Francisco by Joseph A. Peck, a returning Latter-day Saint missionary who left Honolulu on 17 May 1855. Lewis journal, typescript, p. 80. No doubt Cannon left the manuscript in the Islands thinking that he would return there to print it.

49. For the details of his work with Parley P. Pratt, see Cannon journal, beginning with entry for 12 August 1854. Pratt’s autobiography was not published until 1874, seventeen years after Pratt’s death.

50. For a summary of these hectic months, see Davis Bitton, *George Q. Cannon*, 69–70. Their marriage was reported in the *Deseret News*, 21 December 1854.

51. George Q. Cannon, *Writings from the Western Standard, Published in San Francisco, California* (Liverpool: Cannon, 1864), vi.

52. Ibid., vi–vii. Cannon gives more detail in his 27 July 1855 letter to Brigham Young.

53. Young to Cannon, 7 May 1855.

54. Cannon to Young, 27 July 1855.

55. For an account of Parley P. Pratt's prior work in California, see David J. Whittaker, "Parley P. Pratt and the Pacific Mission: Mormon Publishing in 'That Very Questionable Part of the Civilized World,'" in *Mormons, Scripture, and the Ancient World: Studies in Honor of John L. Sorenson*, ed. Davis Bitton (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1998), 51–84. For an overview of Cannon's work in California, see Lawrence R. Flake, "George Q. Cannon's Mission to California, 1855–1857," in *Regional Studies in LDS Church History, California*, ed. David F. Boone, Robert C. Freeman, Andrew H. Hedges, and Richard N. Holzapfel (Provo, Utah: BYU Department of Church History and Doctrine, 1998), 81–105. For the larger historical and religious context of the Mormon mission in Hawaii, see Gavan Daws, *Shoal of Time: A History of the Hawaiian Islands* (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1968), and Arrell M. Gibson with John S. Whitehead, *Yankees in Paradise: The Pacific Basin Frontier* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1993), esp. chap. 13, "The Missionary Frontier," 263–96.

56. George Q. Cannon, letter to John Taylor, 1 August 1855: "We proceeded to examine the press and material and found everything in good order, with the exception of the ribs of the press which were broken and which I immediately undertook to have recast."

57. See Cannon to Young, 31 August 1855. It was Hyde who suggested Cannon's newspaper be called the *Western Standard*, not the *Mormon Herald*, as Pratt had planned to name it.

58. For the details regarding the location and renting of their printing shop, see letter from Cannon to Young, 27 July 1855; also Cannon to Parley P. Pratt, 21 October 1855.

59. On the problems with English fonts, see Cannon to Young, 27 July 1855; also Matthew F. Wilkie, letter to Joseph Cain, 27 July 1855, in the *Deseret News*, 19 September 1855, 222.

60. A sample of these first printed pages was sent to Young in Cannon's letter of 27 July 1855. Young received them on 20 August 1855 and responded to their initial efforts: "I am highly gratified with the energy and perseverance you have displayed, and thank the Lord for the success that has thus far attended your labors. The proof sheets of the Book of Mormon look extremely well, the type is handsome, the impression good and the form very well proportioned and convenient, and the book when finished will redound much to your credit, for I presume the translation is as good as the mechanical execution." Young to Cannon, 29 September 1855. It should be noted that the first proof pages were in octavo form (eight pages to a sheet) due to the lack of lowercase ks (a letter found much more frequently in Hawaiian than in English). By August they had obtained enough extra letters to allow them to move to the sixteen-page sheet format, "which saves us half the labor of composing, wetting papers, press work &c." Cannon to Young, 31 August 1855.

61. Cannon's letter to Young, 3 December 1855, provides the detail: "The 464th page of the Hawaiian, corresponding with the 503rd of the English edition, went to press this morning; this leaves us fifty-six pages to do, exclusive of the index, title page &c. By last mail to the States I sent to New York for some type and other material for the paper, and I expect it here, if no unexpected accident occurs, by the 20th Jan. We will have to wait until this arrives before we can very well put up the index, &c., which ought to be set up in a type a little smaller than the body of the work." Thus, in spite of the 1855 date on the title page of the work, it was actually finished in January 1856.

