JOSEPH, A UTAH HOME FOR THE POLYNESIANS

by Dennis R. Atkin

One of the most colorful and unique colonies founded in the settling of the western part of the United States was the Polyneesian settlement of Joseph. This community, located about seventy-five miles southwest of Salt Lake City, Utah in Skull Valley, Tooele County, was established and fostered by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It was founded on August 20, 1855, after much of the Great Basin had already been colonized.

So many settlements in the Great Basin were colonized by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints that Brigham Young (1801-1877), who served as president and prophet of the Church from 1847 to 1877 and was largely responsible for the selection of the sites and initial personnel of these colonies, is remembered as much for his colonization efforts as he is for his work as an ecclesiastical leader. So many people had come to Utah and joined the colonization process that by the early 1870's practically all the choice farm land had been occupied. The only land left open was located in the less desirable or less accessible areas.

The colonization efforts were a logical result of the missionary work which had been very important to the Church since its founding in up-state New York in 1830. Missionaries were sent to various parts of the United States and to foreign countries to spread the Gospel and gain adherents to the new faith. These new converts soon wanted to join with the others sharing the same beliefs. The new members of the Church gathered to Utah after the initial westward trek led by Brigham Young. The first Mormon pioneers arrived in Utah in 1847. Many others followed later. This was all a part of the great gathering movement believed by the Mormons to be in fulfillment of the Bible prophecy. (1) In Utah, temples were being built in which ordinances necessary for salvation could be performed for Church members and their kindred dead.

As missionaries were called to foreign countries and then returned home, many brought new converts back to Utah with them. This process began later in Hawaii than in many other places. In 1844, the first Mormon missionaries were called to go to the Pacific Islands. They were originally assigned to the Sandwich Islands, but circumstances led them to the Austral Islands, the Society Islands and the Tuamotu Islands. (2) About six years later, ten elders, under the direction of Hiram Clark, were sent to the Hawaiian Islands to open a mission. Among this group which arrived in Honolulu on December 12, 1850, (3) was George Q. Cannon, who later became an Apostle and still later a member of the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

At first the missionary work among the Polynesians progressed slowly and baptisms were few, but as the missionaries learned the language and the customs of the people, conversions began to increase. In the same way that new adherents from other areas of the world wanted to migrate to Utah, many of the Hawaiian converts also wanted to go to Zion, but leaving the islands was forbidden by their own government. (4) Their Church leaders felt that the next best step was to gather the Hawaiian members into one location in the islands. The first gathering place was established in 1853 in the Palawai Valley on the island of Lanai. This island was originally rented from Haleleia, a friendly Hawaiian chief, but it was later purchased from him. This area proved to be unsatisfactory and later a permanent gathering place was established at Laie on the island of Oahu, where the Church obtained a large tract of land in 1865. (5)

Even though a gathering place had been established for them in their native land, many Hawaiians still cherished a desire to go to Utah to live with members of the Church from other lands and cultures. However, in regards to Hawaiians immigrating to Utah, Church officials faced special problems: (1) the climate and surroundings in Utah were quite different from that of their native islands that it would be difficult for the Hawaiians to adapt to and be happy in the new area, and (2) the Hawaiian government prohibited such migration. Therefore, the General Authorities of the Church did not feel free to encourage the islanders to come to Utah. Wilford Woodruff, President of the Church, said:

...it can be truthfully stated that there has been no encouragement given to the native Hawaiian people of our faith to migrate to this country. For, many years many of them have been urging our Elders to arrange affairs so they could come; but there has been a great reluctance entertained by us concerning their coming as we know how great a trial it might prove to them to live in a climate and surroundings so different in every respect to their position in their native islands. (6)

About 1867 a native by the name of Nepela, the first [sic] Hawaiian to join the Mormon Church, received permission from his government to visit the Utah Territory. (7) Upon returning home, he gave such glowing reports concerning what he had seen at the headquarters of the Church that many other Hawaiian members of the Church wished to have the privilege of going to Utah also.

Two Hawaiian boys in Utah with William King and George Secker as they returned in 1873 from their missionary service in the Hawaiian Islands. Fred A. Mitchell brought J. W. Kaulainamoku back with him in 1875. Mr. Kaulainamoku was the first Hawaiian Mormon sent on a mission from Utah. He served a mission in New Zealand from 1885 to 1889. (8)

Although the laws prohibiting Hawaiian citizens from leaving
their island homes were not changed for some time, exceptions were made and occasionally Hawaiian members of the Church were allowed to go to Utah with returning missionaries. Eight Hawaiians (four adults and four children) accompanied George W. Cluff, recently released president of the Sandwich Islands Mission and Elder J.G. Knell as they returned to Salt Lake City on August 15, 1882. The newspaper article reporting the arrival of these people further stated:

There is a law in the Hawaiian Kingdom which prohibits natives from emigrating to other parts of the world, but in consequence of the government (of Hawaii) having proof before them that the only disposition of the community of Latter-day Saints toward the people is to benefit them, exceptions are made in the cases of those desiring to come to Utah.

