Prayer under a Pepper Tree: 
Five Accounts of a Spiritual Manifestation

In 1920-21, David O. McKay, then a forty-seven-year-old apostle, toured the missions of the Church, beginning with Japan. He dedicated the land of China for the preaching of the gospel, visited Hawaii, returned briefly to Salt Lake City for the funeral of President Antion H. Lund, and then continued through the South Pacific, Australia, New Zealand, India, and Europe. He was accompanied on this year-long tour by Hugh J. Cannon, president of Liberty Stake and a member of the Deseret Union Sunday School General Board of which President McKay was general superintendent.

Among the many remarkable spiritual manifestations that occurred during this world tour was a virtually unique event during the thirty-six hours they spent on Maui. Returning to Maui in 1955, President McKay reported and reinacted this experience on the grounds of the Pulehu chapel for his party of forty-four. He first told his party of George Q. Cannon's experience in being led by the Spirit to Jonatana H. Napela, resulting in the first baptism and the organization of the first branch of the Church in Hawaii. He then recalled the visit that he and Hugh J. Cannon had paid to the site in 1921. "We became very much impressed with the surroundings, association, and spiritual significance of the occasion," he remembered, "and felt

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impressed to offer a prayer under the old pepper tree that had stood on the site for years." He arranged four of the men present as the other individuals in the original party had stood, then continued:

I offered the prayer. We all had our eyes closed, and it was a very inspirational gathering. As we started to walk away at the conclusion of the prayer, Brother Keola Kailimai took Brother E. Wesley Smith to the side and very earnestly began talking to him in Hawaiian. . . . Brother E. Wesley Smith said, "Brother McKay, do you know what Brother Kailimai has told me?" I answered, "No." "Brother Kailimai said that while you were praying, and we all had our eyes closed, he saw two men who he thought were Hugh J. Cannon and E. Wesley Smith step out of line in front of us and shake hands with someone, and he wondered why Brother Cannon and Brother Smith were shaking hands while we were praying. He opened his eyes, and there stood those two men still in line, with their eyes closed just as they had been. He quickly closed his eyes because he knew he had seen a vision.

Now Brother . . . Cannon greatly resembled Brother George Q. Cannon, his father. . . . Of course, E. Wesley Smith has the Smith attribute just as President Joseph Fielding Smith has it. Naturally Brother Keola Kailimai would think that these two men were there. I said, "I think it was George Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith, two former missionaries to Hawaii, whom that spiritual-minded man saw."

We walked a few steps farther, and I said, "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." Brother Hugh J. Cannon who was by my side, with tears rolling down his cheeks, said, "Brother McKay, there was no veil." (Middlemiss 1955, 50-52)

As President McKay told this story in 1955, D. Arthur Haycock, then president of the Hawaiian Mission, dropped to one knee, propped his steno pad on the other, and took the account down in shorthand. It was published in 1955 in Cherished Experiences, compiled by Clare Middlemiss, reprinted in 1976, and thus is the best-known version of this experience.

What could have been the purpose of such a manifestation? Also, why did the experience come to the only Hawaiian member present rather than to one or both of the sons in question? President McKay's account was recorded thirty-four years and three days after it had occurred. Were there sources closer to the date of the event in existence?

These questions formed the impetus for my search for additional understanding of this event. Five men were involved:

(1) Elder McKay, an apostle and future president of the Church;
his traveling companion, Hugh J. Cannon, son of George Q. Cannon and president of Liberty Stake; (3) E. Wesley Smith, mission president and a son of Joseph F. Smith; (4) Samuel Harris Hurst, a missionary of mature years from Idaho and the president of the Central Maui Conference, and (5) David Keola Kailimai, a Hawaiian missionary, also of mature years. Who were these five men and how did they experience this extraordinary manifestation? Thanks largely to the kindness of many members of the families involved, I have found sixteen separate accounts of this event, all but four of them unpublished.

David O. McKay

President McKay's understanding of this remarkable manifestation almost certainly evolved over time for it differs from his own earliest account. His very detailed journal of his world tour, which remains unpublished except in excerpts, is the best source of the thirty-six hours they spent on Maui. The mission history, although it records McKay's visit, does not mention the incident at Pulehu. They docked at 4:30 on the morning of 9 February 1921, and Brother Kailimai, who had a little Ford, drove them to mission headquarters where they held a meeting. Samuel Hurst offered the opening prayer. In the afternoon, they visited the George Q. Cannon sites, then came to Pulehu chapel. President McKay's journal records this, his earliest account, of the prayer under the pepper tree:

... It seemed to me ... that we were treading on sacred ground; for surely the Lord was the close companion and guide of that intrepid and faithful missionary.

We offered a united prayer on the ground, during which Bro. Keola seemed to see two men shaking hands. He thought Hugh J. was shaking hands with Elder Hurst, and was surprised when he opened his eyes to see Brother Cannon standing with bowed head and closed eyes! I do not know the significance of his manifestation, but I do know we all felt as though Pres. Joseph F. Smith and George A. Cannon, two of the intrepid missionaries of early days, were well pleased with our visit and service on that memorable spot. (McKay, Journal, 21 Feb. 1921)³

It is important to note that this earliest McKay source identifies the participants in the manifestation as Hugh J. Cannon and Brother Hurst, rather than as Joseph F. Smith and George Q. Cannon. It seems reasonable to me that President McKay's intense attachment to and affection for Brother Cannon shaped this experience as he later recalled it into greater symmetry and logic. Only two months later, speaking at a conference of missionaries and members in New Zealand, he retold the story and again reported that the "two men in a position of handshaking" were "President Cannon and Brother Hurst."⁵

But during the next decade, by 1931, the story had assumed the same shape in President McKay's mind that it had in 1955--
that is, George Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith were seen in Brother Kailimai’s visit. It seems reasonable that his intense attachment to and affection for Brother Cannon influenced memory in the direction of greater symmetry and logic.

Evidence, both of President McKay’s feelings for his companion and his memory of the Pulehu event, comes from his address at Hugh J. Cannon’s funeral only ten years and six months after the prayer under the pepper tree. President McKay called him “a friend. None truer, none more faithful in all this world.” He had not known him except by “general acquaintance” until President Grant designated them as companions for the tour, during which President McKay came to know “his implicit faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.” In this context, then, President McKay retells the story of the prayer under the pepper tree:

... We approached the missionary field made almost sacred by the labors of his father, President George Q. Cannon. ... I shall never forget the emotions that stirred Brother Cannon’s heart as we neared the island on which his father had translated the Book of Mormon into the Hawaiian language. Bro. Cannon told me about some confidences that his father had given him, his son, which had never been printed. I had never heard them before ... when George Q. Cannon, crushed and discouraged, heard the voice of God.

... [After visiting the site] we withdrew a short distance under a pepper tree, and there bared our heads in thanksgiving and praise to God, and asked his guidance upon our further travels.

I haven’t the time to tell you what happened or what vision came to Brother Kaola [sic], a native missionary, but after Amen was said I opened my eyes and Brother Wesley Smith, a son of President Joseph F. Smith, who was also deeply impressed on that occasion, and others, came up and said, “Do you know what Brother Kaola [sic] was just telling us?”

“No.”

Then he repeated what Brother Kaola had seen during that prayer. We were silent for a few moments and then I said:

“Brother Kaola, I do not know the significance of that vision. But this I do know, that the veil between us and those intrepid missionaries, President Smith, George Q. Cannon, and others, was very thin.”

Brother Cannon who was by my side whispered: “Brother McKay, there was no veil.”

Not to him. It just seemed as if he had looked into the other side and felt the presence of his illustrious father and President Smith, who, it seemed, were sharing the experiences of these modern missionaries in that land those first missionaries loved so well. (McKay 1931, 6-7)

Thus, by 1931, President McKay recalled the spiritual event
as the presence of George Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith. This shift in personalities was permanent. He visited Hawaii in 1936 and, as he would in 1955, affirmed that the manifestation was the appearance of George Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith, shaking hands in the presence of their missionary sons (Cockett 1921 and 1924-50, 25 Apr. 1937).

Hugh J. Cannon

Hugh J. Cannon, the son of George Q. Cannon and Sarah Jenne Cannon, was fifty-one years old when he and President McKay reached Hawaii. Like President McKay, he had left his wife with a new-born child. He recorded two brief accounts of this experience, one in his personal journal and another in a narrative of the world tour that he prepared for possible publication. His journal account reads:

I felt that I was treading on holy ground, that the veil between me and my father was very thin. Indeed, I felt that there was no intervening veil. The brethren partook of the same feeling. We had prayers under a tree back of the building and Brother Keola Kailimai says that while we prayed he saw two men shaking hands. He thought I was shaking hands with Brother Hurst and was surprised when he opened his eyes to see me standing with my hands at my side. I do not know the significance of what he saw but I do know that Father and President Joseph F. Smith were there. (Cannon, Personal Journal, 1921)

In his narrative, he explains significant experiences of George Q. Cannon that had already hallowed the site:

Where George Q. Cannon and Brother Napela preached with such power that 97 or the 100 people who came to hear them were converted. The tradition is that Brother Cannon was not standing on the ground on this occasion, but was in the air and that a great light shown about him.

Under a beautiful tree on the lot where this occurred and where the Church now has a neat little chapel, the visiting brethren engaged in prayer. It was an occasion which none of them will ever forget, for they stood almost in the visible presence of celestial beings. In looking back on the trip after the lapse of several years, there are few, if any, experiences which are more impressive than this. (Typescript n.d., 57)

There is a third account from Brother Cannon of this experience, even though it is second hand. Samuel Harris Hurst, the American missionary who was present, outlined the prayer under the pepper tree in his 1958 autobiography without details, instead referring the reader to the published McKay account in Cherished Experiences. According to his daughter, Cleo Hurst Bailey, he did not wish to publish, even in an autobiography of
limited circulation, an account that differed from President McKay's. Then he adds:

I think it would not be out of place, however, if I refer to a statement made by Elder Hugh J. Cannon, and which is not mentioned in President McKay's account. Elder Cannon had related this experience fully to some of my friends and me several years later, and added the following, "My statement that there was no veil has led people to ask me if it was true that I saw the Savior when I was on Maui. I did not see the Savior," he said, "neither did I see anyone else, but I did hear the voice of my father very distinctly, and he told me several things I had been in doubt about." (1958, 12)

In short, then, it seems clear from these early accounts that the vision involved Elder Hurst and Elder Cannon. But why Elder Hurst? Who was he?

