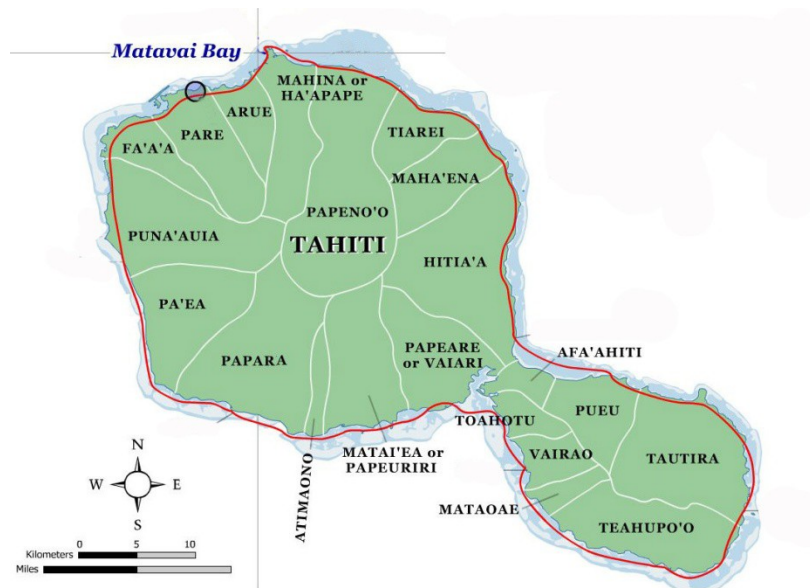


LDS CHURCH ON THE ISLAND OF TAHITI

Compiled by Gerald Faerber

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Tahiti is the main island of French Polynesia. Papeete is the capital and most important city as it is the center of transportation and commercial business. Today it is also the center of LDS Church activities and has the temple as well as several stake centers. There are nine stakes and 23 chapels on Tahiti. It has not always been the focal point.



Tahiti had first been discovered by Captain Samuel Wallis in 1767. He claimed the island as a British possession, but only a year later the French navigator de Bougainville made a similar claim for his country. Neither nation, however, convincingly established its claim to the island. In fact, it remained under control of the native Pomare dynasty until 1847. The most significant outside political influence came through the LMS missionaries. Although Protestant missionaries on the ship *Duff* had seen the island in February 1797, it was not until 1817 that William Ellis of the London Missionary Society landed there with serious intent to teach Christianity. He had little success. But beginning about 1822, native Tahitian missionaries began preaching Christian doctrine to the people of Tubuai. These Tahitians brought literacy and Christian civilization. London Missionary Society (LMS) missionaries had recorded the spoken language in writing and by 1840, only four years before the LDS missionaries arrived, had printed a complete translation of the Bible. The French arrived and began conquering the islands. Originally they allowed religious freedom so Catholic priests could preach Catholicism.

On 1 June 1843, shortly after the settlement of the main body of the church in Nauvoo, Noah Rogers, Addison Pratt, Knowlton Hanks, and Benjamin F. Grouard were called on Missions to the Pacific Islands by the Prophet Joseph Smith. They sailed from New Bedford, Mass., 9 October 1843, on board the "Timoleon". En route, Elder Knowlton Hanks died and was buried at sea. Their journey took them down around the southern tip of South America and up into the Pacific. On 30 April 1844, the three Elders arrived at the island of Tubuai, in the Austral group. Elder Pratt, being able to understand a little of the language of the natives, because of a previous visit to Hawaii as a sailor, decided to remain on Tubuai, while Elders Rogers and Grouard proceeded on to Tahiti, arriving at Papeete 14 Feb 1844. (TH 1948)

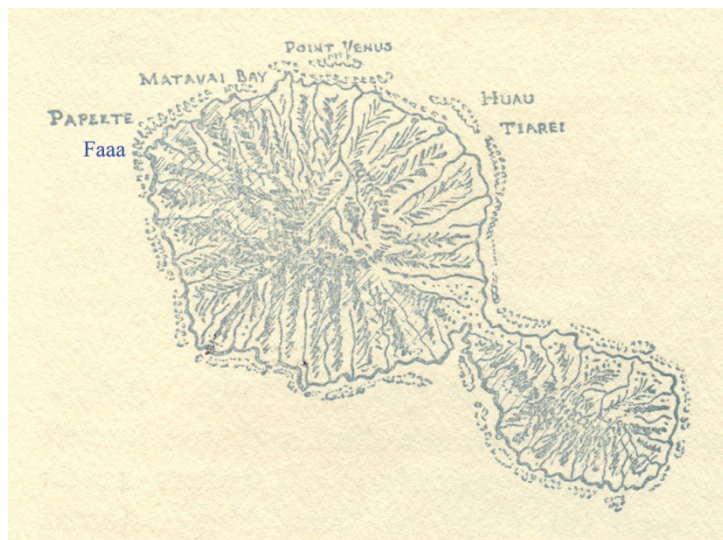
At the time of the arrival of Addison Pratt and his companions, many of the older people of Tubuai could clearly remember heathen practices such as cannibalism that had been abolished some years before. But by 1844 the people of Tubuai all considered themselves Christians. When Elders Noah Rogers and Benjamin F. Grouard left Elder Pratt on Tubuai, they sailed directly to Tahiti, arriving there on May 14, 1844. The island's beauty, climate, and friendly people had made it a favorite stopping place for whalers and other traders. (UIS)

1844-47

Rogers and Grouard stayed in Papeete, Tahiti for five months. They faced real problems. The Tahitians were at war with the French. The protestant missionaries would not let the Mormons use their facilities and they forbade their members from listening to them. The Americans had the difficult task of learning the Tahitian language. After the first two baptisms of Timoleon passengers Mr and Mrs Lincoln fortunately the next baptisms were among the white Tahitian speaking population, and these came to the aid of the missionaries. They slowly gained some facility with the language. Services were held irregularly and a few baptized, mainly American and English residents. Rogers brought some natives to believe but they would not obey. They feared repercussions from the English and French. Lacking significant success on Tahiti after five months, Rogers took a schooner for Huahine in October 1844. He met no success there but remained until late January. Grouard left Tahiti in late December and spent Christmas with Pratt in Tubuai. He returned to Tahiti with Pratt in January. In February 1845 Rogers and Grouard decided to go to distant islands where there was no English missionary influence and no war. On April 22, 1845 Grouard went to Anaa in the Tuamotus. Rogers went west to the leewards. Rogers did not meet with success and returned to Tahiti in the middle of June 1845. He learned of the prophet's death and was concerned for his family. He left for home on July 2, 1845. He arrived in Nauvoo on the 29th of December 1845. Meanwhile Grouard, who was having great success on Anaa, had requested help from Pratt, who was still in Tubuai. Upon receiving Grouard's request for help, Elder Pratt left for Tahiti. Once united on Tahiti, the elders worked a district called Tiarei for a month Pratt and Grouard were teaching and baptizing in the outlying district of Tiarei before they could sail for Anaa. (ZP) They were able to get passage on a boat on January 27, 1846. They landed on Anaa February 3rd. They worked in the Tuamotus until September. The first conference was held on September 24, 1846 to 10 branches representing 866 members. On September 25th 1846 Pratt decided to return to America to see his family. He

had not heard from his wife in almost 4 years. While waiting for a boat, they continued their teaching, preaching, blessing, and baptizing for two more months. By this time, in spite of many hardships, Pratt and Grouard had baptized more than a thousand souls into the kingdom. Pratt left the Tuamotus on November 14, 1846. He remained in the district of Tiarei until the end of March and raised up a branch at Huau. (ZP)

When Elder Pratt landed at Papeete he found the harbor busy with ships of trade and war. The hostilities between the French and the Tahitians were unabated. But a few weeks later, at the end of December, the war finally ended. On January 1, 1847, a large number of natives assembled to hear the French governor address them. He told them, among other things, that "they could embrace any kind of religion they thought proper, and in so doing he would protect them from persecution."



From New Year's Day until March, Elder Pratt spent most of his time in a district called Tiarei, about fifteen miles east of Papeete. One of his converts from Tubuai, Haametua, had come from there and had laid the groundwork for the establishment of the Church in Tiarei. Although Pratt felt that he was only marking his time until a ship sailed for California, he developed a branch of twenty-seven members at Huau. This early branch later proved to be important to the establishment of the Church on Tahiti. On March 28, 1847, Addison Pratt sailed for Honolulu with Captain Lajot on the schooner Providence. (UIS)

Elder Grouard's Work Between 1847 and 1850

While Pratt was away, Grouard remained busy. He selected Englishman John Hawkins, who was converted in the islands, to work with him. Hawkins was an avid teacher, and he expanded the work much farther into the Tuamotus. Grouard spent most of his time during Pratt's absence in Tahiti and Tubuai building and selling boats. While on Tahiti he and Hill built a boat the Anaura patterned after a whaling boat but with a large deck.

Pratt's second mission and closing the mission

Addison Pratt and James Brown arrived in Tahiti in May 24, 1850. By this time the French were firmly in control. For a time the law of religious toleration worked for the benefit of all non-Catholic missionaries. But the government, under Governor Bonard, had become uneasy about the presence of so many Americans within its domain. The government's uneasiness about foreigners and its preferential treatment of Catholicism combined to create a near-impossible situation for the Mormons. Addison Pratt and James Brown were restricted to Tahiti, forbidden to preach and were jailed in Papeete until November 1850. In January 1851 Addison Pratt went to Tubuai to be reunited with his wife and children who had arrived separately in Tubuai the previous October. James Brown remained in Tahiti while learning the language and proselyting in the districts until May 1851. A new mission ship the Ravaai had been built in Tubuai by Benjamin Grouard. It brought a large number of natives, white brethren and missionaries to Tahiti on its maiden voyage. At a mission conference at Huau on May 18 Elder Thomas Whitaker was voted to preside over church affairs on Tahiti and Moorea assisted by Julian Moses and two native elders. (ZP)

Although a group of Tahiti-bound missionaries was ready to leave by mid-summer of 1849, various delays held up their departure. Then, it was Pratt and James S. Brown who left first for the islands. Sailing from San Francisco, they landed at Papeete on May 24, 1850.

The same spring twenty-one more missionaries, seven of whom would preach, were called at April conference to serve in French Polynesia, as it later came to be called. Included were Louisa Barnes Pratt and daughters Ellen, Francis, Lois, and Ann Louise; Jonathan Crosby, his wife, Caroline (who was a sister of Mrs. Pratt), and their son Alma; Joseph Busby; Thomas Tompkins, his wife, and their two children (he was asked to take special care of the Pratts); a Brother McMerty and his wife and child; Sidney Alvarus Hanks (brother of Knowlton F. Hanks, who had died at sea during the earlier voyage); Simeon A. Dunn; Julian Moses; and Hiram E.W. Clark, age fourteen, who was under Sister Pratt's care. This company, prepared to teach the arts of civilization as well as the gospel, departed from Salt Lake City on May 7, 1850. They sailed from San Francisco on September 15, and, following a two-month voyage, they arrived at Tubuai on October 21, 1850. (UIS)

From the time of the Ravaai's maiden voyage to Tahiti in May 1851, the mission encountered greater and greater opposition from both the French government (and the Roman Catholic Church, which was supported by it) and representatives of the London Missionary Society. The involvement of the French government in mission affairs had been of no real consequence until 1848. In that year, however, the government had begun restricting travel from island to island. Not only the LDS but also the LMS missionaries believed this was part of a plot to curtail their work. The restrictions effectively hindered the missionary efforts.