About 1884 the Hawaiian Government revoked its law prohibiting emigration by its citizens and the Hawaiians wishing to go to Utah found it much easier to do so. Generally they travelled with returning missionaries and settled around Warm Springs in the northwest part of Salt Lake City in the old Nineteenth Ward. For example, The Deseret Evening News reported:

"This morning's Utah Central train brought to this city Eliahu Barrell, Matthew Ball, wife and two children, and Fred Beesley, wife and two children from the Sandwich Islands where they have been missionaries for the past three and one half years. They were accompanied by sixteen natives from the islands. (10)"

By the middle of 1889, about seventy-five Polynesians had gathered in Salt Lake City. (11)

The Hawaiians did not assimilate well with the Caucasian population in Salt Lake City. (12) They usually obtained only the low paying manual labor type of employment. They were often unemployed part of each year. None of them purchased or built up businesses of their own, and they found themselves in an environment quite foreign to anything they had ever experienced. Gradually their need became apparent for a permanent location where the Hawaiians could obtain year round employment and control the environment. In their own colony they could develop a setting much more like the one they had experienced back in their native islands. Quite possibly the efforts to get the Hawaiians out of the city were accelerated when one of them died of leprosy. (13)

One of the reasons the Polynesian converts were closely looked after was the fact that some of the very highest offices in the Church were held by men who, because of their past experiences, were well acquainted with and sympathetic to the needs and aspirations of the Polynesians. George Q. Cannon (1827-1901) was in the first group of Mormon missionaries to reach the Hawaiian Islands and Joseph F. Smith (1838-1918) went to the Hawaiian Islands as a missionary when he was fifteen years old. These two men learned the Hawaiian language and were well acquainted with the customs and needs of the Hawaiians. Throughout their lives, they felt a great love and a deep concern for the Hawaiians. The Hawaiians loved these men in return. Joseph F. Smith was affectionately called Josepa, the Hawaiian way of saying Joseph. When the Polynesian colony in Utah was settled, it was named Josepa in honor of Joseph F. Smith.

George Q. Cannon served as the First Counselor in the First Presidency from 1880 until his death in 1901. Joseph F. Smith served as Second Counselor in the First Presidency from 1880 until the death of Lorenzo Snow (1814-1901), fifth president of the Church. Joseph F. Smith then became president of the Church—an office he held until his death in 1915. Throughout the tenure of George Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith (which spanned the period of time the Josepa colony existed), a special relationship existed between the First Presidency of the Church and the Polynesian Church members and their leaders. It became the policy that when problems occurred or aid was needed by the Polynesians, their leaders went directly to the First Presidency, bypassing local and regional Church leaders.

At any rate, the First Presidency of the Church decided to obtain land for a colony where the islanders could live by themselves. Caucasian church members would be appointed to preside over the colony and to assist in the management of its affairs.

Church officials had endeavored to help ease the assimilation process of the Polynesians through giving former missionaries special assignments. Matthew Ball, a former Hawaiian missionary recorded:

"A number of Hawaiians had emigrated to this country despite the law of their own land which forbade them to do so. Because of their racial, language, and cultural differences, they had great difficulty in adjusting to their new environment. Faultfinding and bickering were growing among them. The First Presidency of the Church, over the signature of Joseph F. Smith, who was then second counselor to Wilford Woodruff, called me to the task of conforting the Hawaiian immigrants and doing whatever could be done to make it possible for them to live among our people to a more acceptable degree of comfort, self-sufficiency and harmony. In this task Fred Beesley and Fred Mitchell joined with me. Later Charles C. Bush, a returned missionary from Hawaii, was very active in the project.

The order...was a big one. It stayed with
us to a lesser or greater extent for some ten years. The first big step was the novel of the Hawaiians in a body to a ranch in Skull Valley where they could profitably engage in agriculture. The little town of Joseph was founded in 1880. At that time the Church bore the expense and some natives built themselves houses, and were made comparatively happy and self-sufficient. (14)

In order to select the most suitable place on which to locate and colonize the Polynesians already in Utah and those who would come later, a land selection committee was appointed on May 16, 1889 by the First Presidency of the Church. It consisted of three men who had been active in missionary work in the islands. These three men, Harvey H. Cluff, William W. Cluff and Fred A. Mitchell, went to the Polynesians residing in the Warm Springs area and presented to them the plan to purchase land for a colony. The Polynesians sanctioned the plan and promptly appointed three from their own group to work on the committee. They were J.W. Kaulainanok, George Kamakanau, and Napolc. (15)

Early in June, the six men set out on their assignment and during the following two weeks inspected numerous farms and ranches offered for sale at that time. Within a few days they had visited and appraised various properties in Utah, Weber, Cache, and Tooele counties.

In recent times some people who have visited the area have questioned why this location was chosen as the site for the islander's new home. In the summer it is hot and dry. Very little will grow without irrigation. Other Utah valleys appear more productive. Although the winter weather is milder there than in the other places under consideration, the winters are cold, especially when compared with the Polynesians' native islands. The first winter (1889–1890) the islanders spent in Joseph the temperature was very cold and they suffered.

In the contest of the times and circumstances of the 1880's, perhaps Skull Valley offered the best situation available. In his great Basin Kingdom, historian Leonard J. Arrington said the following of this period in Utah:

"The prime economic problem of Mormon country in the late 1870's and 1880's was overpopulation. In every valley there were signs that the continued flow of immigration and the natural increase in population had filled up the land. Young people were not able to find farms; older people found themselves under-employed. . . . The Church's program in these years reflects official recognition of the deterioration in the ratio of people to the land. Projects to increase the supply of irrigable land were sponsored by ward, stake, and general Church organizations. In the western part of Utah, available patches of land were reclaimed from the desert and put in the way of raising grains, hay, and vegetables. . . New settlements were founded in the Little Colorado and Salt River valleys in Arizona and New Mexico, in the San Luis Valley of southern Colorado, in the Upper Snake River Valley in Eastern Idaho, and Goose Creek Valley in western Idaho. All told, at least a hundred new Mormon settlements were founded outside of Utah during the four year period 1876–1879. In addition, at least a score or more of important new colonies were founded within Utah in such unlikely spots as the San Juan country of southeastern Utah, Rabbit Valley (Wayne County) in central Utah and southern Idaho. With the exceptions of the the initial colonization in 1847–1851, it was the greatest single colonization movement in Mormon history. Eventually it spread to Alberta, Canada and Chihuahua, Mexico. . . "For those who remained in the settled valleys the problems of poverty and underemployment remained." (16)

