FAITH LIKE THE ANCIENTS:
THE LDS CHURCH IN PULEHU AND ON MAUI

Delivered at Kahului, Maui, Hawaii, on 29 July 1989

by Frank Alan Bruno

Several years ago, Mark E. Petersen, of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, visited the Kahului Maui Stake. During his visit he was taken to Pulehu by stake president Evan Larsen. During the hectic conference schedule no one told Elder Petersen the reason why he had been taken to the small village. However, sensing something out of the ordinary, he turned to his companions as they were driving up to it and said, "There is something special about this place. Why don't you tell me about it?" As I have researched the history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Pulehu and the island of Maui, I too have discovered, as Brother Petersen, that there is indeed "something special" about this place.1

In 1843, four missionaries Addison Pratt, Noah Rogers, Benjamin F. Grouard, and Knowlton P. Hanks sailed to the South Pacific to open the first mission there for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Elder Hanks died at sea and the rest made their way to Tubuai and Tahiti. Finding new converts easily the group remained in this part of the Pacific for the remainder of their time, instead of going on to the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii) as originally planned. The first Latter-day Saints to actually stop were Samuel Brannan with a company of 235 Mormon settlers from New York bound for California. In June 1846, Brother Brannan gave the first Mormon lecture in Honolulu entitled, "Salvation to Eternal Life."2 Addison Pratt, returning from the Society Islands to San Francisco stopped over briefly at Honolulu in 1847.3

The story of the first formal Latter-day Saint missionaries in the Sandwich Islands began in September 1850, when Apostle Charles C. Rich rode into the Slap Jack Bar Mining Camp, in Northern California. He called together eight young men (George Q. Cannon, James Keeler, William Farrer, Henry Bigler, James Hawkins, Thomas Morris, Thomas Whittle, and John Dixon) and gave them special blessings to fill missions and preach the restored gospel in Hawaii. Henry William Bigler was at Sutter's Mill when gold was discovered there in January 1848. For Elder Bigler who later served in Maui, this mission call was a dream fulfilled. The previous year he had dreamed that instead of being on his way to California to dig gold, he was headed "to the islands on a mission to preach the gospel."4 Two other men (Hiram Clark and Hiram Blackwell) were called from other mining camps at this time. The ten elders sailed from San Francisco 15 November 1850, and arrived at their destination after a rough voyage on 12 December of that year.5 It was so rough on one occasion that Captain Ritches didn't
think they were going to make it and he told his wife to prepare for eternity.

After breakfast on the morning of Friday, 13 December 1850, the little band of elders started for the mountains in back of Honolulu to engage in prayer. On their way up the Nuuanu Valley they turned off to the King's Falls on the right to wash in pure water in the stream." Hiram Clark, fifty-five years old, veteran of two missions to Great Britain, and president of the new mission, led his companions up the mountain (now called Pacific Heights) where they found a steep knob that rose suddenly and formed a table of thirty or thirty-five feet in width. George Q. Cannon describes the scene:

On the way up we picked up a rock apiece, with which we formed a rude altar. We then sang a hymn, and each one in his turn, expressed his desires. The oldest, who was also the president, (Elder Clark) was selected to be mouth in prayer. He embodied our desires in his prayer...

Having thus dedicated the land and ourselves to the Lord, one of the Elders (Elder Dixon) spoke in tongues and uttered many comforting promises, and another interpreted. The spirit of the Lord rested powerfully upon us, and we were filled with exceeding great joy."

The sun was sinking low in the sky when the Elders finished with their exercises on the mountain."

During their missionary labors on Maui throughout the nineteenth century, the elders often retired to the mountains to pray in a similar manner. On one occasion, Elders Cannon, Keeler, Farrer, and Bigler went up into a mountain behind Lahaina and fasted and prayed all day for the Lord to be with them in learning the language and in preaching the gospel to the natives." Another incident occurred when the elders went up a canyon to hold secret prayer according to the revealed order of prayer. After dressing in the robes of the priesthood and forming a circle, Henry Bigler reported that they heard what seemed to be a great voice in the mountain above them. Startled, they looked up and beheld a large boulder rolling down the mountainside toward them. Before it reached the bottom, where the brethren stood, it broke to pieces, harming no one."

The day after descending the mountain in the Nuuanu Valley the elders cast lots for their assignments. The Mission President, Hiram Clark and his companion, Thomas Whittle, elected to stay and work on Oahu. The remaining eight elders marked four slips of papers with the number one, two, three and four and also put the name of each island on four other slips. Number one was drawn by George Q. Cannon. He chose James Keeler as his companion and drew Maui as his assigned island. Elder Keeler later confided to Elder Cannon that he had prayed that he might remain with him, and felt that his prayers had been answered."