62. Cannon to Young, 20 December 1855.

63. The chronology of the printing can be followed through these sources: 27 July 1855—16 pages (two 8-page signatures), Matthew F. Wilkie to Joseph Cain; 31 August 1855—128 pages (8 signatures), Cannon to Young; 23 September 1855—240 pages (15 signatures), Cannon to William Taylor, *Deseret News*, 14 November 1855, 286; 3 December 1855—464 pages (29 signatures), with about 60 pages remaining, Joseph Bull to John G. Chambers, *Deseret News*, 30 January 1856, 373. The printing was finished in January 1856 and the *Deseret News*, 16 April 1856, 48, printed a notice that the Hawaiian edition was available. Bull had noted in his 3 December 1855 letter: “If no unexpected accident occurs, the body of the work will be completed by about the 19th of this month. The index and title page will have to lay over till our small type (Brevier) arrives from the east, unless we can borrow a pair of Brevier cases from some [printing] office in the city. ... We have not been able to publish the Book of Mormon quite so quick as we anticipated when we first commenced, but taking all things into consideration, I think we have done tolerably well.” Brigham Young received one of the first copies, as did Edward Dennis, who had loaned them the money to obtain the press. See Cannon to Brigham Young, 26 January 1856, and, for Brigham Young’s positive reaction, Young to Cannon, 3 April 1856. A close examination of the first Hawaiian edition reveals the printer’s signature marks.

64. Alma 37:4; compare 1Nephi 5:18; 19:17; 2Nephi 26:13; 30:8; Mosiah 3:20; 15:28; and 3Nephi 28:29.

65. Cannon to Young, 26 January 1856.

66. *Ibid.*; the postscript to this letter was dated 30 January.

67. Young to Cannon, 3 April 1856. The *Deseret News* noted the publication with the same enthusiasm in the issue of 16 April 1856.

68. Cannon to Young, 1 October 1855.

69. Young to Cannon, 29 November 1855.

70. Cannon’s letters to Young, 26 May and 27 September 1856 and 31 August 1857 provide the details on the problems of binding the volume.

71. Cannon to Young, 27 September 1856.

72. Young to Cannon, 4 November 1856.

73. See Cannon to Daniel H. Wells, 4 March 1857, and Cannon to Young, 31 August 1857. According to Henry Bigler’s journal, by 4 October 1857 only 114 copies had been sold for a total of \$97.75. Henry Bigler journal “G” in the Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, Calif.

74. Cannon to Young, 31 August 1857.

75. Young to Cannon, 4 September 1857. In this letter Young indicated that he considered sending Cannon back to Hawaii to supervise the binding and sale of the Hawaiian edition of the Book of Mormon as well as to help the missionaries begin a newspaper there.

76. Henry Bigler journal, 24 November 1857. On 30 October 1857 Cannon wrote to Young: "Since your letter arrived I have been doing all in my power to dispose of the printing materials and to arrange all the business so that we can be, as you counselled me, ready at a moment's warning. ... The Books of Mormon I have boxed up and sent to the Islands, paying freight, etc., so that there will be but very little expense, if the work be done among themselves, in getting them into the hands of the natives."

77. Bigler journal, 4–5 October 1857. In addition to problems with customs, Bigler reported, upon opening the boxes, "m[a]ny of the sheets damaged being eaten by mice or otherwise spoiled." Bigler journal, 25–26 November 1857. Bigler estimated to the customs official that printed sheets for about eight hundred copies were salvageable. These and the above references in the Bigler journal were called to my attention by Chad Orton of the Church Archives.

78. "Manuscript History of the Hawaiian Mission," 25 April 1858 and 25 December 1863.

79. The full title was *He Olelo Hoolaha, I na Hoahanau o ka Ekalesai o Iesu Kristo o ka poe Hoana o na La Hope nei, ma ko Hawaii pae aina; a i na kanaka a pau i aloha i ka oiaio*, or "An Announcement, To the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Hawaiian Islands, and to all people who love the truth." An English translation of his tract appears as an appendix to this essay.