Thus those appointed to select a suitable place on which to locate the Polynesian Church members were faced with many problems. Although it was not the Church policy to urge the Polynesians to go to Utah, some did go—or at least first as opportunity presented itself—then later in larger numbers. The new converts were caught up in the enthusiasm of the great gathering movement. To them, this seemed to be a dream come true. The islanders went to Utah full of faith and with the expectation that once they reached Zion all would be well for them. However, they encountered many difficulties. The life style in Utah was different and not many of the islanders were able to obtain good paying jobs. The land and climate as well as the culture of those with whom they lived was different from anything they had experienced in the past. Church officials felt a special obligation because the Polynesians had persisted in their desire to join the great gathering movement. Yet that they were in Utah, they needed help in the assimilation process. Many of their new neighbors welcomed them and offered any assistance they could. There were always missionaries available who had labored in Hawaii and were anxious to help out. (Note special call of Matthew Hall as related earlier) Some neighbors, however, lacked understanding and feeling for them. Misunderstandings between the newcomers and the older settlers grew. The decision to buy land for a settlement for the islanders was made. The project would be financed by the Church, but the location of such a colony posed a problem. A large
amount of land would be needed to accommodate such a colony and most of the good farming land was already occupied and not available to the Polynesians.

In the beginning the site selection committee obtained a list of farms, ranches, and other large tracts of land that were currently offered for sale. Because of the farmland/population ratio good farming land was at a premium. Most people who owned fertile farm land did not want to sell it and many who did not own good land wanted to buy some. Therefore, the committee found very few choice locations. They needed to choose the best from locations which were available.

The places of property the committee chose to consider included: (1) the property of John T. Rich located in Skull Valley, Tooele County, (2) the property of George O. Noble, north and west of E.T. City, also in Tooele County, (3) the properties of nine different men located three to five miles southeast of Pleasant Grove in Utah County, (4) some property owned by Brigham Young College in Cache County, (5) the property of A.H. Cannon in Weber County, and (6) the property of Hoy and Skeen located next to that of A.H. Cannon in Weber County.

After visiting these areas, the committee wrote a report and submitted it to the First Presidency. The first part of the report gave the description of each place visited and concluded with the following:

Having considered the advantages and disadvantages of the various places visited, we have endeavored to note fully and carefully every point worthy of consideration and now respectfully offer the following as our recommendations:

The property of Brother A. H. Cannon we think would not be suitable for the following reasons: The quality of land is not sufficient; there is no water but that which may be obtained from flowing wells, while there is a strong belief that a good supply can be got from this source, there will not be enough to wash the mineral out of the soil, of which there is undoubtedly a large amount, and will come to the surface, as in the case at Bear River City where, after cultivation, the mineral destroyed much of the land. Fuel will be scarce and expensive, as also all kinds of building material.

The property of Skeen and Hoy we do not think suitable at all.

The locality visited in Utah county affords some advantages such as good fishing and bathing facilities. The soil in some places is well adapted to the culture of small fruits, and vines; yet a large portion of the land is of no value except for pasture. The prices asked are high considering the quality and the improvements.

The land offered by G. O. Noble, near E. T. City, Tooele Valley, possesses so few desirable advantages that we do not consider this at all suitable. The amount for 5000 acres at $20 is $100,000.00 and not to exceed one-fifth of it can be cultivated.

With regard to the locations in Cache Valley, we think either possesses many advantages. The soil is good, water plentiful, the surroundings desirable, the social and religious influence all that can be desired; and we certainly hoped to be able to decide in favor of this locality; but when we consider the cost of the land, the expense of making suitable improvements necessary for their living and the support of the families, the accumulation of interest on the purchase, without the benefit of growing crops or increase from stock to meet these expenses, we have been forced to the conclusion that they cannot be expected to make the means to pay the demands within the near future.

The property in Skull Valley, being 30 miles distant from Grantsville, the nearest settlement, makes it somewhat isolated, so far as social and religious considerations are concerned. Yet it possesses very many great advantages. The cost of the realty is $35,000. This includes a considerable amount of personal property of value and necessary to the proper conduct of the farm together with the growing crops will amount to not less than $10,000 or $12,000. This deducted from the former makes the real cost of land and improvements not to exceed $13.50 an acre. The opportunity of securing any amount of additional lands, and extensive summer and winter range; cheap and abundant supply of fuel and fencing; and extensive water supply; building material easy access; mild climate; a large crop nearly matured more than necessary to supply their wants for the coming year; teams, wagon, harness, farming implements, cows, chickens, pigs, everything needed for their support, together with the increase from stock if judiciously managed, will enable them to meet the annual payment of principal and interest, and in a short time pay for the property.

Therefore, we are united in the conclusion that this is the most available place on which to locate the Hawaiian Saints. (17)
an abundant crop growing and almost ready to be harvested, and a mild climate. There were also cheap and abundant supplies of fuel and fencing, building materials of stone, wood, wagons, harnesses, farming implements, and cattle, horses, chickens, pigs, etc. In fact, everything needed for carrying on everyday life in a frontier town was available at a very reasonable cost. There would be enough for the crops to be harvested when the crops were harvested to feed the colonists for a year. This was also a significant point. All the Polynesians needed to do was to move in and take over. The only disadvantage of the rich property mentioned in the report was the fact that social and religious contact, this property was somewhat isolated. The nearest town, Grantsville, was thirty miles away.