Elder Cannon was pleased with his assignment, and wrote: "In casting lots for islands, Maui fell
to us. When we were sailing past it my feelings were drawn towards that island, and I felt that I would like that to be my field of labor. I knew not why this should have been so, except that the Lord gave me the feeling, for I knew nothing concerning it that would make it a desirable place in my eyes."

Elders Cannon and Keeler, along with Elder Bigler sailed to Lahaina, Maui, where they rented, for four dollars a week, a native house made of grass. Elder Cannon described it as having the appearance of a "haystack." The Elders began to preach to the white (haole) people, and within two days they concluded that if their missions were to be successful, they must turn to the native Hawaiians and learn the language and customs. Elder Cannon made up his mind to learn the language, and had the following experience:

My desire to learn to speak was very strong; it was present with me night and day, and I never permitted an opportunity of talking with the natives to pass without improving it. I also tried to exercise faith before the Lord to obtain the gift of talking and understanding the language. One evening, while sitting on the mats, conversing with some neighbors who had dropped in, I felt an uncommonly great desire to understand what they said. All at once I felt a peculiar sensation in my ears; I jumped to my feet, with my hands at the sides of my head, and exclaimed to Elders Bigler and Keeler who sat at the table, that I believed I had received the gift of interpretation! And it was so. From that time forward I had but little, if any, difficulty in understanding what the people said."

Elder Cannon became renowned as an orator in the Hawaiian language. The natives never forgot his speaking ability."

At the end of three weeks in Lahaina, the trio ran out of money. Things appeared so bad they decided to split up and go to different parts of Maui and seek the help of the native people. Elder Bigler had already left; Elder James Keeler felt prompted to ask a local woman who had done their laundry for help. Nalimanui, a kindhearted native woman turned her room over to them and went to live in her daughters adjoining room. George Q. Cannon was so moved by her kindness that he wept. "I praised the Lord therefore," he said, "it was He who touched the heart of herself and family."

While living in Nalimanui's home Elder Cannon went into a garden behind the house praying and seeking spiritual inspiration. He received a revelatory manifestation. Reflecting on this experience he said,

When I prayed, I could go to God in faith. He listened to my prayers. He gave me great comfort and joy. He revealed Himself to me as
He had never done before, told me that if I would persevere, I should be blessed and be the means of bringing many to a knowledge of the truth and be spared to return home after having done a good work. Many things were revealed to me during those days, when He was the only friend we had to lean upon. A friendship was thus established between our Father and myself which I trust will never be broken or diminished, and which I hope has continued to grow stronger from those days to these."

This was such a sacred experience that he seldom made any public reference to it.

Becoming discouraged with their success among the whites, Hiram Clark had only baptized one young Polynesian man. By February 1851, five of the original ten missionaries left their fields of labor on the other islands and returned to the mainland. Hiram Clark, the president of the mission, however, went to the Marquesas and Society Islands before returning home." George Q. Cannon and the four remaining elders felt, "that it would not be right for us to leave [the Sandwich Islands] then. We had done little at warning the people, or accomplishing our mission, and why leave them then any more than on the first day we landed? We had not been appointed by the authority which called [President Hiram Clark] and us to go to the Marquesas Islands.""

By March of 1851, Elder Cannon on Maui decided that something must be done if the work was to go forward. He told Elders Keeler, Bigler, and Farrer: "I must push out among the natives and commence preaching to them as well as I [can]. I had made very good progress in the language, and felt able to explain in part the first principles of the gospel. . . . the Lord had revealed to me that I would find a people prepared to receive the truth; and I started as a man would who was going to meet his friends. Though I had never seen them in the flesh, I knew when I met them they would not be strangers unto me."" He left Lahaina and started up the Iao Valley to Wailuku.

After three days the young missionary approached the Protestant mission in Wailuku, a group of Hawaiians who lived nearby called out to him. The family of Jonathan Napela invited him to stay in their home and preach to them. Napela was an influential man in the community being well-educated, a judge, a chief of minor rank, and a prominent member of the local Protestant Church and though he had a few human weaknesses was a man seeking the truth. Jonathan was much impressed by what he heard comparing his own religion with Mormonism. He and his companions Uaua and Kaleohano became close friends to Elder Cannon. Eventually all three were baptized and ordained to be Elders. They were graduates of Lahainaluna high school in the country, fine speakers and reasoners, and were men of standing and influence in the community."
Their minister, the Reverend Mr. Condie, began to publicly threaten Nepela and falsely preach against Mormonism. Despite any possible repercussions Nepela decided to assist the missionary. However, to relieve his friend of further persecution, Elder Cannon decided to move from Wailuku. Nepela wanting to help the elder wrote a letter to Akuna Pake, the man who managed his property in Kula, and asked him to provide a place for Elder Cannon to go.

