History Of Louisa Barnes Pratt

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July 26th [1850] Pitched our tents on the bank of the river where we unloaded our waggons, and the man who had purchased them took them away. I saw my old waggon go, which for four years had been a sleeping room for the children: it was the last piece of property that remained of all the labor of our youth. I received thirty dollars for it.

The heat was intolerable, not a tree to shade us from the scorching sun; such excessive heat I am certain I never felt before; we were cooking over a hot fire, preparing food to go on board the bark, Alden, Capt. Alden, on which we had spoken our passage to San Francisco. Soon after we unloaded our goods, several gentlemen called on us with bottles of beer, wine, lemonade and mince pies to treat us; and to congratulate us on our safe arrival in the new country; they were very polite, and we were greatly obliged to them; being weary and overcome with heat, we needed refreshments.

Brs Lyman and Rich called and made us a visit in the tent. We took one walk into town, bought a few goods; the streets were full of old clothes and rubbish thrown out of the stores. Mr. Hues from St. Lewis called on us, the husband of Mary Parker, whom we had not seen from the time of our leaving Nauvoo; he informed us that his motherinlaw died at his house in St. Lewis of the cholera and that he had sent his wife with two children to Nauvoo that they might escape it. Several of our company called to bid us farewell, whom we felt sorry to part with.

The third day we went on to the Bark. J. Pendelton and M. Leonard came off to see us; the former looked very sad at parting with our daughters as to all appearance he had great attachment for them; the latter expressed concern about our taking passage on the Bark said we should
be a long time going to Francisco and the musketeoes would trouble us; he wished he could see us safe on board a good Steamer, and I felt the same. The Bark was large and convenient but the hands had been sick a long time and every thing about the ship was dirty, exceedingly so. In vain they tried to get underway, the wind was against us; the first day by beating hard we made about a mile and a half, tied up to a tree at night; the bushes were thick on the bank and the musketeoes were like sands on the shore for multitude.

One gentleman came in to our cabbin and contended about the berths; his wife being there he thought it his privilege to sleep there of course; we told him it was a new idea to us that gentlemen must lodge in the Ladies cabbin; he appeared resolute and determined to have his choice in the berths; we all retired and were in hopes to have a good nights rest; the musketeoes soon commenced their ravages upon us, and he was the one to leave the cabbin and flee out for quarters on deck, and never adventured himself there again. We were all obliged soon to leave the cabbin, but we had no place of resort, for they were equally as bad on deck.

I wrapt myself in a thick blanket sat in my chair and tried to sleep, in spite of all my efforts to cover myself they would find their way to my flesh, and being about two thirds larger than common insects of that class they inflicted pain like that produced by the sting of a bee; my feet and ankles became swollen and inflamed as did every part of my body where they bit me; day after day passed, and not one hour's sleep in a night did I have until I was so exhausted and worn out that I was not able to sit up; and yet could not lie down having every moment to fight as for my life; I prayed earnestly to be delivered; the children complained most bitterly we were all troubled and knew not what to do. The Capt. sent repeatedly to Sacramento to get a Steamer to tow the Bark down, obtained several promises which were not fulfilled. At length a little Steamer about half the size of the Bark came and after getting up steam for a long time attempted to pull us along; we rejoiced and thought we should soon be away from the musketeoes; but all our hopes were vain; she could not stir us at all, gave up and roared away back to town.

After suffering a whole week being bruised and mangled by those cruel insects, Br. T. concluded to go to town and engage a steamer to call and take us off; he made a partial engagement but did not finish the bargain, promising to return if he concluded to accept that man's offer, he left him to make further inquiry; he found another boat; the Captain agreed to tow the Bark down but was not ready to sail; the former Capt. with whom he had partially agreed, came on, called for the passengers aboard the Bark, said Mr. Tomkins had agreed with him to call and take 20 passengers; we asked why he did not come on the boat himself, he replied he was left by accident. He made us believe what he told as well
did the Capt, and he advised us to go. We made all possible speed to take
our things off. Seventeen passeng[ers] left, the rest remained on the
Bark, among them were my brotherinlaw and sister, he refused to leave
believing the Capt meant to deceive us. Away we went on the steamer;
Sister Tomkins declared her belief in what the Capt had told, that her
husband had agreed with him to take us off. We rejoiced greatly that we
were leaving the musketoes behind and were in hope that the loss of
blood would be regained when we gained the residences of our friends in
Francisco. We looked about the boat found it very comfortable. We put
on clean clothes and took seats in the Cabbin.