By the time Elders Pratt and Brown had arrived back in the islands in 1850, the French were firmly in control. For a time the law of religious toleration worked for the benefit of all non-Catholic missionaries. But the government, under Governor Bonard, had become uneasy about the presence of so many Americans within its domain. Furthermore, Roman Catholic

missionaries, although not officially sponsored by the protectorate, seem to have received special favors and support. In historian Aarne A. Koskinen's words, "the French navy had unscrupulously interfered in the internal affairs" of the islands. Indeed, the Roman Catholics, too, evidently served the government in some instances. The government's uneasiness about foreigners and its preferential treatment of Catholicism combined to create a near-impossible situation for the Mormons.

In addition, the government announced a law in March 1852 that placed all religious affairs at Papeete under state control and created a new office of district minister to direct and correlate the religious activities in Polynesia. At the same time, missionaries were ordered to keep to one district. They were also supposed to preach only when they had been asked to do so by written invitation of their congregations. Neither Mormons nor Protestants adhered to these laws when they could avoid them. (UIS)

As will be seen, before the conflict was over Grouard had been summoned to Papeete to answer trumped-up criminal charges, James S. Brown had been deported, and some local Saints had lost their lives on Anaa because they insisted upon practicing their religion.

At about the time Elder Pratt came back from Utah, bringing Elder Brown with him, Elder Grouard and one of the local converts, Brother Whitaker, were charged with using seditious language at a conference held on Tubuai. Grouard noted, "Consequently a man-of-war was dispatched to bring us prisoners to Tahiti. . . . We had no public trial, but simply underwent an examination before the governor; and though some twenty affidavits had been elicited against us, they were so flimsy and contradictory, that simple affirmation of truth and innocence compelled an honourable acquittal."

James S. Brown, a young, energetic veteran of the Mormon Battalion march to California, attracted too much attention to himself. While laboring on Anaa, he displayed an American flag, sketched a map of the Battalion route, made another map showing the location of the gold fields in California (he had been at Sutter's Mill when the first gold was discovered), and sympathized openly with the Polynesians when they complained of the French yoke. All this was carefully noted by four Catholic priests who had recently established themselves on the island. Brown was incredulous when a French man-of-war brought gendarmes to arrest him, place him in chains, and transport him to Papeete. On November 10, 1851, he was tried before the governor and some associates. Four days later Elder Brown was told that he must leave the protectorate on the next boat. Elder Grouard made sure the next boat was the Ravaai, the mission ship. They set out on the seventeenth and traveled south to Raivavae, which was outside the protectorate at that time. Elder Pratt, who had been teaching there with little success, was replaced by Brown. Grouard and Pratt sailed on to Anaa and other islands in the Tuamotus and finally back to Tubuai, where they arrived on January 9, 1852.

Elder Brown remained on Raivavae and some other islands in the vicinity for almost a year. When he left Tahiti for home on November 26, 1852, he was deeply disturbed about the general condition of the Church in the islands. He observed, as did his companions who had left the same

port in May, that among the population there was a general decline in morals. The prohibition on liquor had been repealed, more licentious dances were growing in popularity, and venereal diseases were at near-epidemic proportions.

But the event that almost broke Elder Brown's heart was the so-called Mormon revolt on Anaa. When he arrived on Tahiti he was carefully watched by the police. He did not at first understand why, but through notes passed to him by young men from Anaa, he learned that a number of Church leaders from that island were now on Tahiti, held prisoners for having been involved in the murder of a policeman and a Roman Catholic priest.

This event occurred after President Pratt, Elder Grouard, and their families had left the islands in May 1852, leaving only Brown and Hanks to carry on missionary activities. About this time four Catholic priests had begun to proselyte intensely among the people of Anaa. They gathered a congregation of around thirty members, most of whom were reported to be employed by the government. These priests also gained the offices of "district ministers" and forbade Mormon meetings. The Mormons were not supposed to read, sing, or pray. One evening while a prayer meeting was underway, a partially drunken gendarme, accompanied by two priests, entered the Mormon chapel at Putuahara and told the Saints to stop their meeting. One woman remained on her knees. The gendarme drew his sword and swung it over his head to bring it down on her. The tip of the sword caught on a cross beam, and one of the brethren grabbed a fishing spear and ran it through the gendarme, killing him. In the scuffle that followed, one of the priests was killed with the gendarme's sword, evidently by one of the Mormons. The other priest escaped with serious cuts on his face. He managed to get word of these events to government headquarters in Papeete, and shortly a contingent of troops was on the little island. Before the troops left, five priesthood bearers, Tefatina, Reifara, Maru, Mafeuta, and Temutu, had been hanged from a beam tied between two coconut trees. A number of others, including several women, were chained and taken to Tahiti, where Brown later found them working in the mountains, building a road under very harsh conditions. It is no wonder that Elder Brown was deeply grieved to depart from the islands under these bitter circumstances.

When Elder Brown left, only Sidney Alvarus Hanks remained of all the foreign missionaries who had come to the islands. He was in the east Tuamotus and out of touch with the rest of the mission. He evidently stayed in the islands until about 1861. In addition to him, there were a number of local elders and other priesthood bearers who carried on the work of the Church. John Hawkins, who had worked closely with the Utah missionaries before their departure, assumed the leadership of the Church in Tahiti for a time. He resided on the island of Kaukura in the Tuamotus.

When Elder Grouard reported the status of the mission in Salt Lake City, he said there were between fifteen hundred and two thousand members of the Church on at least twenty islands spread over hundreds of miles of water. He said, "As a general thing they are faithful and zealous Saints." (UIS)

1852 Missionaries Departed the Islands.

It was decided that due to the persecution and lack of success among the Tahitians, the missionaries would return to the States, Addison Pratt left with his family on May 16th 1852. (Journals of Addison Pratt).

The government announced a law in March 1852 that placed all religious affairs at Papeete under state control and created a new office of district minister to direct and correlate the religious activities in Polynesia. At the same time, missionaries were ordered to keep to one district. They were also supposed to preach only when they had been asked to do so by written invitation of their congregations. Neither Mormons nor Protestants adhered to these laws when they could avoid them. The American missionaries left on May 16th 1852. (Addison Pratt left with his family and Benjamin Grouard left with his Tahitian wife and children.) The remaining missionaries (Crosby, Layton, Whittaker and Alexander) left in September 1852.

Addison Pratt undertook a fourth mission in 1856. He arrived in Tahiti on the first of June. He was restricted to Tahiti and not allowed to preach. "Two chiefs, one from the island of Anaa and the other from Taroa, hearing that he was at Tahiti, went down for the purpose of taking him back with them. But the government disapproved and said that "Pratt had done all the preaching that he would be permitted to do there." Pratt learned that Elder Sidney Alvarus Hanks was hidden away among the Tuamotu islands unnoticed by the French, where he carried on and had "baptized nearly all the inhabitants of one island and large numbers on the other islands." When Hanks learned of Pratt's arrival, he went to Tahiti to find him but failed. Pratt was greatly saddened by reports of persecution and was heartened to know of those still faithful to the cause. Failing to obtain permission to minister, he took the ship home having been in Tahiti about four months. (SFC 29-30). Sidney Hanks remained in the islands until 1862.

Persecutions of the members continued for many years. Indeed the Catholics and Government harassment of the saints on Anaa and other Tuamotu islands became so intense that it was dangerous to openly espouse the Mormon faith. This fact in combination with the lack of designated authority to settle questions of doctrine or procedure allowed dissension to spread that led to division into several factions – Mormons, Israelites, the sheep, Abraham's church, Darkites and Whistlers. The French government extended general religious toleration throughout the protectorate in 1867. After 1867 Mormon Polynesian Zion was established in the village of Faaa, a few miles west of Papeete. The Saints in and around Papeete gathered in a little mountain sanctuary near Faaa, also known as Tiona, three and a half miles west of the city. Exactly how many members of the Church lived there is not known. But they did conduct schools as well as regular church meetings. In the early 1870s this little community was under

the care of local Tahitian elders and an East Indian (or part East Indian) member named David Brown.

1873

It was into this branch that two missionaries from the Reorganized Church came. Charles Wandell, an apostate Mormon who had joined the RLDS Church, and Glaud Rodger arrived at Tahiti on December 13, 1873. They visited the Tiona settlement and, unfortunately (from the LDS perspective) they convinced most of the Saints that they represented the church that had inherited the authority of the Prophet Joseph Smith after his martyrdom in 1844. They claimed that Brigham Young and the Utah Mormons were apostates and that the authority to lead the Church had been given to Joseph Smith III, who was the leader of the Reorganization. Before they went on to Australia to fill their missions, they baptized fifty-one people into their church.

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Reopening the Mission 1892

After the closing of the LDS mission in French Polynesia in 1852, the mission in Hawaii was the only Pacific one to remain open for the next several decades. In 1888, however, missionaries were sent from Hawaii to Samoa to establish the LDS Church there. By the summer of 1891 the mission in Samoa with headquarters near Apia was well under way. Though the mission was only three years old, President William O. Lee decided it was time to open new fields of labor. Then, with the blessings of the Church's First Presidency, he began making plans to send elders to Tahiti. Soon afterwards Elder William A. Seegmiller arrived in Samoa on October 4, 1891, President Lee asked him whether he would be willing to help with the reopening of Church work in Tahiti. He accepted the call and, eleven days later, when Tahitian Bibles and a dictionary arrived, he set to work learning the language.



Joseph W. Damron

Elder Joseph W. Damron, Jr. was selected to go to Tahiti with Elder William A. Seegmiller. When the steamer Richmond left Apia harbor, both men were apprehensive about what lay ahead for them in Tahiti, but they wrote of their conviction that they could succeed in this new assignment.

Their apprehension stayed with them through the entire voyage, in no way lessened by the natural beauty of Tahiti, which they could see as their ship glided to its mooring. How would they be accepted by the people, the government? Could they find any Mormons from the early era? "[In] all that crowd," wrote Elder Seegmiller, "not one did we know; it seemed strange, and we were indeed strangers." It was January 27, 1892. The Tahitian Mission of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was open again after a hiatus of forty years.

As soon as they were settled, Elders Damron and Seegmiller began carefully studying the local situation. Through visits to Mr. Turnball, manager of a local firm, and Mr. William F. Doty, U.S. consul, they learned a little about the government situation. First, the territory was officially called Establissemments Francais de l'Oceanie. The protectorate, as it had been known to earlier LDS missionaries, was now a colony. Between the 1840s and 1880s, the French had laboriously assembled the five archipelagos of the area (the Society Islands, the Marquesas, the Tuamotus, the Gambiers, the Australes, and the isolated island of Clipperton) into one governmental entity headed by a governor and council. (Note the Leewards were not included.) Although the French

had hoped the islands would bring them an economic advantage, by this time these hopes had not materialized. Mr. Doty assured the elders that there were no restrictions concerning preaching the gospel or "carrying out our duty."

One day, shortly after they arrived, Elders Damron and Seegmiller learned about a group of Mormons who lived outside of Papeete at Faava. On February 8, 1892 Amaro, the Tahitian neighbor who had adopted them, took them there. They discovered that the supposed Mormons were actually RLDS. A Tahitian RLDS elder, Tupuni, explained that there were over two thousand members of the Reorganized church in the various islands. This meeting was the first of hundreds of encounters between elders of the two churches.