Kula, which means "the country at the base of the mountain" consisted of a few small villages." In 1849-50, the Kula area produced a poor-variety of Irish potato that was in demand in the California gold fields for a short-time."

George Q. Cannon arrived in the Kula region in the middle of May 1851. Shortly after arriving he received strong opposition from the Presbyterian missionary, Jonathan Green. Green, who had arrived to make his quarterly visit preached at a large public gathering from Galatians 1:8. He denounced Mormonism and the young elder as preaching a non-Christian gospel. The Mormon missionary boldly leaped to his feet and challenged the minister and people to examine the new religion. Instead of turning the natives against the Mormons, they were curious to find out more about Elder Cannon and his religion." The following Sunday, George Q. Cannon gave his first public Hawaiian sermon on 25 May 1851, responding to Green's charges.

During the next few weeks at the small village of Kealahou that today is a part of Pulehu," Nepela's men built a thatched hut (nale) that served as the first primitive meeting house." Here it was that Elder Cannon addressed several of his neighbors and taught them the first principles of the gospel and their restoration to man with the authority to teach them."

The following Sunday, 22 June 1851 saw the first fruits of the work on Maui when five were baptized and confirmed." Elder Cannon recalled, "many were stirred up to repentance, their hearts were touched and the tears coursed down their cheeks. Brother James Keeler, who had been stopping in Lahaina, was now with me that day, he having reached there the previous day. Our joy was very great, and I thought it one of the best days of my life.""

During June Elder Keeler continued travelling around the island and Elder Cannon continued his work in the Kula area. By July there were nineteen members of the Church. Soon after Elder James Keeler, who could barely speak Hawaiian returned to Kula from touring the island. He had found a group of "golden investigators" but needed Elder Cannon to preach the gospel to them. George Q. wrote:

Our arrival at Keanne created great excitement. The people had been watching for us, and seeing us approach from a long distance had gathered to meet us. We obtained the Calvinistic meeting house the afternoon of our arrival, and there was a large attendance to hear the preaching.
This was on Wednesday, and from that time until Monday we were constantly speaking, baptizing, confirming and counseling the people. During that time there were upwards of one hundred and thirty baptized. The Spirit of the Lord was powerfully poured out and all rejoiced. I never enjoyed myself so well before in my life."

About the last day of July, Elder Cannon returned to the Kula district. He organized at Kealahou the first branch of the Church in the Sandwich Islands, the Kula Branch on Tuesday, 6 August 1851.

Elder Cannon said, "In organizing the branch at Kula I ordained two teachers whose names were, Kaleohano and Maiola, and three deacons, Pake, Kahiki and Mahoe. . . . We only ordained teachers and deacons as officers, thinking it better to let them gain experience in the duties of these callings, before ordaining them to the Aaronic or Melchizedek priesthood." Within two weeks he returned to Keanae and soon four more branches (Ke'anae, Wailuanui, Waianu and Honomanu) were formed in that area." Three influential native members on Maui, who contributed significantly to the growth of the Church were Jonathan Napela, K. H. Kaleohano, and William H. Ua'ua. As more missionaries began to arrive in the Islands, they noticed the native elders strength in the gospel.

In the fall of 1851, George Q. Cannon and Francis Hammond (who arrived in August with his wife, Mary Jane, John Woodbury, and the new mission president, Philip B. Lewis and his wife) decided to go to Wailuku to try and seek some type of relief from the persecution from local Protestant ministers.¹ Joseph Spurrier recounted in Sandwich Island Saints.

As they approached the valley of Waikapu, they became anxious about where they might spend the night. It was December and the weather was uncertain. Elder Cannon was unwilling to return to Napela's home lest more pressure be brought on his friend and his family. Deciding to seek divine counsel, Cannon stepped into wayside bushes to pray while Hammond kept watch on the road. When they were ready to continue on their way, both were of a mind to go to Napela's and to go there quickly.

Arriving there an hour later, they were ushered in and found Napela in earnest conversation with a number of men who were trying to persuade him of the error of his ways in his sympathy for Mormons and Mormonism. Napela invited the elders to sit with them. The gathering included Reverend Condie of the Wailuku Protestant Church and Samuel Manaiakalani Kamakau who was a prominent observer of Hawaiian affairs and who would later be a newspaper columnist. A number of other prominent
Hawaiians of the Calvinist congregation were also present. Cannon’s arrival was providential. As Elder Hammond’s journal records, he was the only man alive sufficiently capable in the language and firmly enough founded in doctrines of salvation to defend the teachings of the Church in that company. According to Hammond, the conversation moved from contention to disputation, from disputation to questioning, and from questioning to acquiescence by the coming of dawn.

This event proved to be the turning point in the fortunes of the Sandwich Islands Mission as both Napela and Uaau were baptized shortly thereafter."