Presently a gentleman came in, introduced conversation, asked
where we had come from, where we were bound and several other ques­
tions. As soon as we mentioned Salt Lake he asked if we were Mormons? I
told him frankly we were; he then wished to know something about our
belief. I wanted to inform him in a short and comprehensive manner;
instead of beginning with the bible, I asked him if he had heard of Joseph
Smith? or I remarked that I supposed he had; he said yes, and asked if we
really believed him to be a prophet. I told him we knew him to be a
prophet, and that he had commenced a new dispensation on the earth, in
which all things spoken by the prophets of old were to be fulfilled, that the
gifts and blessings which existed in the church anciently were restored to
our church, that knowledge and faith were prevalent, that the sick were
healed by that faith, devils cast out, and promises obtained; that the gath­
ering of Israel was fast taking place, and thus did I rehearse our belief like
a lesson I had learned by heart, telling him in plain terms it was verily true;
he appeared astonished that I should speak with so much confidence, said
he could not believe it. I replied his disbelieving it could not make it
untrue; he appeared disturbed and left the cabbin. I had with me one of
Orson Pratt’s pamphlets concerning the origin of this work. I laid it on
the table covered it with a bible lying there, that some one might find it when
I was gone, and perhaps the same gentleman, as he belongs to the boat.

We chose our stateroom went to bed the berths were clean, and now
thought I sleep will be sweet tonight. I had not closed my eyes till I discov­
ered that I was in a nest of bedbugs. I removed my bed to the floor and
even there I could not keep clear of them; so the night passed away and
the morning found us in the harbor.

[In San Francisco, 11 August to 15 September 1850]

We found our friends in the city who received us cordially, and bid us wel­
come to their houses. After four days came brother Tomkins; was not at
all in a good humor, highly offended that we had left the Bark in his
absence; Said he was there in four hours after we left with a steam boat to
tow the vessel into the bay where she would be able to make her way along. His wife’s feelings were hurt and he finally made an apology and it was settled.

I visited several of the Brooklin families found them very kind and liberal, they made me presents and treated me well. With Sister William Morey I felt myself at home. Sister Corwin invited me to her house which was at Mr. Samuel Brannan’s, a most splendid situation: the house was like a king’s palace; I remarked to Mrs. B. that such a house would do me but little good in that place, but if I had it in the church at Salt Lake I should enjoy it. Br. William Lewis who was keeping a publick house at a place called Mission Deloras three miles from town came after us with a carriage and invited us to spend some time at his house. We accordingly accepted his invitation and were cordially entertained. The old mission was built in the year independence was declared; it resembles some old ancient abbeys, and that is what it is, built by the Catholics and used for a nunnery formerly; it is of immense size but very low, long dark alleys, which strike the mind with horror. Some parts of it were fitted up in good style or at least comfortable to relieve travellers; there were several very agreeable gentlemen boarders there. We spent near two weeks with the family; our elder daughters having been acquainted with Mrs. Lewis in the valley, were pleased to renew their acquaintance. With Br. Quartus Sparks family who lived near I spent several days very agreeably; it is indeed very interesting to find brothers and sisters in strangers; they made us presents and showed themselves very friendly.

I cannot say I was pleased with the place; the city is built in a bed of sands and the wind blows a gale every afternoon; so there is always a cloud of dust which makes it disagreeable going out. A large fleet of ships were in the harbor, they looked to me like a funeral procession; all was bustle and, confusion; the streets narrow and dirty; there had been a great burning a little before we arrived there, but repairs were soon made; it is one of the greatest commercial cities in the world.

Br. William Carrington and wife were kind, received us into their house and boarded us for two weeks; his wife though not a member of our church, is a remarkably friendly and good disposed woman perfectly neat and industrious. She [is] one of those domesticated females who are so tenacious of order and good management they make a home so comfortable that one cannot help being pleased with them and contented in their dwellings.

Ten days after Mr. Tomkins came, the Bark landed with the remainder of the passengers; places were provided for us all and all the attention paid us we could ask for. The Bark had been baffling about in the bay for two weeks and those of us who left it were not sorry; except we thought it a pity to pay so much money to one who had deceived us. Br T. though a
good man in many respects, is subject to little flurries of temper and impatience; he felt it was draining very strong on his means to procure a passage for so many, and so it was, and whenever I heard of his making any complaint it was bitterness to me.