Samuel Harris Hurst

Samuel Harris Hurst, Jr., was thirty-six years old, a native of Cache Valley, and a widower. His wife had died a lingering death from heart disease shortly before, leaving him with the care of a ten-year-old daughter, Inez. He had had grave doubts about serving a mission under such circumstances but had accepted the calling, at least partly because of his child's faith. His autobiography and his diary breathe a solid, simple faithfulness that is very moving. He was president of the Central Maui Conference at the time of President McKay's visit and was largely responsible for freeing the Maui saints from involvement with kahunas. He was also responsible for building two chapels on Maui in 1921, one at Kahuki and the other at Peahi, and also helped construct the Kalihi chapel in Honolulu on Oahu. He and his second wife, Ida Nielson Hurst, served a second Hawaiian mission, 1952-54.

His diary for 8 February 1921 records the prayer under the pepper tree this way:

Elder McKay, Pres. Smith and Cannon Elder Keola [who had a car] and myself drove . . . out to Pulehu where Pres. Geo. Q. Cannon had his wonderful experience in the conversion of so many of the natives and the first to join the church. As we sat in the little Ford in front of the meeting house there, Pres. Smith related to us the story of how Pres. Cannon in 1850 or 51 had delivered his wonderful discourse in a little church which then stood on the ground we were then on. At this meeting he appeared to be standing in the air with a hallow [sic] of light around his head. At the same time all but three of the over hundred persons there present were transfigured before him. Bro. Hugh J. Cannon being a son of Pres. Cannon was very deeply effected [sic] more so than any one I have ever saw before. We then
alighted from the car and walked around the grounds. At the rear of the old church on the grounds now in the shade of an old tree, Elder McKay said: "Brethren I feel impressed that we should render our thanks to the Lord for the labors of this great man and his co-laborer Pres. Joseph F. Smith whose sons are represented here today." At this we bowed in humble reverence in prayer to God and then I listened to one of the grandest prayers it has ever been my privilege to listen to. At its close Elder Keola testified he saw a hand and arm extended to me in an attitude of shaking hands. In speaking of this later Bro. McKay said "Bro. Keola, I do not know the significance of the hand you saw, but I know this that the veil between us and the other world was very thin." Bro. Cannon then said "There was no veil at all" at which the apostle cast a penetrating look at him for he as well as we seemed to be in doubt as to whether Bro. Cannon had beheld a vision or not but no more was said at that time. In closing his remarks in a general meeting held at Wailuku tonight Elder McKay made mention of this again and with tears in the eyes of both men he turned to Bro. Cannon and shaping [sic] on the shoulder said, "My Brother, you have been closer to your Father today than you have ever been before."7

This account differs from those of both President McKay and Brother Cannon in significant details. No identifiable individual was involved—only the hand and arm became visible—and the object was clearly Elder Hurst. Simultaneously, however, the account confirms that Brother Cannon experienced a powerful sensation of his father. I find it significant that neither here, on the very day that it happened, nor later, did Elder Hurst speculate on the possible meaning of this experience. Two of his daughters confirm that he did not interpret the story in telling it to them in later years. Nor does he record why this experience may have come to him. One of the daughters, Cleo Hurst Bailey (1990), commented, "I have some personal feelings about it. All of those particular people—especially Hugh J. Cannon, E. Wesley Smith, and my father—had ancestors who took part in opening the islands to missionary work. I think all of those ancestors were there, and they knew it. It was a personal occasion, a quiet way of confirming that it was appropriate that my father be there."7

The ancestor of Elder Hurst who had assisted in nineteenth century missionary efforts was Frederick William Hurst, whose diary includes moving accounts of visions, inspirational dreams, and answered prayers. He had been born on the Isle of Jersey, his family then emigrated to New Zealand; and as a young man in the gold fields of Australia, he joined the Church with his younger brother, Charles Clement Hurst. As a result, his angry mother disowned him and marked his name out of the family Bible. On 27 April 1855, he and Charlie emigrated with seventy-two Saints aboard the Tarquinia. The ship was leaking so badly by
the time they reached Honolulu that, after repairs and an attempt to continue, they returned to Honolulu where the ship was sold. Fred W. contributed all of his savings, including a thousand dollars in nuggets sewn into his clothing, to send the other members, mostly families, on to California. He accepted a mission call from President Silas Smith and almost immediately went to Molokai where he served for eight months (August 1855-April 1856). Gifted with an irrepressible cheerfulness, he learned Hawaiian quickly and met poverty undaunted. Often he walked barefoot; and for a long period of time, food was very scanty. On 8 February 1856, he recorded thankfully, "We had three meals today for the first time for I will not venture to say how long. We fasted about three days this week" (p. 52).

This was the man whose grandson joined in a prayer of thanksgiving with the sons of George Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith under the pepper tree at Pulehu, and I agree with his daughter that his presence was altogether fitting.

E. Wesley Smith

The Smith associations in Hawaii run so deep that it is easy to see the powerful influence they exerted on shaping the story. E. Wesley Smith had been born at Laie 21 April 1886, when his parents, Joseph F. Smith and Julina Lambson Smith, spent almost two years there to avoid the polygamy raids. He had served a mission there from 1907 to 1910, was mission president from 1919 to 1923, and would return as president for a second time during the late 1940s. He and his wife had two children and their third, Donald E. Smith, was born in January 1920 while they were there.

According to Donald Smith (1990), his father told the story of the prayer under the pepper tree on Maui as part of his reminiscences to his family about his many inspirational Hawaiian experiences, but no written account was preserved; and due to the passage of time since his death, it is not possible to reconstruct the exact details he emphasized. Apparently the only written version that E. Wesley Smith left of this account appears in the mission president’s annual report for 1921:

Elders McKay, Cannon, Samuel H. Hurst, Keola Kailimai (local) and I visited the spot in Pulehu, Kula district where Pres. George Q. Cannon had a wonderful manifestation in company with the noble chief Napela. While there Elder McKay said he felt impressed with a desire to offer a prayer [blank in original: to?] the Lord in the spirit of thanksgiving for the privilege they had in being there, and for the many souls who had embraced the Gospel. We bowed our heads, Elder McKay being mouth. It was a moment never to be forgotten, for indeed the spot is sacred. Elder McKay said, "I feel certain that Pres. Cannon and Pres. Smith are near for the veil was very thin." Elder Cannon was deeply impressed and with tears filling his eyes and in a choked voice said, "There was no veil." (Smith 1921, 175)
Like Samuel Hurst, Wesley Smith does not comment on his own experience or interpret it, but rather affirms the powerful experience that Brother Cannon was having. I think it is probable that he sensed the presence of his own father. The mission history is replete with loving references to Joseph F. Smith and expressions of joy that his son is among them. Wesley Smith’s own discourses shows a markedly sweet acceptance of his responsibilities as he follows in his father’s footsteps, and his own years in Hawaii spiritual experiences.11

David Keola Kailimai

What of the man who received the vision, Elder David Keola Kailimai?12 Brother Kailimai left no written personal history that and did not relate this experience to his family, according to the memories of those contacted. Their earliest account is a photocopy of the 1955 typescript made by D. Arthur Haycock and, hence, is the best-known version—of Joseph F. Smith and George Q. Cannon appearing to shake hands during the prayer. Abigail Kailimai Kailimai, who is both David’s niece and his daughter-in-law, does not recall and earlier oral version or, in fact, ever hearing this story from him.

Nothing, however, about David or his family would make such a spiritual experience unlikely. He was born in 6 March 1872 to Samuel Kailimai and Kauahi Kanakaloloa Kailimai and thus was forty-eight in 1921. He had a sister Emilia, two years older Emalia, and a brother three years younger, William Hoapili Kailimai. The family had been at Kahuwa near Hilo for at least two generations, and perhaps longer. His parents had been baptised a month apart, in December 1873 and January 1874; and his father, according to an 1895 missionary journal, had served a local mission and was a counselor in the presidency of Kahuwa Branch (Brimley 14 May 1895).

David was baptized at age ten. His wife, Martha (Maka) Kamaka Kaopuni Kailimai, were not able to have any children, so they adopted a child, David Kauluwehi, born in 1908, who would have been thirteen at the time of the Maui experience. This boy married Abbie Kahaniu Kailimai, William’s daughter; and they raised a family of five. The two oldest sons are named Castle Kauluwehi and Wesley Keola, in obvious commemoration of two beloved friends and mission presidents, Castle Murphy and E. Wesley Smith (FGS).

In 1913, Brother Kailimai, his wife, and his son, who would then have been five years old, accompanied the Murphy family to Utah where they were endowed and sealed in the Salt Lake Temple, the parents were endowed, 22 October, and young David was sealed to them. (David was sealed to Samuel and Kauahi, his own parents, in 1920 in the Hawaiian Temple.) They also spent about three months at Iosepa in Skull Valley. Brother Kailimai reported on these experiences at the general mission conference in April 1914 after his return, urging obedience to all of the commandments (Record Book C, 19[11]-22, 73). He served simultaneously in Aleamai Branch near Hilo from at least 1914 to
1917 as branch president, most of the time with only one
counselor (Record of Conferences, n.p.), as president of its
Sunday School, and as first counselor in the MIA. Mission
records show that he spoke at the conferences in April 1915 and
1916, as well. He had been saving his money to return to Utah
and the temple; but after the announcement was made of the temple
planned for Laie, he donated the money that he had saved and
said, "If I were called to come here and break rock for the
temple, I would be glad to do that" (Record Book C, 105-6, 137).

After Brother Kailimani's mission in Maui, Wesley Smith
called him as third vice president of the Polynesian Genealogical
Society, organized at Laie 3 April 1921 (Record Book C, p. 326).
Brother Kailimai was serving as priesthood advisor on the Hawaii
District Council (the equivalent of the high council) in 1934
with his brother William as president of the Honomu Branch
(Directory 1934, 45-46). Sister Kailimai died in 1933, and he
followed 26 June 1940 (PGS).

D. Arthur Haycock, a missionary in Hawaii from 1935 to 1938,
and later Hawaiian mission president and temple president,
affirmed, "I knew David K. Kailimai very well. I don't know of a
finer, more spiritual man who ever lived. He was the most
outstanding native member and leader I knew, very faithful, very
active, the sort of person through whom the Lord could give such
an experience." Elder Hurst described him in his 1958
autobiography as "a man full of faith, and . . . a very fine
Elder because of the inspiration that attended him" (p. 20).

Castle Murphy, who was a missionary in Hawaii from 1909 to
1913 and mission president 1931-36, 1944-46, called him "one of
the most influential leaders and able speakers in the Hawaiian
Mission. So great was our admiration for this Hawaiian-Chinese
leader that when our son was born in Hilo, we decided to name him
Keola after this good man and have him be voice when the blessing
was given" (1963, 42). He recorded several instances of Brother
Kailimai's faith and inspiration.