Francis Hammond, an early missionary in Hawaii also observed a spiritual incident involving Brother Napela:
This day fasting myself and all the family and the Churches at Wailuku, Kula, Koolau, Honoaula. In the afternoon went over to Wailuku to attend the council meeting but found the brethren all engaged in prayer meetings, they had been up in the mountains to the place where we held our conference in May. They found the river very high running down in torrents and raining upon the mountains. They wished to go over the river under a grove of Kukui trees to hold their meeting, but the river being so high made it dangerous crossing. So Brother Napela proposed to the Saints that they should kneel down and pray for the rain to cease and for the river to go down so as to let them go over in safety to their meeting place. They accordingly all prayed and the rain ceased. The river went down quickly and they went over and had a good time in fasting and prayer before the Lord. This is only one instance of many where the Saints have had their prayers answered. They have great faith. I believe they have stronger faith than we have."

Brother Napela also had the gift of healing and he healed the lame and blind alike."

When George Q. Cannon began to translate the Book of Mormon in the Hawaiian language in the 1850s, he found that few were as qualified as Brother Nepela to help him in this monumental task. "He was a descendant of the old chief of the Island of Maui, in whose families the language was preserved and spoken in the greatest purity, and he had advantages which no other equally well educated man, at that time possessed. He had studied the principles of the gospel very thoroughly, he had a comprehensive mind to grasp the truth, and he had been greatly favored by the
Spirit. As I progressed with the translation, his comprehension of the work increased. He got the spirit of the book, and was able to seize the points presented to him very quickly." Brother Cannon would translate a few pages, then discuss the ideas in great depth with Brother Napela and other intelligent natives. He then read the translation to them, going over each word and sentence carefully to discover if the correct impression was given." The final revisions of the Book of Mormon occurred between December 1853 and the last day of January 1854 in Kauai with the help of William Farrer and J. W. H. Kauwahi." The next year Elder Cannon was permitted to complete the setting of the type for 5,000 books in San Francisco and the books were shipped to Hawaii, where unfortunately they were not widely used."

J.H. Keleohano, another early convert of Elder Cannon, was known as a great missionary of the Church among his own people. After he was baptized into the Church in Pulehu in 1851, he was called soon after to accompany Elder Cannon on a missionary journey to the Koolau (windward) district of Maui. This was the first of his many missions and he was of incalculable aid throughout his life to the Utah elders. His chiefly status earned him a hearing wherever he went and his education gave him ease in dealing with the precepts of the gospel. His training in the language and poetry of the ancient chant gave him fluency and grace of expression in his own language. His talent and training were further manifest two years later when the first meetinghouse on the island was dedicated at Kula. For that occasion Kaleohano organized and led a choir in which his wife and father sang. . . . By April of 1854, he had completed seven missionary assignments. At that time he was assigned as leader of the Honuaula Branch of the church."

The third convert, William Uaua, was also a man of considerable faith. George Q. Cannon related, "His wife had been stricken down in his absence and had been, to all appearance, dead for some three hours before he arrived at his house. In that country when a person dies, the friends and relatives of the family assemble together and manifest their grief by wailing. They were indulging in these lamentations and outcries when he returned, every one supposing that she was dead. He was, of course, very much shocked; but the first thing he did was to anoint her and lay hands upon her, and, to the astonishment of all who had assembled, she instantly recovered.""

There followed a period of rapid growth on Maui. In April 1853 at the first annual conference of the Church in the Sandwich Islands there were 585 members on Maui."

In September 1854, a company of nine young missionaries (Silas S. Smith, Silas Smith, Eli Bell, Ward E. Pack, George Spiers, Simpson M. Molen, John R. Young, William W. Cluff, and Joseph F.
Smith) several who were in their middle teens arrived to strengthen the mission. Joseph F. Smith, who was only fifteen years old was assigned to the Kula district on Maui. He had received a special blessing when set apart by Parley P. Pratt that he would receive a knowledge of the language by the gift of God as well as by study. This promise amazed the youth, who had learned only the basics of reading and writing. Having faith, the young elder was able to quickly master the Hawaiian language in only one hundred days and became proficient enough to pray, testify, and preach. In fact he declared he could speak the language and administer the ordinances with greater ease than he could in English. This being the case he was assigned as President of the Conference. His first assignment was to travel around a circuit on Maui visiting all the branches with his companion Elder Pake, the same man who had provided George Q. Cannon a place to stay. With one horse between them they covered the 120 miles, over dangerous precipices to every branch on the island setting them in order as they went. There were upwards of two thousand members in the Maui conference of Maui, Molokai, and Lanai. Many Hawaiian men had been ordained to the Melchizedek Priesthood and either given local leadership responsibilities or called on short term missions to their own people.