Because they could speak neither Tahitian nor French, their missionary work moved slowly in the early months. Both elders were troubled by this and so informed the First Presidency. In order to improve communications between Salt Lake City and Tahiti (all communications had previously been sent through the mission president in Samoa), the First Presidency appointed Elder Damron temporary president of the newly organized Tahitian Mission and instructed him that he and Seegmiller were to report directly to Salt Lake City each month. Damron learned of his appointment on April 29, 1892.

The First Presidency listened to the elders' pleas for help and called Elder James S. Brown, now sixty-five years old and missing one leg, to go to Tahiti as president of the mission. He was the only living member of the earlier mission group. Brown's son, Elando, and Elder Thomas Jones, Jr., were called to accompany the veteran elder.



James S. Brown

By June 1, when the three reinforcement elders arrived, Damron and Seegmiller had not accomplished much that was visible. But they were beginning to use the Tahitian language fairly well, and they did know the lay of the land. What they wanted now was to get some converts and especially to find members of the Church who had remained faithful since the early mission closed.

Not long after his arrival, President Brown was invited to use Mr. Atwater's hall for religious services. Three days later the elders were informed that they would not be "permitted to labor as ministers" among the people of the colony. After consulting the American consul, writing letters, and seeking French legal counsel, they learned that they could legally preach if they notified the appropriate authorities, the mayor or local magistrate, in writing before holding each service. Brown said that because of this restriction they were "practically shut out from holding meetings."

Then, on August 22, 1892 Damron was visited by an employee of a wealthy part-Tahitian named Mapuhi, who lived in the Tuamotu Islands. Mapuhi claimed to be a member of the Church and wanted to see the missionaries.

He later proved to be a true Latter-day Saint. He shared with the elders and Saints his three schooners and his home, which the missionaries described as a seven-room mansion, larger than the fine homes of Papeete. Mapuhi had joined the Church as a small boy when Sidney Alvarus Hanks ministered in the Tuamotus. As a young man he had learned the trade of shipbuilding, and

by trading pearls and pearl shells with the island people, he had become known as the "pearl king." Brown learned that after he and Seegmiller had sailed for Tubuai, Brother Mapuhi had come to Tahiti.

During the absence of the missionaries from Tahiti, a new group of elders arrived on March 21, 1893, from Salt Lake City. The new recruits included Frank Cutler, Thomas L. Woodbury, Eugene M. Cannon, Carl J. Larsen, I. Frank Goff, Fred C. Rossiter, Jesse M. Fox, and Edward Sudbury. The new missionaries rented a home and set to work studying the Tahitian language. In early May, President Brown returned to Tahiti and gave the missionaries their teaching assignments.

Basically the missionary method consisted of from one to four elders traveling alone or together from island to island, meeting with the people, living with them in their huts or homes, eating their food, blessing the sick, organizing branches, baptizing an occasional convert, debating with leaders of other denominations (particularly the RLDS), trying to escape the inconsistent but heavy hand of the government, and in general attempting to uplift the Saints morally and spiritually. Local Polynesian elders generally presided over the branches.

In July 1893, about thirteen months after he had arrived in the islands, James S. Brown turned the leadership of the now firmly established mission over to Joseph W. Damron. On July 8, Brown, accompanied by his son Elando and Elder Edward Sudbury, whose health was poor, sailed from Tahiti.(UIS)

In 1895 President Frank Cutler dealt with French government problems in the Tuamotus and interacted with French Governor in Papeete.

1896

In 1896 Andrew Jenson, assistant Church Historian visited the islands: He toured some of the Tuamotu islands with Mission President Frank Cutler. President Cutler had 8 missionaries in 1896.

1898 Faataua chapel President Daniel T. Miller

Along with the language program and translation work, the energetic President Miller saw the need for the mission to have a geographical center. Until his time there were no headquarters where new missionaries could be welcomed and where they could go when they were tired or sick or to pick up mail, tracts, supplies, and so forth. Nor was there a meeting house in Papeete. Unlike the Tuamotus and Tubuai, where the Church had fine stone chapels built or under construction in all seventeen branches, the Saints in Papeete had, with some difficulty, been renting halls for services. In the spring of 1897, Miller and his companions began looking for property to purchase. They hoped to build a small meeting hall with a mission office and sleeping room adjoining it.

During April conference at Hikueru in the Tuamotus, President Miller explained to the Saints the need for a building in Papeete. The Saints in the Tuamotus were relatively prosperous. Most of their income was derived from diving for pearl shell and from making copra (dried coconut meat). For the chapel they made donations of \$602 and promises of another \$400. With this money in hand, Miller continued to look for a good piece of property.

He did not find an ideal piece of land, but in August he obtained deed to a lot at Fautahera, on the outskirts of Papeete. It was twenty meters by thirty-five meters, donated by a friend of the Saints named Arai. The completed buildings were quite small, consisting of a meeting hall, an office for the mission president, and a study and sleeping room. Nearby, outside, they built a small cook house, which also doubled as a dormitory for missionaries.

Soon after he arrived there, President Miller recognized the need to expand missionary efforts on Tahiti. He saw that it would take far fewer elders to proselyte the ten-thousand-plus people concentrated there than were required to handle the people on the scattered Tuamotu Islands. With this in mind he assigned several elders to begin proselyting the villages of Tahiti. Many of these places had been visited before, but almost always by elders who had only recently arrived in the mission and who could not speak Tahitian. By the summer of 1899, pairs of missionaries were living in three districts of Tahiti, and people gradually began joining the Church.

In his effort to make Tahiti the actual administrative center of the Church, D. T. Miller decided to hold the April 1899 mission-wide conference at Papeete. The cost of coming to the conference was prohibitively high for most members in the Tuamotus, but fairly large groups did come from Takaroa, Hikueru, and two other islands. Local elders and sisters spoke, sang, and prayed. A warm, optimistic feeling pervaded the proceedings. In fact, President Miller reported that he had the same feeling he had enjoyed at general conference in Salt Lake City.

1900. At that date, President William H. Chamberlin was in charge of the Mission, and Elders were laboring in the various districts of Tahiti. President Chamberlin received his release to return to Zion on March 1st, and Elder Joseph I. Haight was appointed to succeed him in the presidency of the Mission, receiving that charge 7 March 1900. During the time Elder Haight was in charge of the Mission, the branches continued to flourish, tracts were printed, and the Gospel preached diligently to all. Elder Haight says in the Mission Diary: "I can say positively and without reserve that at this present time all the districts on Tahiti have been well tracted excepting Mataia and Papeari, and Elders McGregor and Pratt are now appointed to canvas those districts".

During the year 1899, Daniel T. Miller, David Heff, William H. Chamberlin, and Israel E. Willey commenced the translation of the Book of Mormon into the Tahitian language. The work was eventually completed and printed during the years 1903-1904 by Frank Cutler, Eugene M. Cannon, David Heff, and Daniel T. Miller. This work, together with the Bible translated by the first Missionaries from the London Missionary Society, comprise the only books of the "Standard Works" printed into the Tahitian Language.

In Dec 1903 a printing press arrived. The mission was able to print tracts locally in Tahitian.

A New Mission Headquarters in Papeete

After the turn of the century, there was a gradual trend toward centralization of the Church in Papeete. Most of the members were still in the Tuamotu Islands, but the growth on Tahiti and the Leeward Group helped to make Papeete more important to the Church. By 1904 the mission

president saw the need for a much larger facility. Early in 1905 President Edward S. Hall purchased for 9,000 francs a lot on the corner of Brea and Dumont d'Urville streets. By October 1906, the missionaries had completed a new mission home and meeting hall. Having new, respectable headquarters did much to elevate the Church in the eyes of missionaries, members, and nonmembers alike. (UIS)

On 5 October 1906 the Orovini chapel and mission home were dedicated by President Edward S. Hall

On 9 March 1905, President Hall completed the purchase of the piece of property in Orovini, Papeete situated on the corner of Avenues "Brea." and "Dumont d'Urville", for the sum of 9,000 francs. It was purchased from a Miss Celine Bonnet, and the deeds made out in the name of President Joseph F. Smith of Salt Lake City. Work started immediately to fill the property, as it was low and swampy. It took approximately 2,000 square yards of dirt, at a cost of nearly \$200 to fill the property. President Hall made a short trip to Salt Lake City to make arrangements with the First Presidency for the building of a new mission home and chapel. He was away from the Mission just three and one-half months, during which time he married, and completed the arrangements for the building of a nine room Mission Home, and a Chapel, thirty by sixty feet. Elder James S. Noall, a carpenter from Salt Lake, was called on a mission to Tahiti to erect these buildings, and arrived with President Hall and wife. Sixty thousand feet of lumber with other necessary building supplies were shipped from San Francisco, and when all the material had been accumulated, work was started on the foundations 8 November 1905 by President Hall and a number of the Elders. "Work progressed rapidly until finally on 10 April 1906, a short meeting was held, at which time the Mission Home was formally dedicated. A month previous to this time, work commenced on the Papeete Branch meeting house, and on 5 October 1906, it too was dedicated, with approximately 1,200 in attendance. The dedicatory prayer was offered in Tahitian by President Edward S. Hall.

During the evening of 7 February 1906, the seas began to rise in the face of a tropical Hurricane, and continued to do so until late the next morning, when the center of the storm passed over, the wind reversed and drove back the rising sea, probably saving most of inland Papeete, which had not been seriously damaged by the first seas. But, along the seashore, the sea had done its damage, for every frame building along the waterfront was smashed, many of them carried away during the storm. The American Consulat was demolished, the roof laying flat on the ground. Were it not for the splendid work of seven of the Elders most of the Consulat records would have been lost. The Elders, at the risk of their lives, helped remove what books and records they could from the building. Mr. Coty, the Consul, and his family remained at the Mission Home until other accommodations were found for them. Great damage was also done in the Tuamotu group, and many lives were lost as was the case in 1903.

Elder Jos. T. Wilkinson, Jr. and wife arrived in the Mission 7 June 1905. He is a printer by trade and has been sent down to run the Mission Printing Press, and print the official Mission Paper, called the "Heheuraa Api". The first little lady missionary born in the Mission presented herself to Elder and Sister Wilkinson on 21 May 1906. She was closely followed by the first little boy missionary, born to President and Sister Hall 12 August 1906. (TH 1948)

Te Ve'a

Another missionary undertaking that was both a mission and Church effort was the mission newspaper (sometimes called a magazine) Te Heheuraa Api or the New Revelation. Beginning in 1907 and continuing with only occasional interruptions, this paper served the needs of Church members and nonmembers alike. Every issue contained information about the Church in Tahiti, Utah, and the world in general, as well as news of world events. Gospel lessons and inspirational articles were also included. The missionaries sold subscriptions to this periodical by traveling

from house to house throughout the islands. Although the number of subscribers fluctuated, by 1929 over thirteen hundred people received the paper. (UIS)

The missionaries evidently seldom did house-to-house tracting with the intention of getting into a prolonged series of gospel discussions that would lead to the conversion and baptism of an investigator. Instead they sold mission newspapers, planned and attended conferences, directed plays, built chapels, and talked with the Saints. Somehow, during this period, the Leeward Group, where a fairly good start had been made earlier in the century, was almost left out. Elders occasionally "tracted round" these islands and sold newspaper subscriptions, but they rarely attempted to do any long-range work.

WWI Tahitian soldiers visit SLC on return from Europe.