Because Brother Kailimai did not leave an account of the
prayer under the pepper tree, it is not possible to know what
meaning he gave it or how he regarded it as time passed.
However, I think that we may have a parallel source in the
experience of Jonah Patrick (Pia) Cockett, whom Lanny Britsch
characterizes as "one of the grand old men of the Church" (1986,
162). He was a forty-year-old native of Maui in 1920 who had
joined the Church in 1902, was principal of Puukolii School on
Maui at the time of this event, and would soon serve missions to
Kauai and Maui. The father of twelve children, he was a
fisherman and also, for twenty-five years, county treasurer of
Maui (Journal, 1). He offered the opening prayer at the meeting
at Wailuku chapel on the night of February 8, after the prayer
under the pepper tree, and heard President McKay tell the story.
Almost certainly he would have had many opportunities to hear
David Keola Kailimai tell the story--if he did--., both then and
in subsequent years, for Pia Cockett was fourth vice president in

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the genealogical society in which Kailimai was third. Although Brother Cockett says he recorded the experience in his 1921 notebook, only a journal from 1924 to 1950 is in the archives. He refers to Brother Kailimai's vision at Pulehu in both April and July of 1924, then reports telling the mission conference 9 April 1933:

I spoke in Hawaiian and related the vision of D. Keola Kailimai in Pulehu related by David O. McKay on Feb. 8, 1921, where he saw the hand shaking in form of greeting while David O. McKay was praying. Keola thought it was Hugh Cannon and Elder Hurst. After the prayer he told his vision to McKay and he said perhaps the veil was thin that he had seen thru beyond the veil. Hugh Cannon said there was no veil. He must have seen his father Geo. Q. Cannon.

On 25 April 1937, he records the vision again, adding the detail that Brother Cannon had confessed to depression before this event made him "the happiest man." He also explained that President McKay, on his 1936 visit to Hawaii, had heard him tell the story and had corrected his impression that it was Hugh J. Cannon and George Q. Cannon shaking hands; rather, it was "Geo. Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith shaking hands and the hands were seen by David Kailimai" (see also Britsch 1986, 162).

The version that includes Elder Hurst, then, was present in Brother Cockett's mind as late as 1933 and, I believe, supports the original version as recorded by Cannon, McKay, and Hurst independently. Brother Cockett's willingness to accept President McKay's correction, however, points out that for him the importance of the story lay in its sacralization of the land near Pulehu chapel. In all of his versions, he calls it "that sacred spot"; and it had sanctified associations for him, not only through the experience of George Q. Cannon and later of the five men who met in prayer, but also because it was there he met his wife, not yet a member of the Church, and was ordained to the priesthood. He refers frequently to these events and also records holding both formal and informal testimony meetings with missionaries and members of the district council in 1924, 1933, and 1943, with allusions to at least two earlier meetings.15

My husband, son, and I visited Pulehu Chapel 9 June 1990 and there found Stanley and Shirley Makekau. Brother Makekau, a landscaping contractor, was spending his Saturday afternoon repairing a faulty sprinkler. William Kailimai had baptized him, and Pia Cockett had been a neighbor for many years. He confirmed that the building was no longer used for regular worship services but was often used for firesides and other special meetings. "It is a place to come to get close--very close--to the Spirit," he said, adding, "When there is a temple on Maui, it will be here." Obviously, Pulehu is still sacred ground.

Conclusion

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What conclusions, then, can we draw about the prayer under the pepper tree? Obviously, we must look beyond the initial question about a possible transformation. As we reconstruct the facts of the event from the earliest sources, Brother Kailimai saw in vision a hand extended toward Samuel Harris Hurst, as though to shake his hand, while Hugh J. Cannon strongly felt the presence of his father and perhaps E. Wesley Smith sensed the presence of his. President Smith and President McKay undeniably felt the influence of visitors from the other side of the veil and President McKay, by his own account, identified them immediately as Joseph F. Smith and George Q. Cannon. It is likely that they did not know of the missionary labors of Elder Hurst's grandfather on Molokai, or this knowledge would have provided a reason for the visitation to be seemingly directed toward Elder Hurst. As it was, Elder Hurst's role did not have an obvious explanation; and later retellings of the experience, we may conjecture, focused on the more logical explanation of Hugh Cannon and his father and, by the suggestion of symmetry, to President Smith and his father.

But we are still left with a riddle: the meaning of the event. And possibly another question: From a certain perspective, this event was both baffling and possibly insignificant. Does it merit such intensive study? I would say yes. I have been in a unique position during this research, of being led from source to source, experiencing many retellings of this story but perceiving each retelling as holy. It has been a profound privilege for me to enter as a visitor into that sacred story.

My first conclusion then, is an important one, I think, for any individual who takes his or her spiritual life seriously. This story teaches us something of the nature of spiritual experience. The event meant different things to the different participants. Most of them did not try to explain it. President McKay, although some points of interpretation shifted, consistently reported that he did not fully understand its meaning.

Nor do we. I love the fact that this story ultimately eludes our efforts at a tidy explanation or elegant interpretation. As historians in our quest for truth, we are engaged in a rational search. It is a search that both requires and rewards rationality. Yet we need to remember that spiritual experiences are untidy, paradoxical, bewildering. Their rewards are not those of rationality but of transcendence. What that incident meant to each of the five men present is only partially captured by this or by any other reconstruction. The ungainess of these accounts, reinforcing and echoing each other but not mirroring each other identically, much like the accounts in the Gospels, remind us that the whole truth is always better than any one, partial version of it. What the prayer under the pepper tree ultimately meant to its five participants was not information but an intimate love, an affirming peace, and a supernatural joy. I feel this strongly because, even as far
removed as I am, I have heard those echoes and sensed that touch. I am deeply satisfied that the prayer under the pepper tree compels us to puzzle over its meaning, yet still ends in a reverent silence.

I think perhaps there is another conclusion that we may profitably draw as historians. Our attempts to understand history frequently focus on the political and social activities of the Church. It is salutary to be reminded of those sweet moments of pure grace that brim over from the divine life into ours. Such events have no political consequences and relatively little social impact. The five men present that day did not "need" that event. It did not change or even continue the course of the Church. What it did was to refresh them with the loving touch of a divine Father, to whom all fathers are also sons, who accepted their sincerest service. The faith and love that created a receptive atmosphere for such a manifestation was confirmed and intensified by that manifestation. And it is no unworthy reminder to us, who commemorate the social and political efforts and effects of Church leaders, that the reality of religious life lies not in institutions nor their activities but in the love and faith in individual human hearts.

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Cannon, Hugh J. *Personal Journal, 1921.* Typescript. Part of a collection created by Alice Cannon Hicken, daughter of Hugh J. Cannon and Sarah Richards Cannon, from a variety of sources. She recalls typing her father's statement from a typescript created by her mother. Her father's journal was recorded in shorthand notes which he later typed. She
cannot read the shorthand and does not know the present location of the original journals. Quoted by permission.


Cockett, Jonah Patrick (Pia). Diary, January 1924-February 1950. Photocopy of typescript in Historical Department Archives (ms/2354). Paginated but many page numbers cut off in the photocopying. A biographical essay summarizing his life to 1924 precedes the diary entries.

_____. "Visit of Pres. McKay in 1921." Typescript. Cited in Britsch as CR 3695/1/Box 1. The current cataloging system used at the Historical Department Archives does not have a series 1. This particular record was microfilmed as LR 3695/series 21, "Miscellaneous Local Records"/reel 3/Box 4, Folder 9. Items in this particular folder are listed in the register as "Mission and Local Histories." They are unpagedinated and undated; however, from internal evidence this particular typescript can be dated between 1947 and 1953, probably 1952 or early 1953. (The mission acquired the typewriter used to produce the typescript after Wesley Smith became president in 1947; some of the other documents in the local histories refer to events that occurred as late as 1953; and one essay on work on the Hawaiian Temple was written by Samuel H. Hurst, who served a second mission in Hawaii between 1952 and 1954).


FGS. Family group sheets under the name of Kailimai in the family archive, Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah; and copies of personal family group records provided courtesy of Larraine Hoemi Kailimai Carr.


Hurst, Frederick William. Diary, compiled by Samuel Harris Hurst and Ida Frederickson Hurst, 1961. Holograph in the
Historical Department Archives. Ribbon copy of typescript and photocopy of typescript in possession of Cleo Hurst Bailey, Salt Lake City; quoted by permission.

Hurst, Samuel Harris. Journal, 1920-23. Photograph of holograph in possession of Cleo Hurst Bailey, Salt Lake City, Utah. Quoted by permission.

Hurst, Samuel Harris. Memoirs. 1958. Photocopy of mimeograph in possession of Cleo Hurst Bailey, Salt Lake City, Utah. Quoted by permission. Another copy is in the Historical Department Archives.


McKay, David O. Journal of World Tour Mission. Typescript, ribbon copy from manual typewriter. In possession of David Lawrence McKay, used by permission, Dec. 2, 1920-Feb. 24, 1921, unpaginated. A two-week holograph portion from the New Zealand period of this mission shows a very high correlation between what he recorded in his own hand and the typescript for that section; so presumably he kept his own journal and the typescript was created from it. It exists in three volumes in David Lawrence McKay's possession. Vol. 1 covers from the McKay-Cannon setting-apart 4 December to February 23, 1921 in Hawaii. There is a gap that recounts their voyage from Hawaii to San Francisco where they planned to take a ship for the south seas. Volume 2 resumes with their departure from Salt Lake City (they had returned to attend Anthon H. Lund’s funeral) 26 March 1921 and covers through the beginning of the New Zealand period. Volume 3, a later typescript made double-spaced, paginated, and with an electric typewriter, begins later than Volume 2 but extends later as well, completing the New Zealand period. The India-Europe portion is currently missing. It is unclear when the typescript was created, presumably at least some months and possibly many years after his return. However, on the back of the last page of Volume 1, which covers the period from their departure in December 1920 until their arrival in San Francisco in March 1921, is this pencilled notation:

Bro Cannon: Please let us remember to send a cable to Wesley, tomorrow morning--
Dear Brethren: Your telegram rec’d announcing sad message of
Pres. Lund’s death. With all Isreal [sic] we mourn the loss of our beloved brother and esteemed associate—sorely shall we miss his sound judgment, wise counsel, [illegible] guileless spirit. Pres. Grant leaves tonight for home via Los Angeles. Rest of us home Friday and Saturday. Please convey to family our heartfelt sympathy and love.