In the middle of 1854, the island of Lanai had been chosen as a gathering site for the Saints in the Hawaiian Islands. Periodically during the next few years, the young missionaries on Maui would gather with their fellow missionaries from the other islands on Lanai for conference. These young elders would indulge in athletic competition, such as jumping, wrestling, and pulling sticks. "While these amusements were innocent," William Cluff said, "we entered into them with boyish glee." "When, however the day of separation came, all of their boyish hilarity was turned into sadness. Think of it ye stout hearted men. A band of boys, far away on the islands; away from their homes the first time in their life. Tender and as loving as a family of so many boys, these young men experienced the deepest sorrow in separating to go to their different fields of labor on the distant isles of the sea." It was amazing to think that this young group of boys could accomplish what they did in the Sandwich Islands Mission.

While laboring on the island of Maui in December 1857 prior to returning home from their missions, Joseph F. Smith and his companion William Cluff were so reduced in wearing apparel that they alternated wearing a single suit of clothes in order to attend meetings on the Sabbath day. One would go and preach in the morning with the suit on while the other remained indoors. In the afternoon the other would put on the suit and go and preach his sermon. Elder Cluff said, "This economic arrangement lasted for several weeks."

John R. Young recalls having similar difficulties with the lack of necessities near the close of his mission. He had gone barefoot for several weeks and had preached to large congregations. A brother Poaono gave him a pair of Russian slippers which were two inches too long for his feet. He remembered having an unusual
dream to solve the problem. A man came to him and taught him several trades. "At last he said there was one more that the Elder needed to know—shoemaking. He was shown how to shorten or splice them short. The young elder remembered: "When I awoke it was just breaking day. I reached at once for the shoes, and taking my pocket knife, cut them in two. Then during the day I made a last, and a pegging awl out of a horseshoe nail, using a piece of lava rock for a file. I next made some pegs, and spliced them up short; and that pair of shoes, and the pair I traded for, lasted me until I reached my father's home in Salt Lake City."

Another incident he had was when he was traveling with an Elder William Naylor. Elder Young had a little mule going from place to place and the two elders would alternate turns. One day it was raining hard, and upon approaching a large stream they found the crossing dangerous. His companion could not swim. Asking at a Catholic village to be allowed to wait out the storm everyone turned them down. Finally in desperation they decided they better ford the stream. They tied their coats, shoes, and hats to the saddle. Elder Young tie a rope around the donkey's head and swam across the stream holding the other end. In the meantime about one hundred of the neighboring townspeople lined the bank to watch the Mormon elder pull the donkey with Elder Naylor hanging on to his tail across the swollen stream.

Thinking back on the experience John R. Young recalled, "Brother Naylor had on a pair of white linen pants, which had too long done good service. As we walked on in our wet clothes, I noticed that his trousers were bursting in strips. They soon landed like a bifurcated dishrag, and taking them off, he threw them away. For the next week we had but one pair of pants between us. He was five inches taller than I; and when he put on my nether garments to take the air, as he did every day he would look comical."

Pulehu was a favorite stopping place for the missionaries because they were well-treated by the members, who would often feed them at great sacrifice. The missionaries used Pulehu as a stopping place for missionaries to learn the language, do their laundry, recover from illnesses, and to feast on prickly pears or strawberries when they were in season. They felt comfortable and that they were always welcomed in Pulehu.

In July of 1855, the work on Maui was progressing steadily with twenty-seven branches. But by November of that year many of the stronger members had gathered to Lanai. Those who were left were considered weak-minded and discouraged." By November of 1857, the work on Maui and the rest of the Islands hit a snag, when Brigham Young ordered the full-time missionaries home. He felt that due to reports of the lack of progress in the islands and anticipation of possible problems in Utah with Johnston's Army that they should be recalled. Fifteen Hawaiian elders were appointed to positions of leadership, such as conference presidencies. Elder Kauahu, with counselors George Raymond and Kaniho presided over the Maui conference. At the last mission conference with the Utah elders present on 20 April 1858, there were still 3,067 members on
record, by the next conference in October only 632 were reported.

Between 1861 and 1864 the Church in the Hawaiian Islands fell into the hands of Walter Murray Gibson, who claimed he was authorized by Brigham Young to preside over the Church. On one occasion he traveled to Maui to try to persuade the members to follow him to Lanai. He instructed them to sell all of their possessions and meetinghouses and send him the proceeds. One good meetinghouse 25x40 feet was even sold for the paltry sum of two dollars.”