1918 plague

French Polynesia Mission 1910-1919

Year Total Members*Convert Baptisms Melchizedek Priesthood Total Branches Total Missionaries

1910 1,115 11 70 14 10

1912 1,301 61 68 12 8

1915 1,373 0 7 12 13

1916 1,398 18 74 12 15

1917 1,493 58 77 12 15

1918 1,539 26 79 12 16

1919 1,563 16 79 12 11

French Polynesia Mission 1920-1950

Year Total Members*Convert Baptisms Melchizedek Priesthood Total Branches Total Missionaries

1920 1,591 15 88 14 14

1921 1,625 29 14 18

1922 1,665 33 93 16 16

1923 1,689 29 100 16 5

1924 1,721 17 98 16 11

1925 1,493 14 102 16 6

1926 1,065 10 93 16 11

1927	1,079	26	96	16	13
1928	1,109	58	95	16	14
1929	1,149	48	98	15	15
1930	1,181	26	98	16	12
1931	1,222	47	98		11
1932	1,297	28	104		9 average
1933	1,311	30	107		7 average
1934	1,346	21	111		7 average
1935	1,387	30	114	16	11
1936	1,385	33	114	17	16
1937	1,492	27	120	20	22
1938	1,493	33	123	21	18
1939	1,568	49	132	22	25
1940	1,511	20	130	22	0**
1941-45	No statistics available 2				
1946		28	76	15	6
1947	No statistics available				
1948	1,160	31	85		12
1949	No report submitted				
1950	1,604	67	104	20	11

*Includes unbaptized children of members

**16 average

French Polynesia Mission Statistics 1951-1971

Year Total Members Convert Baptisms Melchizedek Priesthood Total Branches Number of Missionaries
foreign local

1950	1,604	67	104	20	11	-
1951	1,700	74	116	27	7	20
1952	1,753	27	126	27	13	-
1953	1,824	32	130	27	11	-
1954	2,028	153	136	28	8	-
1955	2,149	63	140	30	10	-
1956	2,163	32	145	17?	12	-
1957	2,313	64	147	21?	12	-
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1966	4,376	71	287	28	21	4
1967	4,479	65	305	29	40	10
1968	4,555	118	293	31	47	10
1969	4,864	92	323	31	48	-
1970	4,834	111	335	31	54	6
1971	4,750	158	314	30	-	-

1921 DOM visit

On 9 April 1921, Elder David O. McKay and President Hugh J. Cannon of the Liberty Stake visited the Mission. These brethren came with the intention of visiting the Tuamotu islands in speedy steamers, and being back in Papeete in time to catch the next ship to New Zealand. They were, of course, disappointed in not finding President Leonard H. Kennard in headquarters. President Kennard had been waiting in Tubuai for a ship, but due to lack of shipping he had been unable to return to Papeete for their arrival. Efforts were made to charter a vessel with which to visit the Tuamotu island group, but this too proved impossible. The conclusion was reached by all concerned that the Tahitian Mission was badly in need of a ship. After having spent only a few days in Tahiti, the visiting brethren continued on their journey to New Zealand.

All the Saints went out to Mataiea, one of the districts of Tahiti, with President Burbidge and some of the Elders on 15 November 1931, to dedicate a small niau building, built for the use of the Elders in doing missionary work in that district.

For April conference in 1935, the band journeyed to Papeete where they participated in the conference program. The program presented by the Mutual included plays, singing and guitar groups, and a concert by the band. So well advertized was this event, that by actual count there were 3,208 in attendance, which was acknowledged as the largest group ever assembled for a church event in Mission History. During the next few days following conference, the band and the church soccer team toured the island, giving a short concert in each district. At Tautira, a soccer game and spear throwing contests were held between the Church team and the people of Tautira, and in the evening, the band gave a concert which was very well attended. The band also played for the residents of the Leper Colony in Orofara.

1939 Rufus K. Hardy, seventy visited the islands.

World War II Departure of Missionaries on 1940

President Eugene M. Cannon succeeded President Stevens in the presidency of the Mission arriving in Tahiti 3 August 1940. Shortly after his arrival, a telegram from the first Presidency was received requesting that all the Elders be returned to the United States as quickly as possible, due to recent world events. The island schooner "Benicia" was chartered by President Cannon, and on 19 November 1940, President Cannon, wife, and twelve Missionaries sailed for Honolulu. The Branch President, Ani a Mariteragi was left in charge of the Mission Property until the new President, Ernest C. Rossiter arrived in the Mission on 6 June 1941.

At the beginning of WWII all US missionaries were sent home in November 1940. The one exception was President Eugene Rossiter and his wife and 4 year old son were sent to Papeete to be caretakers of the mission in late 1941. (He had served as mission president from 1915-19). He served there until 1944, when he returned to the States due to ill health.

President Rossiter travelled extensively throughout the islands trying to keep contact with all the branches. However, he was handicapped by lack of missionaries to help him, and as a result, many difficulties arose in the branches.

Return of Missionaries 1946

President Edgar Bentley Mitchell arrived in Tahiti in 1945 to reopen the mission headquarters. In June 1946 the first 4 missionaries returned to French Polynesia after the war. Eight more arrived in 1947; followed by 4 more in 1948. Initially they were sent to Tubuai and the Tuamotus.

In early 1947 there was only one branch on Tahiti and there were none in the Leeward Islands.

During 1948 President Mitchell assigned elders to work in several areas of Tahiti permanently. By the end of the year, beginnings had been made at Papara, Paea, and Punaauia, and a branch

had been organized at Pueu. (UIS) Elder Magneson worked in Pueu and Elders Mallory and Savage tracted Teahupo.

A new Branch was organized in Huahine in the leeward Islands, and in the district of Pueu on Little Tahiti, Elders labored with moderate success, three converts to the church having been baptized there to date 1948.

1948 Paea branch

Fariipiti: Brother Leland Carver, a former missionary to Tahiti, with his wife and family arrived in Tahiti 12 September 1947. Brother Carver had been called on a mission by the church to help in the construction of the new Tahitian Tabernacle and Mission Home. Former Mission President, Frank J. Fullmer, arrived with 400 tons of building supplies and equipment on 28 December 1947. Work had been started on the project, but the tempo of the work increased rapidly with the arrival of Brother Fullmer and the building supplies. Brother Fullmer had been called by the First Presidency to supervise the construction of the new chapel and Mission Home for Tahiti.

On New Year's day, 1 January 1948, a short and simple ground breaking ceremony, and dedication, was held under the direction of President Mitchell on the site of the new chapel.

Elder Matthew Cowley of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, President of the Pacific Islands Missions of the church, visited the mission on a tour of inspection on 28 June 1948. President Cowley, accompanied by President Mitchell made a short trip to Tubuai to visit the Elders and Saints there. On this trip they visited the islands of Tubuai and Raivavae. Shortly thereafter, a trip was made to the islands of Huahine, Raiatea, Bora Bora, Mopiha, and Motuone where saints and friends of the church were visited. It was expected that the other branches of the Mission in the Tuamotu islands would also be visited, but due to difficulty in obtaining quick transportation, it was decided that further extensive visits would of necessity have to be postponed until some future date. It was therefore decided that all further plans be suspended and arrangements be made to hold the cornerstone laying ceremony on the 14th of August 1948.

1950 Fariipiti dedicated

Jan 22 1950 Fariipiti chapel dedicated by Apostle Matthew Cowley.

Apr 1950 dedicated fare niau in Paea

1950 there were members in Arue

President Mallory took missionary focus off the Tuamotus in 1950. He assigned 7 of his limited number of missionaries to Tahiti because there had been a shift in population from the Tuamotus to the Society Islands, that is, Tahiti, Moorea, and the Leeward Group. The shift of Church members and the growth of branches in Tahiti-Moorea and Leeward districts was dramatic.

There are two overarching reasons for the rapid growth of the Church in French Polynesia during the past thirty years (1956-1986) First, the missionaries, who have greatly increased in numbers, have used new and more effective proselyting methods. Second, there has been a shift in population from the Tuamotus to the Society Islands, that is, Tahiti, Moorea, and the Leeward Group. The mission presidents since World War II have generally placed more emphasis on proselyting among the people of these islands than elsewhere in the mission. The chart below illustrates the extent of the population shift toward the western islands since 1946.

French Polynesia Census Figures

Island or Group 1946 census 1967 census

Tahiti	24,820	61,519
Moorea	2,838	4,370
Leeward	12,645	15,337
Subtotal	40,303	81,226

Tuamotu & Gambier	6,696	6,664
Austral	3,921	5,053
Makatea	1,826	55*
Marquesas	2,988	5,174
Total	55,734	98,378

*Phosphate works closed 1966

Although a number of mission presidents before the war recognized the advantages of tracting and teaching where the bulk of the people were, it was not until 1948, during the time of President Bentley Mitchell, that serious proselyting with the intention of establishing permanent branches took place on Tahiti. But even though a beginning was made in the outer areas of Tahiti at that time, it was not until 1953 that missionaries began to make inroads among the people beyond Papeete.

The shift of Church members and the growth of branches in Tahiti-Moorea and Leeward districts was dramatic. In early 1947 there was only one branch on Tahiti and there were none in the Leeward Islands. By 1967 there were ten branches in Tahiti and Moorea, and eight in the Leeward Group. On the other hand, the number of branches in the Tuamotus dropped from eighteen to twelve during the same era.

1950s Pueu niau chapel Tregaskis and Hilton

1950 Larson and Almond worked in Mataeia they built a niau chapel

Dec 1950 cement basketball court Fariipiti

1953? Chinese branch

On March 4, 1953, John K. Orton became president of the Tahitian mission. Shortly after he arrived, he visited the Saints, members, and missionaries in the Tuamotus and on Tubuai. He was moved to take an unusual course of action, which he described in this way:

“At this time all the missionaries were called into headquarters, and a new plan was discussed and decided upon. The new plan, simply stated, was to remove the missionaries from the outlying islands and to concentrate their work in Papeete, where there is the largest portion of the population. We had had no baptisms up until August. From August till the first of the year we had 32 converts. We have returned the outlying islands to the native Priesthood holders to administer and the biggest portion of the missionaries' time in proselyting. For the first time in the history of the mission, the missionaries were given a set of lessons for investigators that proceeded from point to point in an orderly explanation of the restored gospel.” (UIS)

Dec 5, 1954 Covered Fare Basket Fariipiti

Jan 1955 David O. McKay visit.

President McKay asked the mission president to assign some missionaries to learn the French language and to begin proselyting among the French-speaking people of the islands. Elders Thomas Stone and Everett Williams, who arrived in the mission on March 17, 1955 were assigned to learn the French language and begin teaching. By May 8, they were out tracting among the people. In June, a French-language Sunday School was organized in connection with the Papeete Branch. Thirty-six members and investigators, most of them youths, attended. At almost the same time an MIA class was started for the same people. Since that time mission presidents have placed ever-increasing emphasis on the use of the French language. A French-speaking branch was organized on October 13, 1957, with one hundred and twenty members, and in recent years Church meetings have been held bilingually. (UIS)

When the membership of the Papeete Branch grew to around four hundred and the combined number of elders on Tahiti and Tubuai rose to 125, President Christensen decided that an elders quorum organization would be justified. On September 9, 1956, Taumata Mapuhi was sustained as the first elders quorum president in French Polynesia. He chose Tinomana Hauata and Joseph Benacek to serve as his counselors. The new quorum included all the elders on Tahiti and Tubuai, four hundred miles away. One of the first projects of the quorum was to develop plans for a temple excursion for worthy elders and their families. (UIS)

Started 1956 French Branch -> Papeete 3

Fariipiti office addition Feb 1958

During March 1956, Elder Wendell B. Mendenhall, chairman of the Church Building Committee, visited Tahiti. After seeing the niau chapels at Paea and Pueu, he was shocked by the conditions under which the Saints carried on the activities of the Church.