Affectionately—
Heber J. Grant
David O. McKay
Antoine W. Ivins
Hugh J. Cannon

These penciled notes, obviously the hasty draft of a telegram sent from San Francisco when President Grant received word of the death of his counselor, Anthon H. Lund, can be dated precisely to 2 March 1921 or, possibly, the next day, March 3. The handwriting is not McKay’s. I do not know if it is Cannon’s. It seems unlikely that Cannon, newly reunited with his wife and infant, as the McKays were, would have had time to prepare a typescript, but it also seems unlikely that a second-hand piece of paper would be used for the ribbon copy of the journal as well.


Murphy, Castle H. Castle of Zion—Hawaii: Autobiography and Episodes from [the] Life of Castle H. Murphy, Missionary to Hawaii. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1963. Historical Department Archives: M270.1/M978m)


Smith, E. Wesley. Report of Mission President, Hawaiian Mission, 1921. p. 175. Historical Department Archives (CR4/12). Britsch (1986) cites this source as part of the Missionary Financial and Statistical Report. This source is currently closed to researchers. However, I was allowed to see and take notes about a photocopy of the page on which this incident was reported.

Taylor, George Shepherd. "Report of Sermons of Elder David O. McKay Delivered at the Annual Conference of the New Zealand Mission of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints held at Huntly, Waikato, New Zealand, April 23rd to 25th, 1921." Mimeograph, pp. 3-5. Ms/d/5919. This source seems miscatalogued, since there is no reference to it under the name of the mission or under the name of Graham H. Doxey, secretary of the mission who made the shorthand account and transcription. It may be cited in the McKay register, but this research tool is closed to the public.

Endnotes


An obvious parallel that would occur to most readers is the transformation of Brigham Young assuming the role of Joseph Smith in Nauvoo when the succession to the presidency was an issue. To my knowledge, such a transformation has occurred only one other time. After the death of Joseph F. Smith in November 1918, the influenza epidemic prevented the calling of a conference to sustain Heber J. Grant formally as his successor until June 1919; but in the weeks before that conference, there were several reports of President Grant assuming the aspect of President Smith during public addresses (Alexander 1986, 117). These reports involving Presidents Smith and Grant might again affirm the succession in the presidency. See, for example, the journal of Anthon H. Lund, Church Historical Department Archives:

Sunday, May 25th 1919. I attended fast meeting in the Temple. This meeting will be a historical one of a similar [nature] to the meeting held in Nauvoo when Presd. Brigham Young was transfigured to look like Joseph Smith and the people took it as a sign that he was the true successor to the
martyred prophet. The following spoke in our fast meeting and bore testimony that Prest. [Grant] had looked exactly like Prest. Joseph F. Smith. Bro. Theodor Tobiason said that at our last fast-meeting he saw Prest. Grant look both in feature and expression as Prest. Joseph F. Smith. Last Sunday when Prest. Grant addressed the Granite Stake conference, there was a man present who was so astonished to know it was Bro. Grant speaking and yet to him it was Prest. Joseph F. Smith preaching. When the meeting was dismissed he came up to Bro. Tobiason and told him what a remarkable thing he had witnessed and related the same that Tobiason himself had witnessed on Fast day in the Temple May 4, 1919. Mrs. Steed, Brother [blank] Wilson 17th Ward both have bore their same testimony. Edward Anderson said that in looking at Prest. Grant he saw also the figure of Prest. Jos. F. Smith and that the[y] melted together and as Prest. [Grant] kept speaking he saw only Prest. Joseph F. Smith. Miss Ship said My mother told me that she had had the wonderful experience to hear Prest. Grant speak but he looked just like Prest. Jos. F. Smith. Prest. Grant made a few closing remarks and said the testimonies in regard to his looking like Prest. Smith made him feel very humble. The first who mentioned it to him was his own brother, B. F. Grant, who said Heber, you were Prest. Joseph F. Smith as I looked upon you. Tobiason said that when that man told him what he saw last Sunday at the Granite Stake conference, he could not keep back his tears of joy.

Miss Babcock said "I have always looked up[on] Prest. B. Young’s transfiguration as a wonderful event, hearing the testimonies today are just as wonderful and fills me with joy that I have been here today."

However, the content of the prayer under the pepper tree does not seem related to succession in the First Presidency; in fact, as this paper shows, other accounts of the prayer would support interpretations of private significance, rather than providing public support for succession in the presidency.

2. The manuscript history of the Hawaiian Mission (CR/3695) records this information about their visit:

Tuesday, Feb. 8. [McKay, Cannon, Smith went to Maui where they met Elders Nelson, Hurst, Dunn, Williams, Jones] "and Bros. Kailimai and [David] Kalani." [Meeting to hear missionary reports at the Wailuku meeting house.]

When asked by Apostle McKay what the paramount need of the mission was, all agreed that it was a Church academy. In the afternoon places of interest in the Central Maui Conference were visited. General service was held in the evening with Saints and strangers from nearly all parts of Maui in attendance. Pres. Cannon was the first speaker, followed by Pres. Smith and Apostle McKay, the latter choosing for his text "By their fruits ye shall know them."
A separate and slightly fuller account is included in Hawaiian Mission Historical Record Book C., 1912-22, #2880, (Typescript, "Conference minutes of annual conferences") microfilmed as LF 3695/series 11/ reel 1, item 9:

p. 311. [under the date of 20 February 1921 but separated by considerable space from the "daily" entry] Elders David O. McKay and Hugh J. Cannon arrived from Japan and China on the 4th of February. They planned to be in Hawaii about ten or twelve days. Fortune favored us, however, and on account of difficulty in obtaining boat passage, they were unable to leave before February 23rd. We were all grateful for that extra week. On Saturday, February 5th we went to Laie. Oahu Conference was held on Sunday at Wahiawa. We attended the morning and afternoon sessions and went to Laie for evening service. Elder Joseph F. Smith [presumably Joseph F. Smith III, a missionary] went with us to Wahiawa and remained there for the evening session of the conference. The meetings were well attended and were characterized by the splendid spirit manifested.

p. 312. We returned from Laie Monday morning, Monday afternoon we sailed for Maui on the Claudine. The following is Elder Jones' report of our visit to Maui: Apostle David O. McKay [sic] and Pres. Hugh J. Cannon and Pres. E. Wesley Smith arrived in this Conference on the morning of February 8th. The following missionaries of the Maui Conferences greeted the Brethren: . . . Chester Nelson, Samuel H. Hurst, Leslie S. Dunn, Lester Williams, David Kailimai, David Kalani, and Byron D. Jones.

A meeting was held in the Wailuku Mission House for the purpose of hearing the reports of the missionaries. Each one gave a report of his labors and expressed his desire to continue. . . . When asked by Elder McKay the paramount need of the Mission was, all agreed that it was a Church Academy. . . . Elder McKay promised his support to get an Academy for Hawaii.

In the afternoon places of interest in the Central Maui Conference were visited.

In the evening a general service was held. Saints and strangers from nearly all parts of Maui were in attendance. The time was given to the visitors. Pres. Cannon told of the experiences of his father on the island of Maui and also expressed his great happiness in being able to be present. Pres. Smith encouraged the people to keep the commandments and get ready to go to the Temple. Elder McKay chose for his text, "By their fruits ye shall know them," and gave a stirring sermon on the same. . . . In the afternoon [of Wednesday] the Brethren went to Lahaina accompanied by Elders David Kailimai and Byron D. Jones, pres. of the West Maui Conference. . . .

[The entry continuing immediately after the above entry, labeled p. 313, typescript, letter No. 17, #3, reports a
general meeting Sunday at Honolulu but identifies no author.] Elder McKay confined his talk to the Saviour's life. He presented phases of Christ's teaching in a manner that was altogether "McKayan." That will be ample description to those who have heard him speak. Everybody in the meeting was compelled to listen to him and had he spoken all night, his audience should have remained eagerly listening to his inspired words. He afterwards said that it was easy to speak to this people. The faith of them, the spirituality and responsiveness of them drew out the best that is in a man."

p. 314, Letter No. 17 #4: [In dedicating the mission home] Elder McKay spoke at some length of his visiting throughout the Islands and of the happiness he had had in goin over the ground covered by Pres. Joseph F. Smith and Pres. George Q. Cannon.

p. 315 Elder Hugh J. Cannon expressed the pleasure he had had in visiting the places that were so dear to his father. ..

3. It is not known exactly when President McKay wrote this entry. He was known for his habit of voluminous note-taking in a pocket notebook, and some photographs Samuel Harris Hurst took on the afternoon of the visit show the notebook in his hands. It seems reasonable that he would have taken notes on the sites of his busy mission visits, then used the long intervening ocean voyages to put his journal entries unhurriedly in final form. However, the original notebook pages for a two-week period from the Samoan visit a few weeks later, sent to son David Lawrence McKay, then serving a mission in Switzerland, and still in his possession, are very similar to the entries below. It is therefore possible that the entry in question was made the same day as the events it records. President McKay's complete journal account of their stay on Maui reads:

Tuesday, Feby, 8, 1921. Arrived at Kahului, Maui, at 4:15 a.m. Remained in our cabin until 6 a.m. We were met at the wharf by Elders David Kalani and Keola Kailimai, a native Elder. The latter drove us to the headquarters of the missionaries where we held conference.

Opening exercises:
1. Singing, "Praise to the man."
3. Singing, "Ye Elders of Israel."

Elders were asked to report as follows:
Personal,
Age, number of months in field, health, schooling.
Missionary labors.
1. Conference.
2. Branch.
3. Daily Program.
4. Number of non-members into whose home you have a ready welcome.
5. Any unpleasant conditions.
What is the greatest need of the Mission.

Relation to Presiding authority.

Remarks.

Elder Byron D. Jones, 23 years old, 2 years college, teaching, West Maui Conference, 25 non-member families. Mission needs resident married couple in each branch, and a High School. Bore a fervent testimony—a choice young man.

Elder Samuel H. Hurst, 36 years old, widower, one little girl, health excellent, 10 months in mission, President Central Maui Conference, 7 branches. Greatest need of Mission, Church school. Number of high school age in his conference 15.

Elder S. Dunn, Logan, 21 years old, 16 months in field. High school is mission’s greatest need. Five now attending sectarian high schools.

David Keola Kailimai, native Elder, 48 years old, Central Maui Conference, thinks Elders should remain longer in each branch. Favors Church high school.

Chester H. Nelson, Ogden, 22 years old, 13 months in field. Has good health, was 2 years in Weber College. President East Maui Conference. Recommends native missionary to labor in each branch. His headquarters are at Hana.