Early in 1864, some Hawaiian Saints who had become disaffected from Gibson wrote to Brigham Young asking for him to investigate what was happening there. He sent two apostles, Ezra T. Benson and Lorenzo Snow along with Joseph F. Smith, Alma L. Smith, and William W. Cluff to set the Church in order. It was at Lahaina, Maui where Lorenzo Snow was miraculously revived after drowning in the harbor by rolling him over barrels, giving him mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and anointing him for the sick. In April 1864, Alma L. Smith, who had returned in the party which excommunicated Gibson toured the island of Maui and was able to help the members reobtain a few of the lost chapels. He organized seven branches of the Church at that time."

Joseph F. Smith sensed the need for a new gathering placed and strongly suggested it to Brigham Young. Subsequently, Francis A. Hammond and George Nebeker were later dispatched in 1865. By 1865 a settlement had been purchased at Laie, Oahu and was firmly established by 1868. For the next several years conference presidents who were missionaries were regularly sent to Maui to check the progress of the branches there. In addition from time to time missionaries labored there with just a few on each island. This sporadic missionary effort required constant setting in order of the branches and resulted in the continual rebaptism of most members throughout the nineteenth century into the early twentieth century."

In December 1900 President George Q. Cannon and some of his family returned to the Hawaiian Islands to celebrate the diamond jubilee marking the 50th anniversary when the first ten missionaries arrived. During his visit he prophesied that a temple would one day be built in the Hawaiian Islands. J. Reuben Clark, Jr., who later visited Hawaii was told by native members about this visit:

President Cannon had not spoken the language for years. Apparently he thought or felt that he had lost his command of it. Accordingly on rising to speak to the Hawaiians he request President [Samuel] Wooley to translate for him, Brother Cannon speaking in English. After this had proceeded for a few sentences the gift of tongues again came to President Cannon, and he made a long address in the Hawaiian language, which President Wooley affirmed was as pure Hawaiian as he ever heard spoken."
Returning to Lahaina, Maui, on 27 December 1900, President Cannon started out to find the place where Nalimanu had lived. President Cannon recounted, "I wanted to find the site of this house and the garden where I sought the Lord in secret prayer and where He condescended to commune with me, for I heard His voice more than once as one man speaks with another, encouraging me and showing me the work which should be done among this people if I would follow the dictates of His Spirit. Glory to God in the highest that He has permitted me to live to behold the fulfillment of His words." This visit meant much to George Q. Cannon, four months later on 12 April 1901, his dying testimony to his son who sat by his bedside in his last hours was that he knew that God lived, for he had heard His voice."

In 1915, President Joseph F. Smith returned to Maui for the fourth time to visit Pulehu and later while at Laie, Oahu he felt impressed to dedicate the site for the Hawaiian Temple. By 1917-1918, meetings in Hawaiian were discontinued. Pulehu became a place of interest as more and more Latter-day Saint General Authorities began to come to Hawaii to visit the Hawaii Temple on Oahu. In 1918 Heber J. Grant and his party in Hawaii for the temple dedication made a stop over on Maui and even preached at Wailuku before returning home.

Although more emphasis was placed on Laie during the next few decades, the members on Maui continued to be faithful. In 1921, David O. McKay, a young Apostle, visited these islands as part of his world tour. In his company were Hugh J. Cannon and E. Wesley Smith, whose fathers, George Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith, had been instrumental in the early missionary work on Maui. Hugh Cannon expressed a desire to go to Pulehu, where his father had organized an early branch of the Church in the Hawaiian Islands. David O. McKay replied, "So should I." After lunching with the Ako family, a small group went to the site of the old chapel near a large pepper tree." Elder McKay felt impressed with a desire to offer a prayer to the Lord in thanksgiving for being at that spot and for the many who had embraced the Gospel. While Elder McKay was praying, David Kailimai opened his eyes and saw in vision two hands clasped in the form of a greeting." Annie Ako who claims to have been present recalled, "I try to feel if I can feel a person by me, because I only see the hand; I don’t see no body. So I try to move a little bit to feel it, [but] nothing, I can feel nothing." President McKay told Brother Kailimai, "I do not understand the significance of your vision, but I do know that the veil between us and those former missionaries was very thin." Hugh Cannon, who was by his side, with tears rolling down his cheeks said, "Brother McKay, there was no veil." President McKay later expounded that the two men seen in the vision by the small group were the fathers, George Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith, clasping hands in the presence of the sons, Hugh J. Cannon and E. Wesley Smith. David O. McKay was so impressed by his reverent feelings that he subsequently returned to Pulehu every chance he could and made visits in 1936 and 1955.
In 1924, two members of the Council of Twelve, President Anthony W. Ivins and Elder Richard R. Lyman and their families made a visit to check on the Church's plantation and Hawaii Temple at Laie, Oahu as well as to visit Pulehu, Maui. On Maui, they were greeted by Pia Cockett and John Ferreira and taken from Lahaina to Wailuku. There they had a luau and addressed the Mutual Improvement and other officers. Then they were driven to "the spot most sacred, the place of greatest interest to us is where the late George Q. Cannon in 1851, performed the first baptisms." Standing by the large pepper tree they spoke to a group of boy scouts."