The isolation factor was mentioned in a letter from the First Presidency of the Church to William King who was then president of the Sandwich Islands Mission. After mentioning numerous advantages of the Skull Valley property, the letter continues:

> It has one slight disadvantage, it is somewhat isolated from any other settlement of the Saints [Church members] that at present exists, but possibly this isolation may in the near future not prove so great a detriment in the development of the colony as might at first be imagined. (18)

The First Presidency also expressed the trust and hope that the Skull Valley colony would prove a success and become a model colony after which others may be patterned when the time comes for the gathering of the remnants of the House of Israel who accept the Gospel on the Isles of the Pacific.” (19)

On June 20, 1889 the committee submitted their report to the First Presidency in which they said that after due consideration they decided that the rich property in Skull Valley, Tooele County offered the best possibilities for the Hawaiians and recommended its purchase. The next day the First Presidency and members of the committee met and by unanimous vote, decided to accept this recommendation. (20)

A detailed description of the property bought for the Polynesian colony is included in the report submitted to the First Presidency by the land selection committee.

> the property of Brother John T. Rich... consists of 1920 acres, with twelve miles of good substantial pole and wire fence. 640 acres of the above is a school section, and within the pasture enclosure of the balance 1280 acres are the property of John Rich has the Government title... Of the other lands there are 200 acres under cultivation, with very fine growing crops. 22 acres have been planted and are situated about eight miles from the farm on the eastside of the vast range of mountains, and has a large spring of good water capable of irrigating from fifty to sixty acres, and will water a large number of stock. The winters are said to be milder than in Salt Lake or Tooele Valleys.

The irrigation water supply is an exclusive right to five small springs from the East range of mountains at which streams are conveyed in one ditch, this being the only running stream within a radius of many miles, and in amount equal to one quarter or one third of the waters of City Creek. In addition there are a number of large springs on the property, one of which forms a fish pond nearly one thousand feet long, and from all indications an abundant additional water supply can be obtained from flowing wells. In connection with this part of our report, we would respectfully call your attention to the fact that sections Nos. 17, 20, 22, 27, 28, 29, 32, 33 and 34 immediately adjoining the land owned by Bro. Rich are of the same quality as that now under cultivation, and are subject to entry. (21)

The land and improvements were priced at $35,000.00 and the horses and cattle on the ranch were to be bought separately. Initially the cost of the livestock was estimated at $8,757.00, but when the animals were itemized, counted and sold individually and the final arrangements made, Rich received $12,279.00 for 129 horses and 335 head of horned cattle.

A group of men belonging to the Church incorporated the Josepa Agricultural and Stock Company in accordance with the current laws relating to private companies. The Church regulated the financial affairs of the company through these men and others. The Church always paid the expenses. Josepa was bought on the installment plan. Five thousand dollars were paid down and $4,285.71 per year for seven years. Seven notes payable to John T. Rich were endorsed by the First Presidency, each for the amount of $4285.71 at the interest rate of eight per cent per annum. The first note fell on July 1, 1890 and another one each succeeding July 1st until all were paid off. The notes were signed for the Josepa Agricultural and Stock Company by Harvey H. Cluff, president, and Fred A. Mitchell, secretary, by order of the board of directors. On August 16, 1889, Harvey H. Cluff paid John T. Rich the five thousand dollar payment and gave him the properly executed notes. (22) The method by which the horses and cattle were paid for is not recorded.

Now all was ready for the Hawaiian Saints to move to Josepa. The new colonists could go by train from Salt Lake City to Garfield Junction, but the Rich ranch was still another forty miles away. The First Presidency assigned members of the Moab Stake the task of transporting the Hawaiians from Garfield Junction and their belongings from Salt Lake City to their new home by teams and wagons. After enjoying a feast on the evening
of August 26th, served by the Nineteenth and Twenty-second wards, forty-five or fifty natives (23) went to Darfield Junction the next morning. They were met by teams and wagons and were taken to Grantsville for the night. There the Hawaiians entertained the local people with a program of music and dance. The next day, August 27, 1889, they were taken on to Joseph, the place that was to be the Utah home of the Polynesian Mormons for the next twenty-eight years. President Cluff proclaimed the day to be Hawaiian Pioneer Day, and in the evening a special meeting of some of the local people and speeches of thanksgiving was held with the brethren from Tooele participating. August 28 was celebrated in Joseph each year just as other Utahns celebrated July 24th, the anniversary of the first Mormons entering Salt Lake Valley.

Teams and teamsters needed to spend the night resting before returning to their homes. Colonists and teamsters spent the night of August 28 crowded into the limited accommodations available. This surely increased the desire to begin the construction of homes immediately. So anxious were the colonists to get things underway that a survey of the townsite was started the first day by Fred A. Mitchell assisted by Francis N. Lyman. Two days later it was completed. In September the colony bought a saw mill for $1,497.75 from a man named Edwin Booth and employed him to operate it. (24)

Each block in the townsite was divided into four lots and each lot was on a corner. There was sufficient space in each lot for a home, a garden, and a barn and corral facilities for livestock. The heads of each family cast lots for their building lots. If the site suited the person who drew it, title to the land could be obtained by purchase.