Lester Williams, Salem, 21 years old, 12 months in field, now laboring in the East Maui Conference. Thinks the greatest need is a man of experience in each Branch. Referred feelingly to the self-sacrifice of his father.

David P. Kalani, Hilo Conference, Island of Hawaii, 48 years old, 7 branches. Does home missionary work. Gave his method of reaching non-members, approach, prayer, catechism or general conversation depending upon mental attitude, closing prayer, practicing to become barber.

Notes of Instruction.

1. Communicate with two absent Elders.
2. Carry message to non-members, 2 each day.
3. Organize local Elders.
4. Settling difficulties among members, "If ye have aught against"
5. Church school a paramount need.
6. Live with the people.
7. Teach by example.
8. Look for the good.
9. Conserve time—work, faith, prayer.

After meeting, Bro. Kailimai drove Presidents Cannon and Smith, Elder Hurst and me in his Ford to the home of Bro. and Sister Chas. Ako, at Kapalaia in the Makawao district. In Sister Ako's home, she shows us the "Ahinea" or "silver sword," a plant that grows principally in and about an extinct volcano.

After a good chicken, poi and rice dinner, we drove to "Pulehu" meeting house, which stands near the spot where George Q. Cannon, then on his first mission, and Chief Napela, in the year 1850, converted 9u [97] people out of the 100 who
attended their first meeting.

The people now have moved to the plantations, and only about a score comprise the branch. It seemed to me however, that we were treading on sacred ground; for surely the Lord was the close companion and guide of that intrepid and faithful missionary.

We offered a united prayer on the ground, during which Bro. Keola seemed to see two men shaking hands. He thought Hugh J. was shaking hands with Elder Hurst, and was surprised when he opened his eyes to see Brother Cannon standing with bowed head and closed eyes! I do not know the significance of his manifestation, but I do know we all felt as though Pres. Joseph F. Smith and George A. Cannon, two of the intrepid missionaries of early days, were well pleased with our visit and service on that memorable spot.

We were about one half way up the side of the "Haleakala," the largest extinct volcano in the world. White fleecy clouds covered the top as the old mountain lay sleeping...

Evening service at 7:20 p.m.
Singing, "Rejoice in the Lord," by the choir of 25 voices, very excellent.
Prayer, Pia Cockett.
Singing, "O Lord, we humbly pray."
Remarks, Pres. E. Wesley Smith, in the Hawaiian language.
Address: Pres. Hugh J. Cannon. Eloquent and inspirational tribute to his father, Pres. George Q. Cannon’s labors on this island, Maui. Bore a fervent testimony of the Gospel, and of the confirmation of this testimony that he had this day on the ground where his father received such divine inspiration.

I concluded, speaking of some of the fruits of the Gospel—honesty, temperance, chastity. There were present 250 persons; some of whom had traveled in an auto truck 30 miles. In arrangements, every detail seemed to have been attended to. Beautiful flowers surrounded the pulpit, and hidden among these were the smudges, the almost imperceptible smoke from which is the fatal enemy to the pester ing musquito [sic].

After meeting, we spent several hours singing and chatting in the home of Brother and Sister Ferreira, where we stayed all night, supplied with every modern convenience.

Sister Ferreira is a pure Hawaiian, whose former husband, the father of her four children, was a Chinaman. Bro. Ferreira is a Portuguese, whose profession is attorney-at-law, a very capable man.

Wednesday, February 9, 1921. Pres. Cannon, E. Wesley, Samuel H. Hurst, Byron D. Jones, Leslie S. Dunn, Chester H. Nelson, Lester Williams, David Keola Kailimai, David P. Kalana, John Ferreira, and John Ferreira, Jr., and I followed the trail leading to the "Needles" in the Tao Valley, really a deep picturesque canyon through which winds a gurgling mountain stream. The massive boulders piled in profusion at
the mouth of the canyon bear witness to the fact that this peaceful stream is sometimes swelled to a torrent. The wreck of Bro. Ferreira's house testifies mutely to the same thing.

"The Needle" is a perpendicular, precipitous cliff, projecting its ragged point high in the air.

Luxuriant foliage fills the rugged defile. The "Kukui" nut tree, the "Maile," the "Guava," the "Lehua," the "Ohia," the "Laii," are the names of some of the trees. Beautiful flowers, variously colored, lined each side of the trail; ferns abound everywhere, even on the tip top of the needle point. The dark, lava-colored sides of the precipitous cliff are covered with green grass and heavier foliage creeping up a hundred feet or more.

This morning, we plucked the following variety of flowers in full bloom: "Lehua," State flower of Hawaii (deep red); "A Japanese tea plant," (yellow); "Lantana," (pinkish orange); "Pukiawe," (pink); "Guava" (white); "Honohono," (pale blue); "Alilopoi," (orange with pink dots); "Blood drops," or "Pua Ma Keni," (deep blood red); "Maile," (purple); "Papapa," (white pea); "Pua pipili," (small red); "Dandelion," (old friend); "Hawaiian Ki," (orange); "Thi Makole," (yellow); "Thi" (pink); "Ilima Keeli," (yellow); "Pua Koali," (delicate blue); "Pua Emiki," (yellow); "Pua Nana Honua," (large lily-like); "Pua Pu Ka Kani," (pea-like purple stripes); "Iliam papa," (yellow); "Kikania," (pea-like).

Drove around part of the island to Lahaina where a most delicious dinner had been waiting our arrival for over two hours. On our way, two sisters had hailed us and placed Leis on our necks--Leis made of white and red roses, the island flower. Bro. and Sister David Kuamu entertained us.

Other Brethren and Sisters were present, and we had a most delightful dinner hour; after which we walked across the street to the L. D. S. Church, where the Primary Association was holding its regular meeting.

Singing, "Shine On."

Received "Articles of Faith."

Story: Our Father in Heaven loves all His children.

Boarded the steamer Mauna Kea for the Island of Hawaii, at 4:40. . . .

4. That evening at a meeting of by 250 missionaries and members, some of whom "had traveled in an auto truck 30 miles," Hugh J. Cannon retold the events of the afternoon. President McKay's journal records:

Address: Pres. Hugh J. Cannon. Eloquent and inspirational tribute to his father, Pres. George Q. Cannon's labors on this island, Maui. Bore a fervent testimony of the Gospel, and of the confirmation of this testimony that he had this day on the ground where his father received such divine inspiration. (McKay, Journal, 21 Feb. 1921)

The manuscript history of the Hawaiian Mission contains
several references showing that the travelers were keenly aware of
the previous missionary service of George Q. Cannon and Joseph F.
Smith:

Wed. Feb. 9. Elders McKay, Cannon and Smith visited the
much famed Iao Valley, also the place where the Book of Mormon
was translated into Hawaiian by Pres. G. Q. Cannon. They then
visited Lahina, the place where Pres. Cannon commenced
missionary labors. . . .

In dedicating the mission home at Laie, 22 Feb. 1921, "Elder McKay
spoke at some length of his visiting throughout the islands and of
the happiness he had had in going over the ground covered by Pres.
Cannon expressed the pleasure he had had in visiting the places
that were so dear to his father."

5. The New Zealand Mission Manuscript History reports the
events of the conference between 22 April 1921 when McKay and
Cannon arrived until their departure but does not summarize their
speeches because Graham H. Doxey, the mission secretary took a
 shorthand account. On 30 Sept. 1921, the history reports: "The
stenographic report of Apostle David O. McKay's speeches at Hui Tau
were put into printed or rather mimeographed form for use of the
Elders and Saints who were so interested in the wonderful sermons.
Elder Graham H. Doxey wrote it up from his shorthand notes." No
transcripts appear, however, with the daily entries. Presumably
these transcripts appear in "Hist. Rec. Book F," which is cited as
a source throughout this section of the manuscript history; however,
Book F is not part of the Historical Department Archives
collection, and the general minutes as catalogued show a gap from
about 1919 to 1954. Mrs. Leone Doxey of Salt Lake City, widow of
Graham H. Doxey, kindly searched her husband's papers at my request
(30 January 1990) and found no mimeographed McKay speeches dating
from this period. Then, by coincidence almost a year later, I saw
a reference in a manuscript, "The Kingdom and the Reichs," by F.
Douglas Tobler, citing a McKay speech in New Zealand from this
period. It turned out to be the missing mimeograph, miscatalogued
(as of 4 May 1990) under the name of the mission president, George
Shepherd Taylor, rather than with either the New Zealand mission
records or under Doxey's name. (It is possible that the McKay
register contains this reference; but since the register is closed to
researchers, it would be of no assistance in tracking down the
speech.) The mimeograph does not include Hugh J. Cannon's speech,
which obviously preceded David O. McKay's. McKay said:

Afternoon session, April 23, 1921. It was not my
intention to occupy any time this afternoon, but I feel
constrained in the spirit to give you, brethren and sisters,
the heart petal referred to by Brother Cannon. By heart
petal, I mean this: There are side doors and direct doors
into one's heart. Sometimes we open the heart door just a
little so you can peek in, sometimes we open it wide and said
"Haere mai, haere mai". I feel like throwing the door open and giving you that testimony.

He (Brother Cannon) referred to a spot that we visited on the island of Maui, where the natives told us President Cannon (father of Brother Cannon here) and Chief Napela, who was one of the first to join the Church, the first true friend of George Q. Cannon, converted several hundred people. The natives told us that on one occasion they converted ninety-nine out of one hundred people assembled. We were very desirous of visiting that spot, particularly Brother Cannon and President Wesley Smith, whose fathers had labored on that island as missionaries in their youth.

It was a beautiful afternoon when we climbed that old hillside of Haleakalau, the largest extinct [sic] volcano in the world. We did not go very far, but just at the base of that extinct volcano stands an old meeting house, and by the side of it a new structure built by the Latter Day Saints recently. We do not know whether we were on the spot, but we were near it at any rate. I noticed a beautiful tree which looked like our pepper tree. The branches were bending over, and it made a very pretty sight. We stood under it. I felt the spirit of the occasion, and said: "Brothers, I want all of us to engage in prayer. Let us render to God the gratitude of our hearts for what He has done." These were the thoughts that prompted the feeling that we bow in prayer and thanksgiving.

There were there, President Cannon, President Smith, Elder Hurst of that Conference, and Elder Keola, who was laboring as a native elder, and I. We uncovered our heads and I was voice in prayer in extending gratitude for the blessings we had received.