Not long after this, the First Presidency and the expenditures committee of the Church approved the building of five chapels in the French Polynesia Mission. The first project was to be a new chapel at Paea, a few miles around the island from Papeete.

The story of the Paea Branch is typical of the development of the new branches of the Church since World War II. The Church first gained a foothold there through the efforts of one family. In early 1949, President E. Bentley Mitchell helped Brother Maoria Anihia to organize a small home Primary composed of his own and some neighbor children. Later the group began meeting in a borrowed home. In 1950 the Saints there built a niau chapel, which was dedicated on April 29. The next day the first convert to the Church from Paea was baptized. Two local missionaries, Tu and Teaki Menemene, were assigned to the area, and they accomplished much during the seven months they worked there. Gradually, year by year, the branch increased in size until by the mid-1950s there was an obvious need for a better facility.

After Brother Mendenhall's visit in March 1956, President Christensen began looking for an appropriate piece of land for a chapel large enough to seat one hundred people, with an adjoining cultural hall and from four to six classrooms. On March 6, 1957, negotiations for land were concluded. This was the first purchase of land in the name of the newly formed "Council of Administration of the Tahitian Mission of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." This Council of Administration, more commonly called the Board of Directors, was essential to the mission at that time, French law requiring each religious organization to have an official Board of Directors that was recognized by the governor. The move to form the Council of Administration was also motivated by the French government's refusal to recognize the old Foreign Lands Corporation as anything but a foreign business company. The recognition by the French government of the Council of Administration is the closest the Church has come to legal recognition by the government in Tahiti.

As in Tonga and Samoa, local young men were called to labor as building missionaries. When the fifteen workers were assembled at Paea, people came from near and far to visit with and see the builders who were "working without pay." Although most of the labor missionaries were unskilled when they began work on the Paea chapel, before long they had learned how to lay brick, do carpentry, drive trucks, install plumbing, and put in electrical wiring. Their families at home supported them, and the local branch provided their food.

Work began in early April 1957, and the completed building was dedicated on April 5, 1958. After the Paea chapel was finished, the building missionaries moved to Uturoa and then to Avera, Raiatea, in the Leeward Group.



The Paea chapel on Tahiti was built by labor missionaries. It is typical of buildings constructed under that program between 1957 and 1965. (Photo by R. Lanier Britsch.)

After the abolishment of the building missionary program, a number of new modern chapels were constructed throughout the islands. Even before the Paea chapel was erected, the Church had installed a number of concrete slabs for basketball and other sports. These recreation areas were also used for dancing and other entertainments. In 1954 a covered basketball pavilion was built near the Papeete chapel. Called the Fare Basket, it became an important gathering place for youth and also served as a missionary tool.

Mission President Karl M. Richards, who served from 1966 to 1969, purchased a considerable number of building lots. Government officials informed him that after certain plans to open the Leeward Islands up to tourists were completed, the value of land would inflate rapidly. President Richards heeded this warning and bought needed and suitable property wherever he could find it. Just as the government officials predicted, the value of land in this area skyrocketed after Richards bought the lots for the Church.

By the early 1970s, the Church owned nineteen permanent and fourteen temporary chapels, twelve recreation halls, eleven basketball courts, and seventeen missionary quarters. Since that time the number of buildings has continued to expand almost yearly.

Pueu niau chapel 10 May 1958 Oliver Cox rebuilt it p150

Papeete 1

Papeete 2

By the end of the 1950s missionary quota restrictions decreased the number of missionaries in Tuamotus. By the end of 1957 the membership of the church had increased in the society islands and decreased in the Tuamotus. The relatively modest numbers also reflect the difficulty of maintaining accurate records caused by the frequent relocation of church members. There were still six organized branches of the Church in the Tuamotus. But their numbers were greatly depleted. Hao 36, Hikueru 65, Nihiru 47, Taenga 34, Takapoto 22, Takaroa 43. At that time the islands of Ahe, Faaite, Fakarava, and Marokau each had only a handful of members and no officially organized branches. (SFC 139)

Papenoo Branch 1959

Ralph Anderson arrived in Tahiti on Feb 6, 1958. He was assigned to be the mechanic for the mission schooner, Paraita. He would pair up with an available Elder to do proselyting. In May 1959 Martin Conover was about to go home. He wanted to do some proselyting, so he and Ralph Anderson rode their bikes out to Papenoo district on the North east side of Tahiti. They got permission from the district governor to teach. He was also a deacon in the protestant church. They decided to go inland where the river empties into the ocean. They met Tahooi who sounded interested in letting them teach him later that night. When they arrived the house was filled with people with lanterns. Martin taught the lesson. It turned out that Tahooi and Mataotao were assistant deacons in the Protestant church. His church was mad at him for letting the Mormons teach at his house. Conover went home with Mati from Idaho. Ralph would get a native companion (sometimes Hiro Mariteragi) to go with him to Papenoo. Ralph had to really study to teach the lessons as hadn't taught all of them. Within a month they had 40 baptisms. They held meetings in a member's home (Tahooi). Erena Taamino was baptized. Pres. Reeder assigned him to go to Takaroa to solve some branch problems in September. He was replaced by Gary Walton and Elder Oliver. They were there from Sept 1959 to Jan 1960. It was during that time that a fare pureraa niau was built by the road near the ocean. Chapel started November 16 and completed Dec 12. It was dedicated by President Joseph Reeder Dec 20, 1959. Elder Walton also chose local members to be the branch presidency. Tihati ____ was president. Elder Hunn became Elder Walton's companion in January 1960. There was no Hitiaa branch at that time.

In 1961 President Kendall Young called Otis Doom to be his first counselor to assist with the branches. He also called 10 experienced men to form a mission council. They helped local branch leaders resolve problems and gave them guidance.



A few chapels similar to this one were used in Tahiti until the 1970s. (Courtesy LDS Church Archives.)

Faaone, Hitiaa, and Tiarei

Parker J. Fuhriman

In January, 1961, President Kendall Young assigned Elders Parker J. "Ioane" Fuhriman and Teariki a Noho (newly called as a missionary) to open the northeast coast of Tahiti from Tiarei to Faaone. A branch already existed in Papenoo and a small group in Pueu..

On January 11, 1961 they were driven to Faaone by Elder Gary Walton in the mission truck. For two days they had been looking in Tiarei and Faaone among those who had previously purchased *ve'a* subscriptions for a family with whom they could live, but they were unsuccessful in finding a place to stay. Around midday on the second day in Faaone, Elder Walton accidentally ripped the seat of his pants getting into the mission truck. As he was getting back out of the truck to pin them up, a little *pereoo* came by, screeched to a halt, and backed up to talk to the elders. The man, Eugene Maitui, lived nearby and spontaneously invited the elders to stay with his family. Elders Fuhriman and Noho began that day tracting and teaching in Faaone and then rode their bikes the 20 km. to Tiarei where they also began teaching, and slept there in a small *niau* movie house.

On February 4, Elders Pierre "Petero" Konkurat and George "Virapura" Parsons joined Elders Fuhriman and Noho, and they found a small rent-free house where all four elders could live in Hitiaa between Faaone and Tiarei about 100 meters inland from the road. The elders were able to travel to Papeete when needed by catching the district *pereoo* going to the market in Papeete at 4:30 am by placing a tree branch in the middle of the road at night to signal it to stop for them.

Soon they were teaching families in Tiarei, Mahaena, Hitiaa, and Faaone, and three group meetings were held in Faaone, Hitiaa, and Tiarei on Sundays and MIA and Primary on weekdays with about 15-35 attending. The first two convert baptisms from Faaone occurred on February 26, and in March there were several more baptisms in Faaone and Tiarei. Elder William “Viriamu” Hunn took Elder Parson’s place on March 4.

In August, 1961, Elders Parker Fuhriman and Gerard Jugant worked with members from Papeete to have a small 14 by 24 foot *niau* chapel built in Faaone. The chapel was built in four days with local materials from coconut trunks, *niau* roof, and split bamboo walls. The total cost came to \$26 to purchase lumber for the benches and table, and hinges for the doors. Elder John Longden, Assistant to the Council of the Twelve, dedicated it on August 25, 1961 with 134 people attending. *The Deseret News* spoke of Elder Longden’s report at October General Conference: “Elder Longden... [dedicated] the chapel in Tahiti which was built in four days by members of the Church. Benches for the small chapel were completed just in time for the dedication; otherwise the 134 members and friends attending would have been seated on the sandy floor. Building of the chapel of bamboo and coconut fronds is the start of a new branch.” Mission President Kendall W. Young told those attending that when the branch grew to 134 members, they would have a permanent building.

Faaone chapel bamboo niau 25 Aug 1961 John Longden

Papeari Branch: 3 Nov 1962 Pdt Kendall Young

New Hitiaa chapel dedicated 6 Oct 1963 Pdt Stone

New Papenoo chapel dedicated 26 Apr 1964 Pdt Stone

Papeete 3branch

New Tipaerui chapel dedicated 30 July 1966 by President Thomas Stone.

Papeete 4 branch

Missionary quota was at 14 during the 1960s

Missionaries increased in the late 1960s Pdt Karl Richards able to proselyte more in Tahiti due to better government relations.

French Polynesia Census Figures

Island or Group 1946 census 1967 census

Tahiti	24,820	61,519
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Moorea	2,838	4,370
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Leeward	12,645	15,337
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Subtotal	40,303	81,226
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Tuamotu & Gambier	6,696	6,664
Austral	3,921	5,053
Makatea	1,826	55*
Marquesas	2,988	5,174
Total	55,734	98,378

*Phosphate works closed 1966

The table below presents the basic statistics for the French Polynesia mission from 1951 to 1971.

French Polynesia Mission Statistics 1951-1971

Year	Total Members	Convert	Baptisms	Melchizedek	Priesthood	Total Branches	Number of
Missionaries	foreign	local					
1950	1,604	67	104	20	11	-	
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1969	4,864	92	323	31	48	-
1970	4,834	111	335	31	54	6
1971	4,750	158	314	30	-	-

The gross increase over the two decades was 3,050 members. The number of Melchizedek Priesthood holders increased almost 200 percent, and the number of branches by 50 percent. In 1967, Latter-day Saints made up 4 percent of the total population of French Polynesia.

1967 there were ten branches in Tahiti and Moorea, and eight in the Leeward Group. On the other hand, the number of branches in the Tuamotus dropped from eighteen to twelve during the same era. Until the 1950s the Church was strongest in the outer islands.

French Polynesia Census Figures

Island or Group	1946 census	1967 census
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Marquesas	2,988	5,174
Total	55,734	98,378

*Phosphate works closed 1966

December 1963 - First Tahitian member temple excursion

September 18, 1964 - Dedication of Church elementary school in Papeete.

By 1970 Mission President Karl Richards was able to get the missionary quota increased to 40 visas. With more missionaries there was increased missionary effort in the Leewards. The church grew rapidly in the 1970s and 80s.