Soon after arrival in Joseph, the colonists found it necessary to select a burial site. An elderly lady by the name of Makaopiolio died on September 15th. Cluff and a group of the native elders selected an elevated plot on the northeast corner of the townsite for the cemetery. The next day Joseph's first funeral was held. (25)

As winter approached, the Joseph colonists settled down to the serious business of building up their settlement and producing a livelihood in the wilderness of Skull Valley. The newly harvested crops provided ample food supplies for the colonists until harvest time at the end of the following summer. The first winter was very cold and difficult for the islanders to endure. Fortunately there was not much work to be done during the coldest part of the winter. However, early the next spring preparing the land for planting meant busy time for everyone. Some of the Hawaiians wanted to get back to Salt Lake City to work, but they were needed at the colony in order to help make the endeavor succeed.

The Joseph Agricultural and Stock Company, owned by the Church, held all the land and the livestock of the colony except the lots of the colonists which had been purchased and the teams or riding horses owned by individuals. The colonists received a daily or monthly wage from the company for their work. Necessities of life were purchased by the company or through its officials. In the beginning a bookkeeping system was used by which the workers were credited with work performed and charged for the use of some supplies. This system was used until after Thomas A. Waddoups became president of the colony in 1901. Shortly thereafter a scrip system was inaugurated, doing away with the laborious bookkeeping system. A Salt Lake City printing house printed a special series of paper scrip in 5 cents, 10 cents, 25 cents, 50 cents, and $1.00 denominations. This was used to pay the colonists for their labor and in turn the colonists used it to pay for goods and services received. Occasionally some of the colonists went to Salt Lake City to shop. The company endeavored to have enough cash on hand to exchange for scrip at such times. Later, as the company became a paying venture, cash replaced scrip. (26)

Some of the Hawaiians were not happy in Utah. Before experiencing the climate and nature in Utah they could not understand how difficult conditions would be. The bookkeeping system at Joseph was often unpopular. Homesickness afflicted many of them, especially when the weather was cold or hot or when they had difficulty earning enough money to purchase what they wanted. In Hawaii, obtaining things was much simpler. Food could be obtained from the sea and the trees much easier than in Utah and fewer clothes were needed. A few became disillusioned and wanted to return to the islands. When the Hawaiian government in Utah got back to the Hawaiian government, money was appropriated by the Hawaiian Legislature to help the natives who wished to go back to the islands but could not afford tickets. Government officials and representatives went to Utah to encourage the Hawaiians to return. The first eight Hawaiians taken back from Utah by the Hawaiian government arrived in Hawaii on August 7, 1901. (27) It was not noted, however, whether those Hawaiians left from Joseph or Salt Lake City.

In a letter written on October 1, 1890 from Salt Lake City to David McKinley, Hawaiian Consul General stationed in San Francisco, William A. Kinney stated that:

The majority of the natives prefer to remain in Utah though many wish to return.

None are destitute, or need be, as times were never better in Salt Lake [City] than now and there is plenty of demand for labor. The body of the natives are over in Skull Valley, Church farming property, and only those are in Salt Lake who have broken away from the commands of the Church. These, of course, are the ones who wish to return. The many others will probably avail themselves of the chance to go home if they get it, who, until that time, do not wish to show their hands to the Church authorities. Some
sickness is what makes them wish to return.

Some are the old time natives, who are thoroughly at home, declared, when they heard that the Government was going to send for them, that they would go to jail before they would comply. While those in Salt Lake are not destitute yet they don't get along very well and cannot raise enough money to return and they are anxiously waiting the action of the Legislature which they think will send enough for them to get home on. (28)

On Nov. 4, 1890, Mr. Kinney reported that ten adults and eleven children (from age one month to ten years) who were living in Salt Lake City wished to return to Hawaii. He had also heard that twenty to thirty of the Hawaiians living at Skull Valley also wished to go back. Not all the twenty one who said they wished to return made it. One died, and others decided not to return. In the end only thirteen of this group returned.

Mr. J. H. Goodwin was asked by Arthur Thomas, Governor of the Utah Territory to investigate conditions among the Hawaiians in Skull Valley. During his investigation Mr. Goodwin spoke with Charles William Naau, a Hawaiian living in Skull Valley. In response to being asked if he [Mr. Naau] was ordered from Salt Lake City to Skull Valley, Mr. Goodwin said that the Hawaiian told him that all the islanders were ordered there and that nobody could go to Salt Lake City or any other place very far off unless they got a permit from the manager. Mr. Goodwin also said that Mr. Naau wanted to return to Salt Lake City where he could earn cash and added, "...but the president will not let me go and the manager watches us closely." (29)

Mr. Goodwin felt that there were Hawaiians in both Salt Lake City and Ogepa who "...have been much disappointed and are very homesick, and if given full freedom would gladly return to the more congenial climate of the Sandwich Islands, except possibly a few who have become fanatic in their religious beliefs." (30)

On Nov. 21, 1980 Arthur L. Thomas, Governor of the Utah Territory, sent the report of Mr. Goodwin to James G. Blaine, U.S. Secretary of State, along with an editorial from The Deseret Evening News of Nov. 20, 1990. Although Governor Thomas did not state his reason for including the editorial, saying only that it "...relates to the subject," (31) perhaps he wanted to present a balanced view of the situation. The editorial refuted some of the ideas and allegations presented by such men as Mr. Goodwin and a Mr. Carter. The Denver News printed an inflammatory article supplied by Mr. Carter. Would it have been that Governor Thomas questioned the truthfulness of some of the allegations and ideas contained in the reports and wished to show the other view of the situation?