When the prayer was ended, David Keola, one of your brethren (referring to the Maoris) walked over to President Smith and said something to him in his native language. President Smith and David came back, and Brother Smith told me this: "Brother McKay while you were praying and we had our heads bowed, Brother Keola said he saw two men in a position of handshaking, and he was so surprised. He said to himself, "Why have President Cannon and Brother Hurst with heads bowed." [sic]

We walked along in silence for a few moments, and then I said, "Brother Keola, I don’t know the full significance of your vision, but I do know that the veil between us and God and the brethren on the other side was very thin."

Then Brother Cannon, with tears in his eyes said, "There was no veil", and the testimony of his vision is too sacred to give. But let me tell you, my beloved brethren and sisters, his father, George Q. Cannon, and Joseph F. Smith, nephew of the Prophet Joseph, who presided over this Church as the divinely authorized successor to the Presidency of this Church, let me tell you that they live, and these men gave approval of the work now known as Mormonism, which you,
brethren and sister, have embraced.

God keep you to it, and may you know when wolves have entered in among you, even though they have sheep's clothing. Amen. (The reference to the wolves meant the two disturbers who are members of the "Re-organized" Church.) (Taylor 1921, 3-5; parentheses in original)

My uncle, Jonathan Royal Bennett of Holden, Utah, was among the missionaries present, and his diary account of this conference session, though sketchy, is moving:

Elder Mckay talk [sic] to us about his trip in the world mission labor and about the Elders coming out here leaving every thing to come out into the world to preach the Gospel because we had a testimony of it. And nearly everybody had tears in their eyes in about one minute. The maoris has sure fell in love with him. He has got the spirit of the Lord with him and it does not take long to find it out that he was a man of god. ... Elder Cannon talked about in Honolulu visiting that mission. They went up on a Hill where Elder Cannon[’s] father had been and they prayed and they said the vail was very thin between them and Heaven. Bro Cannon said in fact their was no vail between them and Heaven.

R. Lanier Britsch reports that "President McKay also related this story in New Zealand shortly after it happened" (1986, 538, note 4 to Chapter 10). He kindly attempted to reconstruct his New Zealand sources for me, but his efforts were thwarted by the location of his research notes in Orem, Utah, while he himself was serving at BYU-Hawaii in Laie at the time of the request.

6. For example, when he was in his teens, he worked on a cattle ranch north of Soda Springs, Idaho. Cowboy friends introduced him to saloon and prostitutes, chiding him for not drinking or for taking advantage of the girls' services. He records, "When we went home late that night, I do not know whether my friends were disappointed or not, but I felt wonderful, and in thinking of the experience of the day I could not help but marvel at the calm and peaceful feeling I had experienced through it all. It seemed that I had been in the presence of my Mother" (1958, 6). In addition to his poverty--he had to sell his farm to accept this mission--and his concern for his daughter, Inez, he also confesses that being called to Hawaii was "quite a test to my faith." His patriarchal blessing had told him he would go to the "land of my forefathers," which did not seem to be possible, he thought he would be too old to learn Hawaiian fluently, and adds with humility, "I had desires to be a good speaker, and I could not see any development for me if simple natives were to be my audience." He wrestled with his doubts about whether his call had been inspired "all the way to Hawaii." But when he saw Wesley Smith waiting for him on the dock, he recognized him as the man he had
seen in a dream two years earlier, engaged with him in missionary work. This dream had occurred a year before Smith had been called as mission president. "With this I knew that some power other than that of man was having something to do with it" (1948, 10). Elder Hurst also knew that he would be assigned to some island other than Oahu before President Smith made the assignments.

7. Hurst's complete record of the two days that President McKay spent on Maui reads:

Feb. 8, 1920. Arose from our beds at three this morning to meet the "Kilauea" on which Pres. Smith, Elder McKay and Pres. Hugh J. Cannon arrived at Kahului about four fifteen. Returned to mission house at Wailuku and had our breakfast after which a very good meeting was held for about four and one half hours. In answer to a question of Bro. McKay's as to what we considered the greatest need of the mission all were united that a church High School was the greatest need. After the reports of the Elders Bro. McKay said he was very strongly impressed that the school was the big need of the mission and stated that before many days passed by he would write a letter to the First Presidency recommending [sic] one. He also gave other very valuable instructions to the Elders. After he had closed he arose again and showed to us the peculiar coincidence that it had been resolved to build a church school at Laie at a gathering of the Elders in the town where the Book of Mormon was translated by Pres. Geo. Q. Cannon and on the Island where the powers of the Lord had been shown to men more than any other of the Islands.

At the close of the meeting Elder McKay, Pres. Smith and Cannon Elder Keola and myself drove up to Bro. Chas. Ako's at Kapolaia and ate dinner with them. After dinner we drove out to Pulehu where Pres. Geo. Q. Cannon had his wonderful experience in the conversion of so many of the natives and the first to join the church. As we sat in the little Ford in front of the meeting house there, Pres. Smith related to us the story of how Pres. Cannon in 1850 or 51 had delivered his wonderful discourse in a little church which then stood on the ground we were then on. At this meeting he appeared to be standing in the air with a hallow [sic] of light around his head. At the same time all but three of the over hundred persons there present were transfigured before him. Bro. Hugh J. Cannon being a son of Pres. Cannon was very deeply affected [sic] more so than any one I have ever saw before. We then alighted from the car and walked around the grounds. At the rear of the old church on the grounds now in the shade of an old tree, Elder McKay said: "Brethren I feel impressed that we should render our thanks to the Lord for the labors of this great man and his co-laborer Pres. Joseph F. Smith whose sons are represented here today." At this we bowed in humble reverence in prayer to God and then I listened to one of the grandest prayers it has ever been my privilege to listen to. At its close Elder Keola testified he saw a hand and arm
extended to me in an attitude of shaking hands. In speaking of this later Bro. McKay said "Bro. Keola, I do not know the significance of the hand you saw, but I know this that the veil between us and the other world was very thin." Bro. Cannon then said "There was no veil at all" at which the apostle cast a penetrating look at him for he as well as we seemed to be in doubt as to whether Bro. Cannon had beheld a vision or not but no more was said at that time. In closing his remarks in a general meeting held at Wailuku tonight Elder McKay made mention of this again and with tears in the eyes of both men he turned to Bro. Cannon and stamping [sic] on the shoulder said, "My Brother, you have been closer to your Father today than you have ever been before."

Feb. 9. In company with our visitors and three natives we Elders all went up Iao valley as far as the needle point which was a very pleasant trip. Bro. McKay is a natural lover of flowers and nice vegetation and his eyes feasted on these things. He was successful in getting some fifteen or more kinds of flowers learning their names and as much of them as he could from the Elders and natives with him keeping same and a description of each in his diary book. About two miles above town Bro. McKay and party [illegible] in us in Elder Keolas car for Lahaina where they took passage in the "Manakea" for Hilo. We were asked to administer to a woman this afternoon who was and had been possessed with an evil spirit since she returned from the meeting the night before. We rebuked the same in the name of the Lord and she was freed from the power that had held her though she was very weak.

A corroborating note about President McKay's and Brother Cannon's interest in natural history comes from John Q. Adams, mission president in Samoa, who reported in the Improvement Era (25:553): "They were both veritable sponges for absorbing every loose vestige of information, and let a bird chirp melodiously in the midst of an animated conversation, and Brother McKay instantly was on the Qui Vive as to its name and characteristics; and down all such items went in the plenteous memoranda. Between Brother Cannon's shorthand and Brother McKay's long intuition, nothing in all Samoa escaped."

8. Frederick William Hurst's entry on Christmas day, 1855, gives a good idea of his personality:

p. 45 Dec. 25, 1855. Christmas Waialua. Brother Koanu and I left Waiakea about six o'clock this morning. When we started, we had no idea of reaching this place. We walked about ten miles and then sat down and ate some cold potatoes, we had brought with us, [presumably they had no salt since he usually mentions it] by a big spring. I could not help thinking how different they would spend Christmas at home. I got into a sort of reverie and fancied I could see their happy faces around a table loaded with the good things of this world, such as plum pudding, roast beef, etc. I will say
though that we are traveling in the hot sun and on a rough road.

I spent the day pleasantly thinking how much better off I now am than I was before I became a member of the Kingdom of God, not in the things of this world, for I have only a suit of clothes and they have seen their best days, for I see my elbows begin to show through my coat sleeves. I am almost barefoot. I have an old pair of low shoes and every now and then I have to take them off and empty the sand out of them as the roads are very sandy and heavy. I have no socks so I will leave the reader to imagine the state of my feet, especially when I arrived at the end of my journey. If I had liked, I could have made myself miserable, but no! I put my trust in the Lord and He blessed me with a light heart, occasionally singing a hymn and conversing with Brother Keanu. I do not look for my reward in this life, I look for it in the world to come. . . . My earnest desire is to get the language of this people so I can declare the Gospel of Christ in its purity unto them. No one can tell, except by experience, what pleasure it is to stand up and bear testimony to the truthfulness of this work in the Hawaiian language. I realize already that it pays for all trouble of learning it. . . . Brother King was praying when I got to the house so I stood outside until he finished although it was raining pretty hard and had been for the last mile or so. With the rain and perspiration I was wet through and had to change my clothing. I had traveled 15 hours and walked about 40 miles. I supper on poi and hee (squid). (p. 45)

9. When Frederick William Hurst was released, he went to California where he served another mission in the gold fields and met George Q. Cannon, apparently for the first time (pp. 67-68). He was apparently an effective missionary, even in that rough environment. He notes: "Hang Town Company’s Camp. . . . We had a crowded house in the evening, in fact there were numbers that could not obtain seats [in the City Hall]. After I had got through speaking they clapped their hands and stomped their feet, however, we got them quiet so as to dismiss the meeting. (19 July 1857, p. 79). This mission was curtailed by the impending arrival of Johnston’s Army in Utah, and he records the colorful rumors that reached the missionaries in the gold fields: "It is reported that the Mormons have fought a battle with the U.S.A. Troops. Brother Brigham himself killed six hundred, etc. . . . (p. 85, 14 Sept. 1857)

When he was forty-two and living in Cache Valley with his wife and seven children, he was called to serve a second mission, this time in New Zealand (1875-77), with his brother Charles Clement Hurst. He responded promptly though his eight-year-old daughter died three days before he left, and his wife had six-month-old twins to care for, in addition to five older children. He settled on the outskirts of Wellington, to be near his mother, who was, by then, "feeble and childish" (29 June 1876). His brother Alfred was
"abusive and insulting" (26 Dec. 1875), his former friends shunned him, and he was extremely poor. "I scarcely know what to do," he wrote on Christmas Eve, 1875. "Everybody I used to be acquainted with gives me the cold shoulder, and at the same time I would not change places with them." He was isolated from the other elders—a great sorrow to his gregarious soul—and limited in his opportunities to study Maori. It was a great relief when his brother joined him in June 1876, and they rented a small cottage where they paid the rent by chopping and selling wood. They made no progress on winning friends and converts; though not discouraged, an entry during July sounds bleak: "We are very hard up. Sometimes we go a whole week without meat, butter is a rarity, we live mostly on oatmeal porridge and sop, but we have sickened on oatmeal, especially Charley. . . We have a great deal of dark rainy stormy weather and the wind is almost continually blowing a hurricane" (p. 156, undated entry after July 24th, 1876). They spent the last six and a half months of their missions October 31, 1876-5 May 1877, at Kaiaapai near Christchurch, where there were several Mormon families. It was bliss to Fred W. to be near other Saints and he cautions himself in his journal against light-mindedness (2 Feb. 1885, pp. 184-85). He also records this amusing vignette, a good revelation of his own resilient personality and his commitment to the Church:

Sunday, Dec. 3, 1876. Brother Norris [a local member] and I walked to Papanui. On the way I inadvertently said we had started so late I wouldn’t have much time to black my boots and get clean before meeting time. He was horrified at the idea and talked a long time to me about being so wicked. I gave him to understand that we did not strain at a gnat and swallow a camel.