The site of the little chapel in Pulehu is still considered sacred ground. Late in the 1920's a monument was planned and then erected to mark the spot where those early events had taken place. On 26 October 1930, the granite Kula monument was dedicated by William M. Waddoups, president of the Hawaii Temple, under the direction of mission president, Castle H. Murphy."

In the 1930's the Church in Maui suffered the effects of the Great Depression as many moved off the island trying to find jobs." The branch at Pulehu was very small. Sunday School was held at the meetinghouse in Pulehu and Sacrament meeting took place at either Peahi or Paia. Hired carriage-cars drawn by horses drove up and down the valleys picking members up for conference at Pulehu.

When Mission President Castle H. Murphy came to Hawaii in 1930, he prayed for guidance on how he could involve the Saints of Hawaii more effectively in the affairs of the kingdom of God. One night he awakened from sleep at two o'clock in the morning. He was impressed, as if someone had actually spoken to him, to organize District Council organizations consisting of local members on each of the five main islands. He felt that this would free the missionaries from supervision of Church organizations and make it possible for them to attend to their duties as proselyting missionaries. The members of the Church would grow in faith and experience. The District Council on Maui was formed on 30 November 1932." Although there were still missionaries over some of the branches until the 1960's, the members increasingly led their own branches.

Finally within five short years the Church grew sufficiently strong to establish the creation of the Oahu Stake in 1935. This fostered regular and more frequent visits by general authorities. After June 1935 quarterly stake conferences brought four leaders a year to the islands. President Heber J. Grant, and J. Ruben Clark, Jr. toured the Kula district previous to attending the organization of the Oahu Stake."

A year later on 15 August 1936, Albert E. Bowen, General Superintendent of the Young Mutual Improvement Association and soon to be an apostle, made the first official visit of any Church auxiliary leader outside the continental United States.

The year 1950 marked the centennial of the Hawaiian mission. President George Albert Smith, his two daughters, Henry D. Moyle and wife, D. Arthur Haycock and wife sailed to Maui for the celebration to be held at Pulehu, honoring one hundred years of missionary work in Hawaii. President Smith, who had not felt well
for some time was asked one evening by his daughters if he wanted to eat the ship's meal, capon cooked in burgundy. He quickly said yes. "Father," said Emily, mindful of his rigorous abstinence from alcohol all his life, reminded him it was cooked in burgundy. His response was "I don't care if it's cooked in Australia, I want some." Henry D. Moyle bought the president a French beret to wear on the long trip. It scratched his sparsely covered scalp, so his daughters put a silk lining in it that solve the problem. Upon reaching Oahu on 9 August 1950 before continuing to Maui, President Smith was presented with over ten thousand orchids from the Hilo Saints. The lei was too heavy to wear so President Smith had it placed on the stand during the centennial pageant and addresses.

The next morning Elder and Sister Moyle, Edward Clissold, the Mission President and his wife and many missionaries went to Wailuku, Maui where the first general session of the conference convened. That night in the Baldwin High School auditorium, they witnessed a performance of the pageant, "One Hundred Years of Mormonism in Hawaii." President Grant did not make the trip until the following day because of fatigue due to his age and the announcement of the death of George F. Richards.

On Friday, 11 August 1950, at Pulehu they held an outdoor meeting because the little chapel, which only held fifty, could not accommodate the large crowd of several hundred. President Smith reminded the people who were present that "the meeting was being held on sacred ground" and paid tribute to George Q. Cannon. A very emotional presentation occurred when Sister Rosannah Cannon Irvine, daughter of Elder Cannon placed a special lei around a picture of President Cannon, which hung from the pulpit and today that picture is still on the wall of the chapel. The next day a meeting with 3,265 people was held in Wailuku on Sunday, President Smith wore a lei made from one hundred large orchids and during the celebration was presented with George Q. Cannon's personal first edition of the Hawaiian Book of Mormon by Elder Cannon's grandson, George Q. Cannon III. President Smith praising the Saints of Maui and Pulehu recorded in his journal:

Seldom have I ever seen a more attentive congregation. As I arose to speak, all the congregation stood up on their feet almost as one man in what appeared to be a spontaneous expression of good will and fellowship. The Saints listened to every word, leaning forward so as not to miss a word, and with tears streaming down their faces very often, as it was recalled to their minds the blessings they have enjoyed during the past one hundred years that the gospel has been in their beautiful land.