The editorial states:

Some of the native members of the Mormon Church desired to come to this Territory and received permission to do so. On their arrival they obtained work, chiefly in this city. They were well satisfied and other natives followed them. But it soon appeared that they would not rise above the ordinary laborers, unless some better opportunity than this city afforded was found for them. Several Elders who had been missionaries to the Islands joined in the formation of a company and purchased some land in Skull Valley as a place for the Hawaiian Colony. The natives removed there and were pleased with the change.

A few of them, not more than ten or eleven, since the first arrival, desired to return to the Islands and went there. One who had been excommunicated for improper conduct spread the reports of the dissatisfaction of the colony and thus the movement for an appropriation to take them back was started.

...There is no destitution in Skull Valley. Some of those who have returned were improvident and spent more than their income, so that they ran behind their brethren in the possession of "creature comforts." But they have all been supplied with necessaries and some luxuries through the kindness of the Elders having the matter in charge.

"The Hawaiians, so we learn, are doing very well and are contented and prosperous. ..." (32)

In a letter written to Wilford Woodruff, President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, William A. Kinney outlined his efforts to help thirteen Hawaiians leave Utah and return to Hawaii. These efforts were being hampered by the actual or perceived statements of the Church leaders to the Hawaiians to the effect that it would be sinful for them to leave Utah and if they did that God would be displeased. Mr. Kinney asked President Woodruff to explain the position of the Church regarding this.

In response, President Woodruff thanked Mr. Kinney for his assistance in behalf of the Hawaiians, then said,

"...the most that can be said in regard to our influencing these people to remain is that our people have encouraged them, insomuch as they had come here to make the best of their situation and to stay, assuring them that if they applied themselves to their labor they would be soon in a
position of comfort and comparative independence.

(31)

In a postscript to his letter President Woodruff said:

P.S. As a further proof of what we have said concerning our feelings toward those who have returned, we may mention the fact that when, Samuel Kii and Lima and their families left this country to return to the islands a letter was given to them recommending them to the kind attention of the Presiding Elder at Laie. He was informed to this effect: "They leave with our good feelings, although we think they are making a mistake. They should be treated kindly and be given a chance to work if they desire it and not be cut off." (34)

Again in 1894, the Hawaiian Government sought to encourage the Hawaiian Utah pioneers to return to the islands. In March of that year, Cecil Brown, an agent of the Hawaiian Government, came to Josepa and offered to pay return fare to the islands for anyone who would exchange his Utah home and return. Some seemed inclined to accept the offer. (35)

On April 12, 1894 fifteen Hawaiians (six adults and nine children) arrived by train in San Francisco from Utah and boarded a ship bound for Hawaii on April 14. The fares for these people were paid by the Hawaiian Government on the recommendation of Cecil Brown. (36)

In August of 1894 the colonists received a letter from the Hawaiian consul in San Francisco offering free passage to Hawaii to all who would go. (37) To some of the colonists, this was a command from their government—a command they must obey; others, however, regarded their allegiance to their church as paramount to all others.

The Sunday after the consul's letter was received, President Cluff addressed the people on the gathering of Israel in the last days, a work that he said was then going on. He told them that they were the first fruits of the gathering from the islands of the sea and that they were under the dominion of the Kingdom of God. The purpose of these remarks was to check the enthusiasm that stirred the colonists and make some of them desire to return to their island home. This talk had a profound effect upon the colonists. They unanimously gave up their desire to return at this time.

A short time later, President Cluff met with the First Presidency of the Church to discuss what the policy should be when some of the Hawaiians wished to return to Hawaii. The First Presidency stated that any of the Polynesians should be free to return to their former home if they should so desire. Hopefully they would leave with good feelings, manifesting an interest in the mission back in Hawaii. When the announcement was made that the Hawaiian Saints were free to come and go as they wished, some left Josepa, intending to enjoy a trip to their native islands at the expense of their former government. (38)

That some did return to Hawaii that year for an extended or permanent stay is indicated in a letter written by President Cluff to the First Presidency of the Church. Cluff noted reports from the Sandwich (Hawaiian) Islands that some of those who left Josepa and returned to the islands with the help of the Hawaiian Government already wanted to come back to Josepa. An article in The Deseret Evening News stated that "a few saints accepted the Hawaiian Government's invitation to return to the islands, and that they were now wishing they were back in Utah and would return as soon as it was practicable." (39)

During the latter part of September, a group of sixteen Utah colonists who wished to return to Hawaii was put together at considerable trouble to the Hawaiian Government representatives. Twenty-six had been brought into Salt Lake City, but after arriving in the city ten changed their minds. This caused Charles T. Winder, Hawaiian Consul General in San Francisco, to say, "In the future I would advise that the government leave them (the Hawaiians in Utah) where they are, the fact is that they do not know what they want, and as they are in need of nothing I consider that they are just as well off as they would be in Hawaii." (40)

From this time on, the Hawaiians felt more free to come and go as they wished. In 1899 the Hawaiian Islands became a territory of the United States and thereafter its citizens could travel freely and from the United States. During the years 1901 to 1917, when Thomas A. Waddoups was president of the colony, a few more returned to the islands, but the number was small in comparison to the number who came over to the colony. Never during this time did the Hawaiian Territorial Government attempt to persuade them to return to the islands. (41)