I asked him what he would think if he was to call on Brother Brigham, Jr. on Sunday Morning and directly he got to the door hear him say, "Here Bub, hang up and clean my boots, I have only got so many minutes to get to meeting."

His eyes bunged out and he replied, "I should feel very bad."

I told him if he ever went to Zion he would both hear and see a great deal worse things than that; that he must not entertain the idea for one moment to find everybody perfect for Jesus said, the wheat and tares grow together, and the best way to find Zion was to be sure and take it along. (pp. 174-75)

In light of the cruelty of his brother, Alfred, it must have been particularly warming in the spring of 1893 when Fred W. was working as a painter on the Salt Lake Temple to have this brother appear to him one evening, announce that he was dead but had been attending Mormon meetings in the spirit world, and ask that his temple work be done (p. 209). Fred Hurst served for many years as stake Sunday School superintendent in Cache Stake and also served two stake missions after his return from New Zealand (p. 209).
10. In 1970 when President Smith was eighty-four, Don and another son, Julian "bought some recording equipment for his Christmas present with the idea that he would record some of his experiences. They set it up for him and tested it on Christmas afternoon. The test tape contains this little conversation: 'Now, Pop, what are you going to do with this?' He answered, 'God willing, I'm going to the office in the morning and when I get home, I'm going to start on this project.' He died of a heart attack that night." (A. Smith 1989).

11. The Deseret News announcement of E. Wesley Smith's appointment (in the mission history, 17 March 1919), notes his first mission and comments, "Like his father he became very proficient in the Hawaiian language and was among the first to acquire the tongue." When he gave his first public address as mission president, on 29 June 1919, "he showed that he had come to do the best he could and try to do what his father would want him to do for the Hawaiian people." The mission history copied an article from the Deseret News: "Great regret is felt by the Hawaiian people that their dearly beloved leader, the late President Joseph F. Smith, will not be with them at dedication time, for during his three missions to the islands he became loved and reverenced by all. His honest, gentle, fearless and sympathetic characters drew the confidence, respect and boundless love of this naturally trusting people. And while the one they dearly loved can not be with them, they rejoice in having his son, E. Wesley Smith, as their president. (Also in Journal History, 11 Oct. 1919, p. 9). (Mission history, 11 Oct. 1919)

Heber J. Grant's dedicatory prayer for the Hawaiian Temple (Liahona, 17 (3 Feb. 1920); reprinted in the Manuscript History of the Hawaiian Mission, 27 November 1919, petitioned: "We pray Thee, O Father, to bless the son of Thy beloved servant President Joseph F. Smith, E. Wesley Smith, who now presides over the Hawaiian Mission. May the missionary spirit be and abide with him. May he have that same splendid love for the people of this land which his dear departed father possessed."

The record of the dedication also includes remarks by Charles W. Nibley that "referred to the dedication of the site by President Joseph F. Smith, he being present on that occasion. With deep emotion he expressed the sorrow that President Smith had not lived to attend this dedication but reminded the saints that the authority which he held was still here and now resting upon President Grant."

Elder Rudger Clawson commented,

What a privilege it is for President Grant and his brethren to be here, also that Sister Sarah Jennie [Jenner] Cannon is here to represent her husband, and President E. Wesley Smith, to represent his father. . . . . President E. Wesley Smith said it was an honor to serve in the ministry in this land, and a privilege to represent his father. Expressed his determination to realize the blessing involved upon him in
the dedicatory prayer. Expressed his love for the missionaries here and the people and hoped to be able to accomplish a noble work. He finished with remarks in the native tongue. ... Sarah Jenne Cannon, who by the way was the first woman to speak at a temple dedication, said it was a great day for her and that she rejoiced exceedingly. ... President Heber J. Grant expressed a keen regret that President Joseph F. Smith had not lived to come here and dedicate this temple. He read the hymn which he had read at President Smith's funeral commencing with the line, "Thou dost not weep to weep alone." He then read extracts from a letter which he had written to the family after President Smith's death. Also read in full a dream that President Smith had in his early missionary experiences in these islands, published in the last number of the Improvement Era. ... 

President Grant also commented "on the excellent work being done by the mission president Elder Wesley E. Smith [sic], and by his predecessor, Prest. Samuel Woolley, and also spoke of the reverence paid by the island Church members to the memory of the late Pres. Joseph F. Smith." (Report in Liahona, 6 Jan. 1920 copied in mission history 28 Nov. 1919.

The feelings about President Joseph F. Smith were so often and so lovingly expressed during the dedication of the temple that it would not be surprising had he manifested his presence during the dedication in some way. In fact, he did so, but privately-only to the elderly sister who had taken care of him. Wilford W. King, mission clerk, reported:

Ma Manuhii, an elderly lady, who took care of President Joseph F. Smith when he labored as a boy missionary in these islands, was present at one of the dedicatory services. Being blind and unable to walk, she had to be carried. The week following the dedication she was given the privilege of going through the Temple and receiving her own endowments. She had to be carried and helped all the way. While in the Temple she testified she had heard Joseph F. Smith say "Aloha" ("love to you") to her and it caused her to weep for joy. The next week she returned to her home in Honolulu and shortly after took sick. She called for President E. Wesley Smith to come and see her. On his entering the room she sat up in bed and said "Auhea ke keiki" (meaning "where is the boy?" the son of Pres. Joseph F. Smith). Pres. Smith took hold of her hand. She clasped it to her breast, kissed it and wept. Then she said in her own tongue, "It is enough. I am satisfied and ready to go now." She had been to the Temple, a thing for which she had lived and she had now felt the hand of the son of the man she loved so much and she was ready to return to her Maker. She passed away the next morning [11 Dec. 1919]. (Liahona 17:271, copied into the manuscript mission history under 11 December 1919; also cited in Britsch 1986, 156-58, where he also identifies her as Ma Nacheakamalu.)
Speaking at the mission general conference at Laie, Elder William W. Waddoups, president of the temple and later president of the mission, said: "As I was listening to President Smith I was thinking of his father, the man you all love. I believe that his spirit is with us today and that his hand has been stretched forth to approve this his son. I also believe that Pres. Smith will receive the spirit of the Lord all during this conference. . . I knew his father. He had a heart of a mother filled with love for all mankind. (Record of Conferences, p. 356)

A most unusual spiritual experience is reported in a typescript account by an unidentified author, catalogued in the Historical Department Archives as Elias Wesley Smith, ms/d/5273. "Cain";

E. Wesley Smith, president of the Hawaiian Mission, told me [the writer is unidentified] on the 24 day of July 1948 in the presence of my companions on the way down to Lahina to attend the Pioneer Day Celebration. Pres. Smith said that he was quite discouraged regarding the work and progress of the mission a few months after his arrival, when he was first appointed mission Pres. in 1918 [correction in margin to 1919] when he was still just a young man. As a result of feeling discouraged he went to the Lord in earnest supplication to give him strength and wisdom and courage to continue on with his work. This was . . . just before the dedication of the Laie Temple. He said that shortly after his prayer, Sister Smith had retired and he was sitting in their living room reading, when he heard the front door bang open and looked up to see an unusually [sic] tall man come through the door, he was tall enough that he had to stoop to enter,. [sic] His eyes were very protuberant and rather wild looking, his finger-nails were thick and long, he presented a rather unkempt appearance, and wore no clothing at all. He said not a word, but advanced toward Pres. Smith with his hands out-stretched as though to clutch at him. Pres. Smith said he was so frightened he couldn’t speak, but that he quickly got to his feet and held his hand and arms up to protect himself from attack if possible, and that as he flung his arms up, there suddenly appeared in his right hand a light which had the size and appearance of a dagger, and that [a] voice said to him, "This is your Priesthood." He said this gave him courage and that he Commanded the person in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to depart. He said that immediately when the light appeared the person stopped and on being commanded to leave: he backed out the door. A moment or two later when he went to the door to look out, no trace of any one was to be seen.

He told Joseph F. Smith, apostle, [Joseph Fielding Smith] who identified the individual as possibly ["]Cain, Master Mahan, Father of all Sons of Prediction [sic], whose curse it is to roam the earth seeking whom he may destroy. He also said that for a period just prior to the dedication of every
Temple, there has been excessive strife and disquiet among the people and that there is always unusual evidence of the spirit of the adversary working to cause dissention [sic].

12. Why did the vision come to Brother Kailimai rather than to Hugh J. Cannon who, apparently, had the most powerful emotional experience out of the five men present? I hypothesized that he might have had particularly close ties to either George Q. Cannon or Joseph F. Smith, and D. Arthur Haycock (1990) commented, "I think Brother Kailimai knew both Cannon and Smith." Brother Kailimai would have been thirteen in 1885 when Joseph F. Smith returned to Hawaii for two years, twenty-eight in December 1900 when President Cannon returned for the Jubilee of missionary work in the islands, and forty-three in 1915 when Joseph F. Smith returned for a two-week stay. However, the mission history and other sources simply contain no evidence either confirming a relationship or ruling one out. A telephone conversation 5 May 1990 with Abigail Kahunu Kailimai Kailimai, the daughter-in-law and niece of David Keola Kailimai, shed no further light. She could not recall hearing him mention knowing either of these two men. In the absence of further evidence, the question must remain open, but the presumption seems to be that Brother Kailimai had no particular ties with the two former missionaries.