Papenoo new chapel dedicated in November 1973

Papeari new chapel 1970s

Teahupo chapel 1970s

Mission Pdt home abt 1977

Temple pdt home about 1977 for school originally

Mission service center 23 Sept 1977

Tahiti district offices 20 Apr 1978 Jack Goasland

Fariipiti stake center dedicated 21 June 1981

Pirae stake center occupied 1982 dedicated 21 Aug 1983

Taravao chapel 1983

Stakes:

The Creation of French Polynesia Stakes

Papeete Tahiti Stake May 14, 1972

After 128 years of missionary work in French Polynesia the first stake was organized on May 14, 1972. Marvin J ASHTON of the Quorum of the Twelve called Tehina TAPU as stake president with Raymond BAUDIN and Fernand CAUMET as counselors.



Pictured left-to-right: Raymond BAUDIN-first counselor, Tehina TAPU-Stake President, Fernand CAUMET-second counselor, Tutu PALMER-patriarch

Wards: Papeete 1, Papeete 2, Papeete 3, Papeete 4, Paea, branches Papenoo, Hitiaa, Papeari, Haumi and Haapiti in Moorea.

In August 1977 Papeete 4th ward was divided into the Faaa ward and Tipaerui ward.

On 27 April 1980 Papeete 3rd ward was split into the Pirae and Arue wards.

On 16 October 1980 Papenoo branch became a ward. At this time

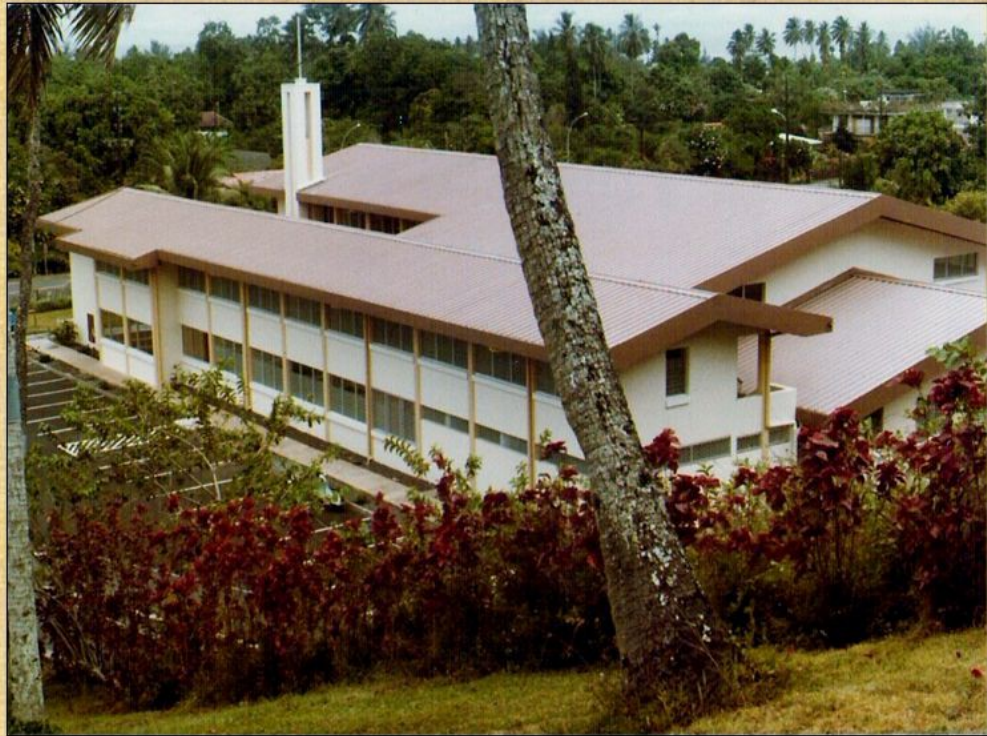
On 28 December 1980 Faaa Ward was split into the Faaa 1 and Faaa 2 wards.

1972 Papeete Stake - Tehina Tapu

In the spring of 1972 the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve approved the creation of the Tahiti Stake. Elders Marvin J. Ashton of the Council of the Twelve and Franklin D. Richards, assistant to the Twelve, organized the stake on May 14, 1972. It was, incidentally, the first stake

created in a French-speaking country. The new stake consisted of all the former branches on Tahiti and Moorea.

Pirae Tahiti Stake (Later renamed Arue Stake) June 20, 1982 James E. FAUST of the Quorum of the Twelve called Lysis TEROOATEA as Stake President with Georges BONNET and Victor HAPAIRAI as counselors.



Second Stake Created June 20, 1982 by James E. Faust of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Lysis Terooatea was the Pirae Stake President with Georges Bonnet and Victor Hapairai as his counselors

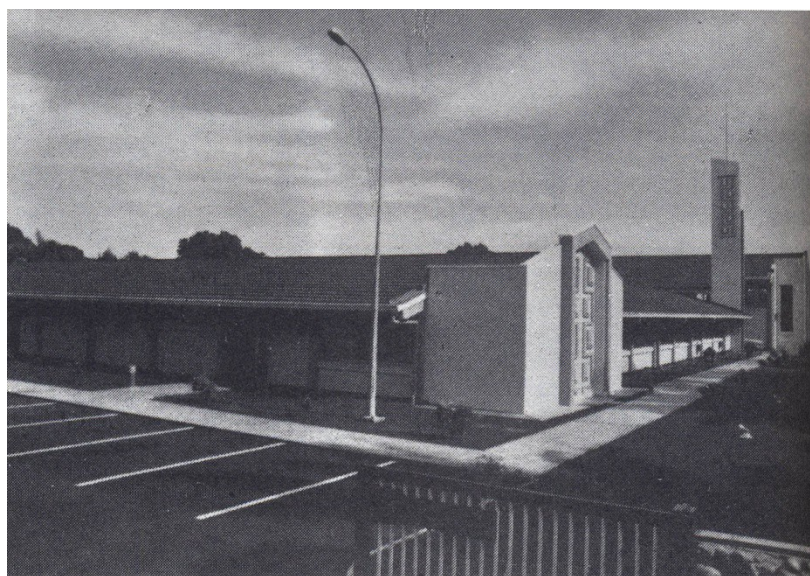
Pirae stake had wards: Pirae, Arue, Paea, Papenoo branches in Hitiaa and Tairapu (Taravao). (It comprised all of Tahiti except Papeete, Faaa and Punaauia.) Pirae stake had 2207 members.

Papeete Stake had Papeete 1, Papeete 2, Faaa 1, Faaa 2 and branches in Moorea. Papeete 4 ward (French speaking) was dissolved. Papeete Stake had 2174 members.

Membership grew rapidly in all areas of Tahiti. The division of wards and branches required the building of additional meeting houses. Starting in 1983 new chapels were constructed in Tiarapu, Paea, Faaa, Hitiaa, Tautira, Papara, Mataiea, Punaauia, and Fautaua. The Paea meetinghouse was torn down and rebuilt in 1985. Land was purchased in Tautira and an existing structure on the property renovated. During the two years from 1987 to 1989, the number of meetinghouses on the island of Tahiti doubled from seven to fourteen.

1982 June 20 Pirae Stake - Lysis Terooatea

By mid-1981, the Tahiti Papeete Stake was prepared for a division. An apostle was assigned to go to Tahiti to divide the stake, but he was reassigned elsewhere at the last minute, and the division was delayed for a year. But on June 20, 1982, Elder James E. Faust called thirty-one-year-old Lysis G. Terooatea, a former bishop and high councilor, as the first president of the Pirae Tahiti Stake. On the same day, Jean-Michel Vehiatua Carlson, also age thirty-one, a former bishop, high councilor, and counselor in the stake presidency, was called to lead the Papeete Stake. At about the same time Victor D. Cave was called as regional representative over the Tahiti Region. When one adds together some changes in the temporal affairs department, the closing of the elementary school, the creation of the second stake, and the calling of Tahiti's own first regional representative, June 1982 was a historic period that marked the maturity of the Church in that area.



Papeete Stake Center. (Courtesy Yves Perrin.)

First Area Conference – March 1-2 1976 –President Spencer W. Kimball

Tahiti Temple

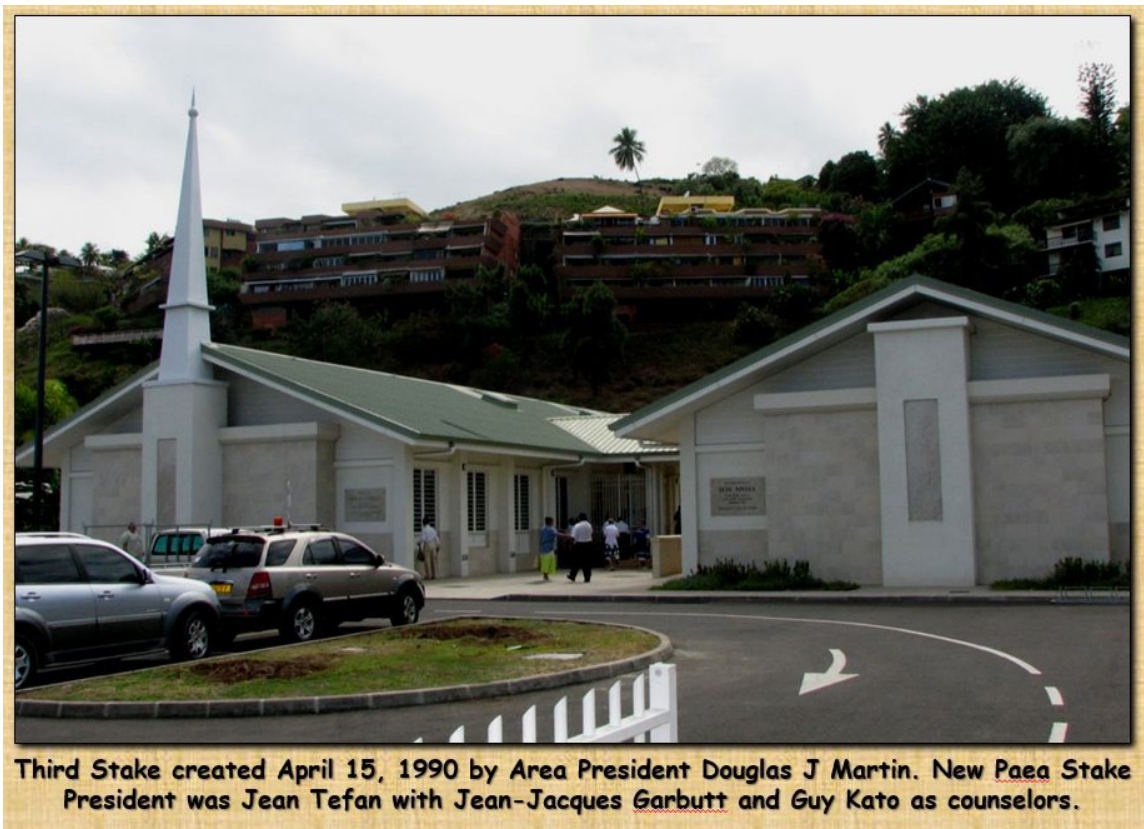
If more numbers were the sole determiners of where and when temples should be built, Tahiti, with its 6,400 members, would have to rank fairly low on any list. But because the Lord and his servants measure their purposes by a different standard-the standard of covenants and needs-the Saints in Tahiti now have a temple in their midst. Perhaps more than any other temple, the Papeete Tahiti Temple exemplifies the concept of taking temples to the people rather than having the people travel to the temple.