The aim of the Josepa Agricultural and Stock Company was to provide employment for the colonists and to grow sufficient foodstuffs for the colony. In addition they sought to produce the additional finances needed for the colony. Some of the necessities could not be raised on the land and had to be purchased. Cash was also needed to meet the yearly payments to the Church. From the beginning, they were successful in producing sufficient foodstuffs for the colonists. In fact, at times they had reserves enough to last them for two or three years even in the event of crop failure. However, the company did not begin to break even financially until after 1900. When they operated at a loss, the Church made up the difference. During the 1900's, farmers and ranchers in the United States experienced financial difficulties and those who bought livestock feed or boarded their animals at Josepa had no money with which to pay the bills when they were due. This compounded Josepa's problems. Gradually, as the colonists learned proper farming
and ranching procedures in Utah and as the economic situation became better, the Josepa Agriculture and Stock Company turned a profit. Conditions continued to improve until 1911, J. Cecil Alter, a Utah historian said:

Perhaps the most successful individual colonization proposition that has been attempted by the "Norton" people in the United States is the Hawaiian colony at Josepa. There are 1,130 acres practically all in use and half as much more is being brought under the magic wand of the Hawaiian irrigator. . . . Every Hawaiian in the United States who had come here to be nearer the Mormon people was given the opportunity to go there and move into a house that was built for him and for his family, and work on the ranch at good wages and have besides, a large garden patch for his own use.

The story of Josepa is a story in itself. Suffice it to say that today the several hundred folks there have water in their houses just as we have in Salt Lake City, and a power plant will sometime give them their electric lights. Their school and meeting houses are as good as the best. . . . and since they grow their own food and raise their own animals, they are better off than many farmers who have lived in this country all their lives. The Mormon Church conceived the plan for them, and the Church made its perfection possible.

At a recent annual celebration there by the Hawaiians, when President Joseph F. Smith, Governor Wieban Spry, and other men of prominence attended, Lorenzo D. Creek, a government Indian official from Washington, who was studying the Indians in Tooele County at the time, rose before the great Hawaiian uniformed audience, after having been shown all over the place, and with much feeling said: "My friends, if this is a sample of Mormon colonization work, the best thing the government of the United States would do would be to assist them in every way possible." (42)

The yearly crop production and number of cattle fed increased and financial and living conditions continued to improve during the next few years. Will G. Farrell, president of the Josepa Agriculture and Stock Company, was able to report in a 1915 Pioneer Day Speech that Josepa had:

. . . .a well watered farm of over a thousand acres which furnished the bulk of employment for the natives, and the pay roll averages more than one thousand dollars per month the year round. Everyone receives his pay every Saturday morning as every Saturday afternoon is for recreation, leaving Sunday for reverence and rest. The cash sales from farm products last year amounted to $10,000 besides which feed was raised for eight hundred head of thoroughbred Shorthorn Duras cattle which belong to the company. The cash sales of the cattle add another $10,000 to the income.

A strictly modern merchandising store serves every need of the colonists, and is patronized by the big sheep farmers that winter their herds on the range in the great American desert.

How modern houses have been built. The company not only sells a liberal village lot for the nominal sum of $250 to the settlers, but it builds the homes and takes payment at cost in monthly installments. Hawaiians of means and education, hearing of this new home, have sold their property in Honolulu and have come here to join us. (43)

It is easy to see from the above report that by 1915, Josepa was on a firm economic foundation and was paying off financially. From then on the venture continued to make a profit until the colony was disbanded.

Conditions in Josepa changed greatly during the twenty-eight years of its existence. When the original pioneers arrived and for a number of years thereafter, they had all been transplanted into an environment and life alien to that which they had known before. Many of the things they had been used to doing and eating were now unavailable to them. They had to be satisfied with many substitutes. The great redeeming factor to them was the fact that they were participating in the great gathering movement of their Church and were near a temple where sacred ordinances could be performed for themselves and their dead ancestors. Great sacrifices were made easier with their belief that they were obeying the will of the Lord.

Many of the Josepa Hawaiians returned to the Islands for the same reason that the first ones migrated to Utah. They felt it was what their God wanted them to do. In 1915, President Joseph F. Smith, after returning from one of his frequent trips to the Hawaiian Islands, announced that the Church was going to build a temple at Lai, Oahu. When this was announced to the Hawaiians, some of them said simply that they were going back. Waddups had been told by President Smith that if any of the Hawaiians wished to return to the Islands, it was agreeable with the Church for them to do so. The Church would pay transportation expenses for any of the colonists who could not afford tickets. Waddups knew of no time when the Church officials advised the colonists as a group to return. The decision was left up to the individuals, but the Church would help those who wished to do so. (44)
Soon a group was ready to leave. Their personal property was sold by the company at a price arrived at by two disinterested persons.

To the Hawaiians there were some considerations that made going back to the islands less difficult. It would be easier to collect the genealogy necessary to do ordinance work in the temple in the Islands as that was where the necessary records were located. A temple was being built for their people, and they wished to participate and do all they could towards building and sustaining it. They had participated in the great gathering movement and had established a thriving colony in Utah, but now it was time to return to the islands.

None of the Hawaiians were left to help harvest the crops in the summer of 1917, so Maddocks had to hire white men to assist him in the harvest. That fall the ranch, including the townsite, was sold to the Deseret Livestock Company for $150,000. (45) It remains an integral part of their holdings today.

The Hawaiians had to work hard but in time they succeeded. Their victory was complete. They went back to their native Islands and helped build the temple, chapel, and a church college at Salt Lake. Those who are fortunate enough to be the descendents of these Polynesian Utah pioneers should be proud of their ancestors who took their place among the pioneers of other countries in gathering to the "tops of the mountains" in the last days.