13. The notes of Brother Kailimai's addresses kept in the conference minutes give some insight into his personality and values. Speaking at the annual conference of the mission at Laie, in April 1915, he "said that it was his constant prayer that he might be able to return to Zion to live. He said, "Let us put our whips to our horses and our shoulders to the wheel and push." (Record Book C, microfilmed as LR 3695/series 11/reel 2/item 3). A year later at the conference in April 1916 at Laie, he said:

Last year I went to Bro. Woolley and told him I was prepared to return to Utah. He said, "Go back to your branch. Wait a while. We don't know what changes will come soon." I did that and I have tried to teach the Saints there the Word of Wisdom, the law of tithing, and the other laws of the gospel... When I heard that the temple was to be built in Hawaii, I rejoiced and from that time until today I have raised my voice in encouraging the people to prepare themselves for that great blessing. I want to tell you what it cost me to go to Zion and return. Perhaps some of you are prepared to go. We can donate that money and the blessing will be an eternal one. If we spend this money, the benefits will go to others and not to us, but if we put it in the temple, we will receive the blessings. It cost us about $500 for our trip to Utah. That does not include the money we spent for food and other incidentals. When I left I had $1000. When I returned I had $3 left. I returned in 1913 and in two years I had enough money to go again. The Lord had blessed me. I was given work. I returned home on Sunday and
on Thursday I went to work. . . . At one time I owed $85 for tithing. I tried to pay it, but it seemed impossible to catch up. I promised the Lord that if He would help me, I would pay an honest tithe from that time on. I am thankful that the gift of repentance has been given to us. . . . I had not prayed for the temple to be built here. I had prayed that the Lord would help me to go to Zion to receive the blessings there. I desire now to build a home here in Hawaii. We should be patient, honest, just, kind, loving, and full of love and faith. (pp. 102-06)

Similarly, he said in the Sunday afternoon of the annual mission conference on 9 April 1916: "I desire to go wherever I am called to go. I want to labor under the direction of those over me. I want to keep the laws of the gospel. I rejoice that we have been taught about tithing, and about the Word of Wisdom, and all that we have heard in this conference. . . . If I were called to come here and break rock for the temple, I would be glad to do that" (Record Book C, p. 138).

14. For example, Brother Kailimai, hospitalized with tuberculosis on the island of Hawaii, asked Castle Murphy for a blessing saying "that he knew for a certainty that if we would administer to him . . . that he would recover. . . . To our great surprise Keola left the hospital and attended the district conference. . . . He had faith to be healed, and it was so" (1963, 42-43). As another example, Brother Kailimai said that he and his family would accompany the Murphys to Utah so they could be endowed and sealed, several months before President Murphy was released:

We were delighted, for we had come to love this family very, very much. Brother Kailimai and I seemed to be congenial spirits. Frequently he would tell me what I was thinking, and I had the same gift regarding him and his thinking.

When our letter of release came . . . we were, of course, the only ones in Hawaii who knew it had arrived. I immediately boarded the train for Honomu when I knew I would find Brother Keola. He was, at that time, supervising some road construction work near that place. I walked along the road until I found him. As I approached, he began to cry. I asked the reason for his weeping.

He said, "Kakela (Castle), you have been released." He knew as certainly as if I had told him. He immediately resigned from his fine job and sold his property. When we were prepared to depart for Utah, he and his wife, Kamaka, and their son, David Keola, were prepared to accompany us. At the sacrifice of all they possessed temporally, they came to the mainland and entered the temple of the Lord in Salt Lake City, and were sealed by the priesthood for time and all eternity.
The blessings of heaven are predicated on sacrifice. What blessing must have been awaiting them when they passed on! (1963, 138-39)

15. R. Lanier Britsch (1986, 162) records one version of this experience from Pia Cockett which was newly typed in about 1952 and included with some local histories. This 1950s version sounds as if it was taken down as Cockett dictated it, apparently some time after 1936.

Visit of Pres. David O. McKay in 1921

Pulehu in Pula Maui is considered sacred and fertile ground. It was there that the first seed of the Gospel took root and the first baptism performed by George Q. Cannon and his companion early in 1851 and there the first branch of the Hawaiian Mission was organized in October 1851.

President David O McKay will verify that the ground where the Pulehu Chapel is situated is sacred. It was there in February 8, 1921 David O McKay, Hugh J. Cannon, E Wesley Smith, Samuel Hurst and a Hawaiian Elder, David Kailimai, visited and after leaving the grounds David O McKay offered a word of prayer. While he was praying, the Hawaiian Elder was privileged to see in a vision two hands clasped in the form of greeting. He thought Cannon and Hurst were shaking hands. He opened his eyes and saw they were apart. He closed his eyes again and after the prayer he told what he had seen. David O McKay said: "The veil must have been thin and you have seen through", but Hugh J. Cannon said: "There was no veil." The above incident was told to us at a meeting at Wailuku in the evening and I was present. I was impressed and noted in my note book that those hands were the hands of Geo. Q. Cannon and his son, Hugh J. Cannon, and I was responsible for relating [it] to the missionaries. In 1936 David O McKay came again and after dinner at Afoon Kamahuoha's home, I related the same incident. Then David O. McKay corrected me. He said: "Those hands were the hands of the two fathers, Geo. Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith, in the presence of the two sons, Hugh J. Cannon and E. Wesley Smith." I thanked him for the correction.

Written by: J. Pia Cockett

Pia Cockett's relevant journal entries read:

April 6, 1924; [in conference at Kalihi Church which began 4 April in Honolulu] "Next meeting was very large, 1663 attendance. Luau was served. Afternoon session had an audience of 980. In this meeting a strange coincidence occurred. I was showing Sister Rena Kealoha Smith the record of a vision received by Elder D. Kailimai at Pulehu when Apostle D. O. McKay said that the veil must have been very thin. Rena Kealoha Smith asked what a veil was. I told her
that it was what separated [sic] us from the spirit world. Pres. Wm. Waddoups was speaking at the time. He then said what D. O McKay told him that the time will come when the veil will be so thin that we could be able to see through, substantiating what I told Rena K. Smith. . . . (pp. 11-12)

April 20, 1924. [At Wailuku. Present at Sunday School. Keola Kailimai spoke at General meeting.] Asked Bro. Silva to officiate in the sacrament and he refused because the system of performance has been changed a little. . . .

July 28, 1924. . . . About 11:30 our visitors arrived, A. W. Ivins, R. R. Lyman member of the Quorum of Twelve, Pres. Eugene J. Neff, Antoine Ivins, Vilate Ivins, Falvia Ivins, Bae [sic] Williams. . . . First we went to Paia church and met the saints. Then we drove up to Makawao and on to Pulehu Kula. We rested at the Church and talked about David O. McKay’s visit there, and about the wonderful manifestation in which David Kailimai saw hand shaking of which I have a record in my note book. After wards we went to the pepper tree, the spot or sacred spot where the above manifestation happened, and took our picture. . . .

April 9, 1933 [conference at Wailuku Chapel, annual. General meeting:] I spoke in Hawaiian and related the vision of D. Keola Kailimai in Pulehu related by David O. McKay on Feb. 8, 1921, where he saw the hand shaking in form of greeting while David O. McKay was praying. Keola thought it was Hugh Cannon and Elder Hurst. After the prayer he told his vision to McKay and he said perhaps the veil was thin that he had seen thru beyond the veil. Hugh Cannon said there was no veil. He must have seen his father Geo. Q. Cannon. Elder Horsley read a letter from David O. McKay in which he commended the work of the Sunday School in Hawaii. He also referred to the incidents happened in Hawaii rather in Maui on that memorable [sic] journey with Hugh J. Cannon.

April 25, 1937. In the afternoon of this day, the council members, Kaaa, Ferreira, Kamaauoha, Alo, Mahi, Enos, Matthias, Cockett, Ako, Kuamu the elders, Durrant, Eason, Wallace, Beal, Brighton, Rollins, Paeaina [Presidents] Francis Bailey and [Hilton] Robertson of the Japanese mission met under the pepper tree at Pulehu and bore our testimony and I was reminded that it was on that sacred spot where I first met my life companion and it was there I was taught the gospel and received the priesthood.

It was the same spot and sacred where in Feb. 8, 1921, apostle David O. McKay, Hugh J. Cannon, Pres. E. Wesley Smith, Elder Samuel H. Hurst and Elder David Kailimai met and David McKay offered a word of prayer. David Kailimai in a vision saw two hands shaking in form of greeting. He thought Hugh J. Cannon and Elder Hurst were shaking hands. He opened his eyes they were apart. After the prayer David Kailimai told David O. McKay what he had seen and was told that the veil was thin and he had seen through. But Hugh J. Cannon said there was no veil. As David O. McKay was relating this incident to us in
Wailuku I had recorded and noted that the hands seen were those of Geo. Q. Cannon and Hugh J. Cannon. As there was no veil his father was there and gave the glad hand to his son.

Hugh Cannon spoke after David O. McKay and said that as they came to these beautiful islands with magnificent scenery and fine people he was depressed. It seems the adversary was working against him. But today I am the happiest man. I noted again because he has seen and shook the hand of his father Geo. Q. Cannon, he was the happiest man.

I was always under the impression that Geo. Q. Cannon and his son Hugh J. Cannon shook hands whose hands were seen by David Kailimai.

In 1936 when David O. McKay visited us I related this incident and he said everything is correct with the exception of one thing and that it was Geo. Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith shaking hands and the hands were seen by David Kailimai. I was glad that the correction was made. (The two fathers in presence of the two sons—Joseph F. Smith and Geo. Q. Cannon—fathers; E. Wesley Smith and Hugh J. Cannon—sons).

This testimony meeting which we held is one we will never forget. All of us felt something burning within us.

It is a good place to go to when we are depressed and to commune with our God, because it is a sacred spot.

April 24, 1943. Chas Kamaucha, Anderson, Sam Alo Sr. Henry Kaa, Carlisle and Walton. We then gathered on the chapel ground [at Pulehu] near the monument in a circle for a meeting... Pia Cockett thanked God for this gathering and thanked the brethren for making it possible to come in a group like this as we had done in the past with Pres. Murphy and Bailey. This is a sacred spot where the hands of Geo. Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith shaking in form of greeting were seen by David Kailimai. He loved this place where he learned much about the gospel and this is where he first met his wife who was not then a member of the church. While he spoke he could not keep the tears from his eyes." [continues with summaries of the others' testimonies, which also include their witnesses that this was "sacred ground"]

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