In the early 1950s there were 19 small branches scattered throughout Maui. (Waihe'e, Waiehu, Waikapu, Wailuku, Kahului, Puunene, Hana, Kihei, Lahaina, Honokawaii, Honoahua, Nahiku, Kainalu?, Haiku, Paiahi, Paia, and Pulehu.) A consolidation of several of these branches took place to concentrate the membership
in one place. For example, Waihe’e, Waiehu, Waikapu, and Wailuku (the four waters—Navaieha) were combined. On 7 September 1955, the first leader, to function without supervision from the Mission President was established when Roger E. Akui, was made the first District President in Wailuku, Maui."

At the time of consolidation of the branches of Haiku, Peahi, Paia, and Pulehu into the Haleakala Branch, some sister missionaries were working with some families in Pukalani. They strongly suggested that this was the place to establish the branch. Elder Gordon B. Hinckley, who was on his way home from the Orient, was asked to stop by and look over some property for a new chapel. Elder Hinckley wasn’t pleased with the site selected by the real estate agent, George Ezaki. He looked up on the hill near the site that was selected and said, "Let’s go up there and see that area." But George Ezaki said, "Oh, no, we can’t look at that area. We can’t consider that area in this proposed site, because that’s another development which would not take place for another two years." Elder Hinckley was insistent. After viewing the site, amid protests from the developers, he turned to President Poulson and said, "President Poulson, you may send them a check of a thousand dollars as a deposit." And that was it!

In 1964, meetings were discontinued in the Pulehu Branch completely. And since that time the chapel is used for special firesides and meetings. In 1975, the Kahului Maui Stake was established with Evan Larsen, as stake president. The Pulehu Saints now meet in the Pukalani Ward. In 1975 when the stake was established the Church was not very strong on Maui. Only one out of four priesthood holders were active. There was 165 Melchizedek priesthood holders and 450 active members. Under the direction of Evan Larsen in 1978, a second missionary marker was placed at the Kula monument in honor of Jonathan Napela, honoring the native Mauian for his devotion to the gospel.

In 1985, when Evan Larsen was released to become the Regional Representative for Maui the stake had grown to be the second most significant in Hawaii. In 1987, the Kahului Stake started presenting a special pageant in Pulehu, that is anticipated to be shown every other year. The pageant depicts the ancient Book of Mormon people making their way to the Pacific Islands and the establishment of the Church by the early Latter-day Saint missionaries. The Church in Pulehu and Maui is experiencing a revival similar to the days when the George Q. Cannon, Jonathan Napela, and the faithful Saints preached there. Our hope for Pulehu and Maui is that they will continue to grow as they are and soon realize the dreams of the thousands of faithful Latter-day Saints living and dead, who throughout persecution and prosperity demonstrated faith like the ancients.
NOTES

1. Oral interview with Evan Larsen, former president of Kuhului Maui Stake and Regional Representative for Maui by Frank Alan Bruno, 1 October 1988.


17. William Farrer Journal, 20 February 1851 states that Hiram Clark "concluded to go to the Marquesuan Islands which he believed would be a good place to get an opening from the information he had got from a man by the name of Blake which he had baptized who had lived there and spoke their language tolerably well, and also from Brother Clifford a man Bro. Pratt has baptized on the Society Islands as there were not missionaries there and that it was a good climate. . . . and that Bro Blake the man whom he had baptized was going with him, he is an editor, printer etc."


24. Several authors going on Andrew Jenson, Manuscript History of the Hawaiian Mission, Wednesday 6 August 1851 have incorrectly identified the name of the ahupua‘a Kealahou as Kealakou. A good map that lists the ahupua‘a which a piece of land held by the ali‘i (chiefs) that usually was a narrow strip that ran from the mountain to the sea shows that Pulehuiki and Kealohouiki border each other. Today the hill just north of the present chapel, which is parallel to where the Pulehu Elementary School is located is probably where Akuna Pake’s home and the thatched hut were located.


28. Ibid.


33. Francis Hammond Journal, 1 June 1852. Located at Brigham Young University--Hawaii, Laie, Hawaii.


38. William Farrer recorded in his journal on 7 April 1854, "Elder Patridge made a report in relation to the Hawaiian Books of Mormon sent over from the coast by Elder George Q. Cannon to be sold here. Some 114 have been disposed of, but the money as yet has not all been collected, the amount of money received up to date is 27 dollars & 75 cents, Books remaining that have not been disposed of 66."


59. Fred Mau, oral interview conducted by Kenneth Baldridge, Brigham Young University--Hawaii, 21 August 1980 in Maui.


62. The pageant which was directed by Joseph F. Smith was held later on Tuesday 15 August 1950 in the Arthur Andrews Outdoor Theatre on the University of Hawaii Campus in Honolulu with President Grant and party in attendance. Members of the cast of five hundred included representative of several early Hawaiian missionaries' families such as Joseph F. Smith, George Q. Cannon, Samuel E. Woolley, etc.

64. Ibid.