After Joseph was sold, many of the buildings were moved away while others were torn down and the materials reused. Traces of Joseph's uniqueness began to disappear and in a few decades people in Utah began to forget its existence. For a while the cemetery grew high with weeds. Wandering cattle walked through, tipping over grave markers. In recent years the gravestones and graves themselves have been repaired. The cemetery was first fenced, then repaired and then fenced by various groups from the Church. In June 1970, Boy Scout Troops 481 and 581 from Payson, Utah participated in a special two day work project at Joseph, under the direction of Stake President Kenneth C. Johnson, a dedicated crew rebuilt heaps of stones, repaired fences, cleaned the area and erected a special commemorative sign, identifying the cemetery and the unique little settlement which it had served. (46)

For the past several years, 100 to 300 Polynesians and Caucasians interested in Joseph have returned each year to the original site for Memorial Day weekend reunions. Most of them are from Utah, (about two thousand Polynesians live in Utah now.) but some come from Hawaii and from homes in far flung states where they have moved to follow their chosen careers. Most of these people camp out on the site for two or three nights. During these reunions, special programs and meetings are held to commemorate the occasion, entertain each other, and to reaffirm the faith that brought the original Polynesian pioneers there long ago. The surrounding area resounds with the music of the Islands much as it did on festive occasions in Joseph. Flag poles have been erected to fly the flags of the various Islands represented. Before they return to their homes, these modern Polynesians pull the weeds in the cemetery and fix the fence and anything else around in need of repair. This must be done each year to keep ahead of encroaching nature.

Guided tours are provided at the reunions for those who wish to learn more about the area. Cluff Pond, which served as a swimming pool for the colonists is still there and filled with water. This is a favorite spot for all. Some of the Polynesians kick off their shoes or sandals and jump in, fully clothed, for a refreshing swim. Others, more inured, wade near the edge or dangle bare feet in the water. During the heyday of Joseph, Cluff Pond was used as baptismal font, swimming pool and fish pond.

A good time is always enjoyed by all and they return home with a greater understanding and appreciation of the Polynesian cultures and the islanders who made the Joseph colony a success.

Edwin L. Kamauh and other descendants of Joseph are in the process of establishing a non-profit organization to raise money to build a monument in commemoration of the colony. They plan to strengthen the fence around the cemetery and fence an area to be set aside for camping during the reunions. Thus, although Joseph was forgotten for decades and allowed to deteriorate through the ravages of nature, once again it is remembered by many who are certain that it will never be forgotten.

NOTES

1 "And it shall come to pass in the last days that the mountains of the Lord's house shall be established in the tops of the mountains and the hills shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say, come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of Jacob and he will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his path." (Isaiah 2:2-3) It is in fulfillment of this and other scripture, according to Mormon doctrine, that the converts from the various countries of the world gathered to the Rocky Mountains. Soon after joining the Church, these converts gained a desire to go to Utah where they could be with a large body of others who believed as they did and where temples were built in which necessary ordinances could be performed for themselves and their kindred dead. Although the Church officials did not deem it wise to urge the Hawaiians to "gather" to Utah, many of the new Polynesian converts also gained a desire to join this movement.

3 Ibid., p. 9.
5 Ibid., p. 693.
7 Deseret Evening News, May 13, 1892.
8 Jensen, Andrew A. (comp.), Josepha Colony, Tooele County, Utah, MS p. 16. L.D.S. Historians Office, Salt Lake City, Utah.
9 Deseret Evening News, August 15, 1892.
10 Ibid., Apr. 25, 1889.
11 Peck, p. 739.
13 Cluff, Harvey H. Diary, MS.p. 250. Microfilm copy in Brigham Young University Library, Provo, Utah.
14 Mose, Matthew, To My Children, an Autobiographical Sketch, Salt Lake City, Utah, pp. 57-58.
15 Cluff, p. 27.
17 Jensen, Josepha Colony, Tooele County, Utah, pp. 22-23.
18 First Presidency, Letter to William King.
19 Ibid.
20 Cluff, Diary, p. 28.
21 Jensen, Andrew A., Josepha Colony, Tooele County, Utah, pp. 17-18.
22 Cluff, p. 31.
23 There is a discrepancy in the Cluff diary in regard to the number of Hawaiians who arrived in Josepha the first day. On page 31 he stated that forty-five natives went the first day. Later, he listed the names of those who arrived with the first group. There are the names of fifty on this list. It has not been possible to ascertain which number is correct from any primary source. The author is inclined to believe the correct number to have been fifty because names are listed. Perhaps when Cluff stated the number as forty-five he was approximating.
24 Cluff, p. 33.
25 Ibid., p. 33.
26 Interview with T.A. Waddoups, Apr. 5, 1959. by Dennis R. Atkin.
28 Ibid., p. 57.
29 Ibid., pp. 61-62.
30 Ibid., p. 70.
31 Hawaiian Islands, p. 70.
32 Deseret Evening News, Editorial, Nov. 20, 1890.
33 Hawaiian Islands, p. 82.
34 Ibid., pp. 82-83.
35 Cluff, p. 120.
36 Wilder, Charles T., Hawaiian Consulate General, Letter, to Francis H. Hatch, Hawaiian Minister of Foreign Affairs. April 13, 1894.
37 Cluff, p. 139.
38 Ibid.
40 Wilder, Sept. 28, 1894.
41 Interview with T.A. Waddoups, Apr. 8, 1958.
43 Herald Republican, Sept. 5, 1913.
44 The Josepha Colony and the Josepha Agricultural and Stock Company, p. 6.
46 Deseret News, Church Section, July 16, 1917.