The First Presidency of the Church announced during general conference in April 1980 that a temple would be built in Tahiti. (UIS)

About 3,000 people attended the groundbreaking in Tahiti when President Spencer W. Kimball turned the first soil on February 13, 1981. As already noted, the former site of the LDS Elementary School in Papeete was selected for the new temple.

President Gordon B. Hinckley and a company of general authorities including Elders L. Tom Perry and David B. Haight of the Council of the Twelve, Rex C. Reeve, Sr., of the First Quorum of the Seventy, and Presiding Bishop Victor L. Brown joined Elder Gosland on October 27, 1983, for the first of six dedicatory sessions. The sessions were attended by 2,500 worthy Latter-day Saints.

Paea Tahiti Stake Apr 15, 1990 Douglas J. MARTIN area president called Jean TEFAN as stake president with Jean-Jacques GARBUTT and Guy KATO as counselors.



It comprised all of Tahiti except Papeete Faaa and Arue (Punaauia to Papenoo). The stake consists of the Outumaoro, Punaruu, Paea, Mara'a, Papara, Mataeia, Taiarapu (Taravao), Tautira, Hitiaa and Papenoo wards and had a membership of 2,614.

The Papeete Tahiti Stake was reorganized Apr 15, 1990 to include the following wards on the island of Tahiti: Faaa 1, Faaa 2, Pamatai, , Papeete 1, Papeete 2, Papeete 3, and the branches of Haumi and Paopao on Moorea.

The Pirae Tahiti Stake was reorganized Apr 15, 1990 to include the following wards on the island of Tahiti: Arue, Mahina, Matavai. Pirae 1. Pirae 2. It also included the following branches on the island of Raiatea: Avera, Faaroa Baie, Fareatai, Tevaitoa, Uturoa, and Vaiaau, and Cumorah on the island of Tahaa.

1990 15 April Paea Stake Douglas J. Martin area president created Paea Stake with President Jean A. Tefan 1C Jean –Jacques Garbutt and 2C Guy Kato.

Paea Stake: Hitiaa, Maraa, Mataiea, Outumaoro, Paea, Papara, Papenoo, Taiarapu, Tautira.

Papeete Stake: Faaa 1, Faaa2, Pamatai, Papeete 1, Papeete 2, Papeete 3, Haumi and Pao Pao branches of Moorea.

Pirae Stake: Arue, Mahina, Matavai, Pirai 1, Pirae2, plus branches of Raiatea and Tahaa (Avera, Faaroa Bay, /fareatai, Tevaitoa, Uturoa, Vaiaau, Cumora).

April 1994 Elder Nelson came to Tahiti for the 150th commemoration of the arrival for the first missionaries. He dedicated French Polynesia for the preaching of the gospel.

In December 5, 1993 Rulon G. Craven area pdt created the Raromatai Stake with President Michel Doucet. With the removal of the Raiatea and Tahaa wards from Pirae stake it was augmented by the transfer of the Hitiaa, Papenoo and Faaripo units from the Paea Stake.

Président Michel Doucet a été appelé comme Président du pieu de Raromatai le premier weekend de Décembre 1993.

Le second weekend, 8 decembre 1993 j'ai été appelé comme conseiller de Président Jean Tefan qui était Président du pieu de Paea qui comprenait Punaauia jusqu'à Papenoo. (Marama Tarati)

May 28, 1995 Elder Lowell D. Wood created the Punaauia Stake. President T. Marama Tarati with counselors Calixte PAI and Oscar Barff.

A Faa'a, il y avait

- la paroisse de Heiri avec Georges Malardé comme évêque,
- la paroisse de Puurai avec Léopold Parker comme évêque,
- la paroisse de Tavararo avec Louis ,
- la branche française de lotus avec Shane Palmer comme président de branche, supprimée en 1996
- la branche chinoise Papeete 3 avec Fabien Mana comme président de branche,
- la paroisse de Punaruu avec Tuahu Italo comme évêque,
- la paroisse de Manotahi avec Claude Nauta comme évêque,

- la paroisse de Outumaoro avec Gatien Tehetia comme évêque,
- la nouvelle paroisse de Matatia avec Jean-Paul Tepuhiarii comme évêque,

Le pieu de Punaauia-Faa'a a été créé le 28 Mai 1995 à partir du pieu de Papeete et du pieu de Paea. C'était lors d'une conférence multipieux présidée par Elder Lowell D. Wood qui est décédé lors d'une assignation à une conférence de pieu de Samoa, un an ou deux ans plus tard.

En même temps que moi, Président Arthur Perry a été appelé comme président du pieu de Papeete-Moorea et Président Richard Williamu a été appelé comme Président du pieu de Paea qui comprenait Papara jusqu'à Tiarei. C'était Président Erroll Bennett qui était Président du pieu de Arue qui comprenait Pirae jusqu'à Papenoo.

Paea Tahiti	01-Dec-1993		Jean A. TEFAN	T. Marama TARATI	Guy KATO
Paea Tahiti	28-May-1995	Lowell D. WOOD	Richard WILLIAMU	Olivier TAHUA	Eria TEMAHUKI
Paea Tahiti	21-Sep-1997	Vaughn J. FEATHERSTON E	T. Marama TARATI	Oscar BARFF	Rautipara AHUROA
Papeari Tahiti	21-Sep-1997	Vaughn J. FEATHERSTON E	Richard WILLIAMU	Kito HAREUTA	Emile TAMA
Faaa Tahiti	21-Sep-1997	Vaughn J. FEATHERSTON E	Benjamin T. SINJOUX	Jimmy BOPP	Léopold PARKER
Papeete Tahiti	28-May-1995	Lowell D. WOOD	Arthur S. PERRY	Paul TEPUHIARII	Thierry HUNTER
Papeete Tahiti	21-Sep-1997	Vaughn J. FEATHERSTON E	Arthur S. PERRY	Jean-Michel CARLSON	Gustave PAHIO

Sept 21, 1997 Faaa Stake created with President Benjamin T. Sinjoux

The Faaa Tahiti Stake, which includes the Haumi, Heiri, Pamatai, Pao Pao, Puurai and Tavararo wards, and the Haapiti branch, has been created by Elder Vaughn J Featherstone of the Seventy.

FAAA TAHITI STAKE: (Sept. 21, 1997) Elder Vaughn J. Featherstone Created from the Arue Tahiti, Papeete Tahiti, and Punaauia Tahiti stakes. President - Benjamin Tauraa' Sinjoux, 44,

Regional Manager of Temporal Affairs at Tahiti Administration office; wife, Tarita Alexandre Sinjoux. Counselors - Jimmy Bopp, 49, owner and operator of a day nursery; wife, Puarii Mateau Bopp. Leopold Parker, 43, bank employee; wife, Noelline Heipua Ching Soy Parker.

Stake reorganizations

PAEA TAHITI STAKE: (Sept. 21, 1997) President - Marama Tetuanui Tarati, 46, vice principal of education service; succeeding Richard Teuira Williamu; wife, Christiane Mere Pea Tarati. Counselors - Oscar Tetua Barff, 48, retired from army as warehouse supervisor; wife, Rose-Marie Richmond Barff. Rautipara Ahuroa, 46, secretary for Paea Town Hall; wife, Liliane Vahinetua Ahuroa.

PAPEARI TAHITI STAKE (FORMERLY PUNAAUIA TAHITI STAKE): (Sept. 21, 1997) President - Richard Teuira Williamu, 39, coordinator for Church Educational System; succeeding Marama Tetuanui Tarati; wife, Tererai Marguerite Baumert Williamu. Counselors - Kito Hareuta, 43, self-employed carpenter; wife, Germaine Teriitemoehaa Hareuta. Emile Tama, 32, cuisine chief for government hospital; wife, Johanna Amaru Tama.

Raromatai Stake Dec 5, 1993 Rulon G. CRAVEN area president called Michel DOUCET as stake president with Sylvain SINJOUX and Didier TERIIHAUNUI as counselors.

Pirae and Paea Stakes were realigned at this same time with Papenoo, Hitiaa and Faaripo units being transferred to Pirae stake.

Punaauia Tahiti Stake May 28, 1995 Lowell D Wood area president called T. Marama TARATI as president with counselors 1st Counselor Calixte PAI and 2nd Counselor Oscar BARFF. (This Stake was dissolved Sept 21 1997.)



The Punaauia Tahiti Stake included the Heiri, Outumaoro, Punaruu, Puurai, and Tavararo wards, and the Lotus and Papeete 3rd branches.

On May 28, 1995 Richard Wiliamu was called as President of Paea Tahiti Stake, which covered area from Papara to Tiarei.

On May 28, 1995 Arthur Perry was called as President of Papeete Tahiti Stake.

Erroll Bennett was president of Pirae Stake which went from Pirae to Papenoo.

Faaa Tahiti Stake Sept 21 1997 Vaughn J. FEATHERSTONE area president called Benjamin SINJOUX as president with Jimmy BOPP and Léopold PARKER as counselors

Faaa Tahiti Stake included the Haumi, Heiri, Pamatai, Pao Pao, Puurai and Tavararo wards, and the Haapiti branch

Papeari Tahiti Stake September 21 1997 Vaughn J FEATHERSTONE area president called Richard WILLIAMU as stake president with Kito HAREUTA and Emile TAMA as counselors. The Papeari Stake comprised the wards from Papara to Tiarei.



Papeete Tahiti Stake: Sept 21 1997 President - Arthur Teahi Perry, retained. Counselors - Jean-Michel Carlson and Gustave Pahio.

Paea Tahti Stake: Sept 21 1997 President - Marama Tetuanui Tarati with Counselors - Oscar Tetua Barff and Rautipara Ahuroa.

Pirae Stake: Sept 21, 1997 President Erroll Bennett. Pirae Tahiti stake renamed Arue Tahiti Stake, which covered area from Pirae to Papenoo.

PAPEETE TAHITI STAKE: (Sept. 21, 1997) President - Arthur Teahi Perry, retained. Counselors - Jean-Michel Carlson, 47, management assistant for Tahitian Import Export and owner and manager of Mamao Cleaners; wife, Lindy Line Fonoimoana Carlson. Gustave Pahio, 38, banker; wife, Valerie Sinjoux Pahio.

En Septembre 1997, Marama Tarati a été appelé Président du pieu de Paea- Punaauia et Président Benjamin Sinjoux a été appelé Président du pieu de Faa'a - Moorea. Président Richard Williamu a été appelé comme Président du pieu de Papeari qui comprenait Papara jusqu'à Tiarei.

2011 May 1 Punaauia Stake A. Claude Nauta

The Punaauia Tahiti Stake was organized from the Raromatai and the Paea Tahiti Stakes and includes the following eight wards: Anau, Manutahi, Matatia, Maupiti, Outumaoro, Punaruu, Punavai Nui, and Vaitape.

2012

Oct 2014 Mahina Stake created with president Emile Tama.

Last Sunday, the Church created a new stake in French Polynesia. The Mahina Tahiti Stake was organized from the Arue Tahiti and Papeari Tahiti Stakes and includes the following seven wards: The Faaripo, Hitiaa, Mahina, Matavai, Papenoo, Tiarei, and Tuauru Wards. The Papeari Tahiti Stake now has seven wards and the Arue Tahiti Stake now has six wards and a branch. The Church's two wards and one branch on the neighboring island of Moorea previously pertained to the Papeete Tahiti Stake but were transferred to the Arue Tahiti Stake as there were only four wards remaining in the Arue Tahiti Stake following its division.