80. Cannon to Young, 26 January 1856, Young to Cannon, 4 November 1856. John T. Cain, letter to Brigham Young, 13 April 1856, reported that fifteen hundred copies had arrived in Hawaii. John R. Young's letter from Hawaii to his father, Lorenzo D. Young, 15 March 1856, reported that Cannon's tract was "being circulated among the Natives, and the Saints appear to be delighted with it. We are looking anxiously for the Book of Mormon, as it has been out of press some time." "Correspondence," *Deseret News*, 20 August 1856, 190.

81. Cannon to Young, 26 January 1856.

82. Young to Cannon, 3 April 1856.

83. The *Prospectus of the Western Standard* was dated 4 January 1856 (copy in Church Archives). The *Western Standard* was published weekly in San Francisco from 23 February 1856 to 18 November 1857.

84. Consider the following statements, which are typical: "If Joseph Smith's claims as a Prophet of God had no other foundation than that which this book furnishes, then there is foundation enough for him to rank as one of the greatest prophets that has ever lived upon the face of the earth," George Q. Cannon, in *Journal of Discourses*, 22:254, (8 September 1881); and "We do not believe it possible for any honest, unprejudiced soul to read the Book of Mormon in a prayerful spirit without being convinced that its words are the words of God. There is an influence which accompanies it, and which the reader feels, if he will not reject it, that carries with it overpowering conviction and is a testimony that God is the Author, through His inspired servants, of that Book," *Juvenile Instructor* 25 (15 August 1890): 500.

85. Cannon's key role is discussed in David J. Whittaker, "Early Mormon Pamphleteering," *Journal of Mormon History* 4 (1977): 35–49.

86. A sampling of these works include George Reynolds, *The Myth of the "Manuscript Found," or the Absurdities of the "Spaulding Story"* (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor Office, 1883); George Q. Cannon, *The Life of Nephi, the Son of Lehi, Who Emigrated from Jerusalem, in Judea, to the Land Which Is Known as South America, about Six Centuries before*

the Coming of Our Savior (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor Office, 1883); George Q. Cannon, *Book of Mormon Stories: Adapted to the Capacity of Young Children, and Designed for Use in Sabbath Schools, Primary Associations, and for Home Reading*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon and Sons, 1892, 1899); and B. H. Roberts, *A New Witness for God*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon and Sons, 1895, 1906). For a listing of articles and published addresses by George Q. Cannon on Book of Mormon topics, see Donald W. Parry, Jeanette W. Miller, and Sandra A. Thorne, *A Comprehensive Annotated Book of Mormon Bibliography* (Provo, Utah: Research Press, 1996), 76–79.

87. For a useful overview, with the references to the comments and concerns of George Q. Cannon and his son Abraham H. Cannon, see the introductory chapters in Reid L. Neilson, “The Japanese Missionary Journals of Elder Alma O. Taylor, 1901–10” (master’s thesis, Brigham Young University, 2001), esp. pp. 19–27.

88. On the gathering to Lanai, see R. Lanier Britsch, “The Lanai Colony: A Hawaiian Extension of the Mormon Colonial Idea,” *Hawaiian Journal of History* 12 (1978): 68–83; for Cannon’s 1894 comments, see *Collected Discourses Delivered by President Wilford Woodruff, His Two Counselors, the Twelve Apostles, and Others*, comp. Brian H. Stuy (Burbank, Calif.: BHS Publishing, 1987–92), 4:145–47 (5 October 1894 discourse); for Cannon’s 1897 comments, see Conference Report, 5 October 1897, 40–41. While not announced by a president of the Church of Jesus Christ until 1907, Cannon began to stress this years before.

89. Joseph Smith said on 28 November 1841: “The Book of Mormon was the most correct of any Book on Earth & the key stone of our religion & a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts than any other book.” Wilford Woodruff journal, 28 November 1841. See *Wilford Woodruff’s Journals*, ed. Scott Kenney (Midvale, Utah: Signature, 1985), 2:139. Throughout his mission, Cannon taught people that his own testimony was not based just on what Joseph Smith taught but on personal witnesses of the Spirit. See, for example, the long sermon addressing this matter as recorded in his journal, 25 January 1853.

90. This translation, commissioned by the L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, was completed in May 2000 by Richard Keao Nesmith and William K. Kelly. We have made minor changes in the punctuation, capitalization, and wording of their translation.