July 17, 2016

Area President O. Vincent Halek created the Taravao Stake by splitting off wards from the Papeari Stake and adding the Hitiaa ward from the Mahina Stake. The new stake has the following wards:

The Papeari Stake was realigned with the addition of the Australes branches from Tubuai and Rurutu.

Ce dimanche 17 Juillet 2016, au centre du Pieu de Papeari, s'est tenue une conférence spéciale ayant pour but la création du nouveau Pieu de Taravao et la réorganisation du Pieu de Papeari. Ainsi, nous avons eu le plaisir de recevoir Elder O. Vincent HALECK, autorité générale et président de l'interrégion du Pacifique, accompagné d'Elder Benjamin SINJOUX, 70 d'interégion, pour organiser les limites des pieux de Papeari et de Taravao, ainsi que d'appeler des frères dignes pour diriger et présider ces pieux.

A Papeari, ainsi que dans les lieux de cultes des Australes, plus de 2000 personnes étaient au rendez-vous: membres de l'Eglise, amis, élus des communes concernées...

Voici donc le réalignement des limites...

Le Pieu de Papeari est composé des unités suivantes:

les paroisses de MAHAIA TEA, MATAIEA, VAHIRIA, VAIARI et PAPEARI et les branches des Australes: MAHU, MATAURA, TAAHUEIA, ZIONA et RURUTU.

Les membres de ces unités ont alors soutenu leur nouvelle Présidence de Pieu:

- [Vaianu Tupai](#) , Président (paroisse de Vahiria)
- [Emile Tunutu](#) , 1er Conseiller (paroisse de Papeari)
- et [Arsen](#) Anihia, 2ème Conseiller (paroisse de Mataiea)

Le Pieu de Taravao se compose des paroisses de HITIA'A, TAUTIRA, TARAVAO 1, TARAVAO 2, TOAHOTU et VAIRAO.

Avec comme nouvelle présidence du Pieu de Taravao:

- Président Rupe Parker (paroisse de Vairao)
- [Henry Marere Perry](#), 1er Conseiller (paroisse de Taravao 1)
- Nicolas Maihota, 2ème Conseiller (paroisse de Taravao 2)

Félicitations à ces nouvelles Présidences de Pieu.

Aux paroisses du nouveau Pieu de TARAVAO, vous nous manquerez... Et resterez toujours dans nos cœurs! Président PARKER, Merci pour tout ce que tu as fait pour le Pieu de Papeari.

Aux branches des AUSTRALES et à la paroisse de MAHAIA TEA, nous vous disons "BIENVENUE dans le pieu de PAPEARI" et avons hâte de travailler tous ensemble...

Que Dieu nous bénisse tous.

Punaauia Tahiti Stake May 1, 2011 Elder James Hamula called Pdt Ahyn Claude NAUTA 1st Counselor Marc Jean Alain VALENZA and 2nd Counselor Steve Raiarii TCHAN.



Pictured left-to-right: Marc Alain VALENZA-first counselor, Claude Ahyn NAUTA-Stake President, Steve Raiarii TCHAN-second counselor

It included the following eight wards: Anau, Manutahi, Matatia, Maupiti, Outumaoro, Punaruu, Punavai Nui, and Vaitape.

The Paea Tahiti Stake was reorganized the same day May 1, 2011. Jamet Bryan was called as Stake President with counselors: Manarii Alfred et Ariipeu Rainui



Pictured left-to-right: Manarii ALFRED-first counselor, Jamet BRYAN-Stake President, Ariipeu RAINUII-second counselor

Paea Tahiti Stake added Papara ward from the Papeari Stake to the exististing Paea wards : Papehue, Maraa, Tiapa, Orofero, Vaiata, Tepuhapa and Mahaiatea.

Mahina Tahiti Stake October 14, 2012

Elder F. Michael Watson called President Emile TAMA 1st Counselor Emile AUMERAND and 2nd Counselor Fernand TETUANUI.



Pictured left-to-right: Emile AUMERAND-first counselor, Emile TAMA-Stake President, Fernand TETUANUI-second counselor

Wards in the new stake were Faaripo, Hitiaa, Mahina, Matavai, Papenoo, Tiarei and Tuauru.

Arue Stake Presidency was also reorganized October 14, 2012.

The new Stake President was Henri ESTALL with first Counselor Temarama VARNEY and second Counselor Torea MAU. The wards in this stake were Erima, Haumi, Haapiti (branch), Paopao, Pare, Pirae 1 and Taharaa.



1st Counselor Temarama VARNEY, President Henri ESTALL, 2nd Counselor Torea MAU

The Papeari Tahiti Stake now had seven wards and the Arue Tahiti Stake now had six wards and a branch. The Church's two wards and one branch on the neighboring island of Moorea previously pertained to the Papeete Tahiti Stake but were transferred to the Arue Tahiti Stake as there were only four wards remaining in the Arue Tahiti Stake following its division.

Taravao Tahiti Stake 17 July 2016

A new stake was created from the Mahina Tahiti and the Papeari Tahiti Stakes. It was created by Elder O. Vincent Haleck, a General Authority Seventy, and Elder Benjamin T. Sinjoux, an Area Seventy. The new presidency called was President—Rupe Parker, 1st Counselor—Henry Marere Perry and 2nd Counselor Nicholas Tefaarere Temahuki Maihota.



Pictured left-to-right: Henry Marere Perry-first counselor, Rupe PARKER- Stake President, Nicholas Maihota -second counselor

The Taravao Tahiti Stake consisted of the Hitiaa, Taravao 1st, Taravao 2nd, Tautira, Toahotu, and Vairao Wards

Faaa Tahiti Stake Split into Faaa Tahiti-Tuamotu and Faaa Tahiti-Takarua

FAAA Tahiti Stake split December 15, 2019

Elder K Brett NATTRESS and Elder Benjamin SINJOUX reorganized the Faaa, Tahiti stake on Sunday December 15, 2019. They split the stake and included the Tuamotu District wards and branches into the new stakes. The Makemo District remains part of the Tahiti Mission. There are now 11 stakes in French Polynesia.

Faa'a Tahiti-Tuamotu Stake Presidency:

Stake President: Gaël SINJOUX

First Counselor: Benjamin TUARAU

Second Counselor: Gilbert TUNUTU



Pictured left-to-right: Elder SINJOUX, Benjamin TUARAU, Gaël SINJOUX, Gilbert TUNUTU and Elder NATTRESS

Wards: Pamatai, Ruatama, Tavararo, Tefana, Tipaerui

Branches: Ahe, Apataki, Arutua, Avatoru, Manihi, Tiputa

Faa'a Tahiti-Takaroa Stake Presidency:

Stake President: Harold TEIVAO

First Counselor: Heiarii DAUPHIN

Second Counselor: Teihokura TEROOATEA



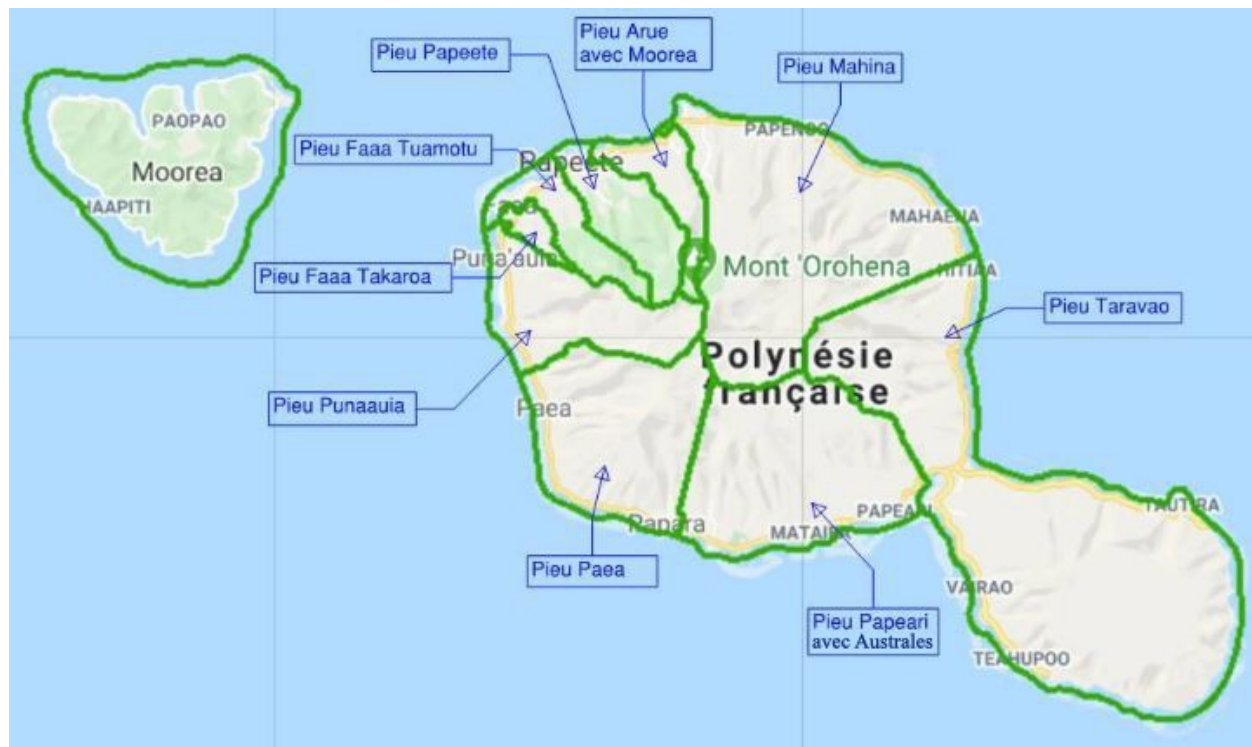
Pictured left-to-right: Heiarii DAUPHIN, Harold TEIVAO and Teihokura TEROOATEA

Wards: Ahurai, Farahei, Oremu, Puurai, Vairai

Branches: Takapoto, Takaroa 1, Takaroa 2

-

Today 9 stakes on island of Tahiti with 21 chapels. Tahiti is truly the center of church in French Polynesia.



Main references are *Unto the Islands of the Sea* by R. Lanier Britsch (UIS) and *Seasons of Faith and Courage* by S. George Ellsworth and Kathleen C. Perrin (SFC). Excerpts are used with permission. References for the early years are *Zion in Paradise* by George Ellsworth (ZP), *Journal of Noah Rogers* by Pike, *The Journals of Addison Pratt* (S. George Ellsworth editor), *Journal of Benjamin Grouard 1843-47* and *Giant of the Lord, Life of a Pioneer James S. Brown*. The Sanito years are based on *Roots of the Reorganization, French Polynesia* by F. Edward Butterworth (ROR), *Autobiography of Andrew Jenson*, Mission records, and memories of many devoted former Tahitian missionaries.

Pictures are from collection of Gerald Faerber (Terii Orometua).

Journals of Addison Pratt (S. George Ellsworth editor) Pub 1996

ROR *Roots of the Reorganization, French Polynesia* by F. Edward Butterworth, 1977

SFC *Seasons of Faith and Courage* Ellsworth and Perrin 1993

TH 1948 *Tahiti History* written in 1948 by President Bentley Mitchell put in cornerstone of Fariipiti Chapel.

UIS *Unto the Islands of the Sea* - Britsch 1986

ZP Zion in Paradise by Ellsworth 1959