There is something so humiliating in the idea of being dependent that although he was called and duly authorized by the Church to go with us, and I knew we were both engaged in the same common cause, yet so much did I regret that I had not means of my own to go on an errand for the Lord at my own expense, that at times it made me quite unhappy. What I do for the cause of Christ I desire to do wholly at my own expense; and I pray for the means, that I may show my liberality and my willingness to do those things necessary to be done. And if any one gives, or lends to me in time of need, and thereby inspires my confidence, I pray that they may never in any way allude to it, in my hearing, as it will be sure to give me pain, and cause the favor to lose half its value. I can feel an obligation, it is not needful to tell me. Sister T. never but once refered to what she had done for us and then it was in a passion and I forgave her. She was good and kind, and her faith in this cause was strong.

[Voyage from San Francisco to Tubuai, Society Islands]

After a tarry of five weeks in Francisco our passage was engaged to Tubuai on board the Brig Jane A. Hersey Capt. Salmon. We set sail the 15th of Sept. [1850] in fulfillment of a dream Ellen had dreamed two years before being the precise time shown in the dream. We found the Captain a polite well bred man; likewise Capt. Hull who belonged on Tahiti and had come out in the vessel; both very gentlemanly and agreeable. Mr. Poole a small owner in the Brig had his wife with him, a sprightly young woman of 17. She was company for our daughters; of english descent, proud and haughty but very interesting in conversation. There were several very clever young men sailors who seemed desirous of showing us every little kindness in their power; likewise the steward was a well bred negro from Boston; he was obliging and endeavored to make us comfortable. Our cabin was large built on purpose for us between decks; there were in all twenty two passengers of the Mormon fraternity.

I had never supposed I should be sick on the water, on the contrary I was the first one taken. I took to my cabin and my berth, determining to remain there till completely recovered, but I soon found I could not endure the close air in the cabin. I was obliged to keep on deck all in my power; and altho it sometimes seemed like raising the dead to get out of my berth and dress myself yet when I found my life depended on it I made great exertion for no dread could be so great as that of being buried in the sea. Many a time when I felt that I could close my eyes and
in a few moments drop out of existence a thought would suddenly cross
my mind Ah, you will have to be buried in the sea if you die here! in an
instant I would arouse myself, and make a desperate effort to go on deck;
and it happened well for me that my eldest daughter was sick but a few
days. She was able to take care of me, which she did faithfully. Day after
day I laid on the hard deck with only a few blankets under me thinking of
my weak body and my disheartened mind.

I complained in my heart of my fate which seemed to be that of
always traveling about the world without my companion; some days I was
able to read and having some interesting magazines with me I often
found things suited to my condition, from which I drew instruction; hour
after hour I would listen to the roar of the foaming billowing waves, and
lift a silent prayer to him who has power to control the raging elements
that he would preserve us from a watery grave, and carry us in safety to
our place of destination.

When the cry of porpass or skipjack was heard I would call for some
one to lift me up, and holding on to the side of the vessel, I would
indulge my admiration till I almost forgot my weakness and pain. I con­
stantly wished for something to excite as I found it a great means of
throwing off a sense of my bad feelings, but oh, Sea sickness how horri­
ble! it is continually dying, and yet you live! it is not to be told but only to
be felt. The company were nearly all sick at times no one felt like praying
or admistering to the sick, and for that cause I felt darkness; I longed to
hear prayer, and to have hands laid on me; once I mentioned it but was
told it was not best, there were so many unbelievers about us, but the
apology did not satisfy me. I thought the devil might take his own course
and I would take mine, and that was not to be afraid of him; I thought
often of the words of the psalmist. “I kept silence even from good words,
but it was pain and grief to me.”

There were some jealous persons among us who wanted to get
something to tell from one to another; a principle so detestable that he
who calls himself a Saint should spurn it as he would a venomous serpent;
that such a spirit was among us only showing itself in a small degree, was a
grief to me, for I felt I had all I could bear without it.

For the first time in my life I took food as a medicine; forcing it
down as I would a nauseous draught that was given to save my life; two or
three times a flying fish was found on deck, which was cooked for me and
was sweet to my taste; the only thing that I relished the whole voyage.

I should have often engaged in conversations, in vindication of my
principles but by some of the breatheren it was not deemed wisdom to
speak much upon them, for fear of creating prejudice; I therefore held my
peace many times when I felt it would be a comfort to me to talk. I wished
to be submissive to counsel. The weather was fine the most of the voyage; a
few days head wind was all the difficulty we met with; and had it been possible to have shaken off my seasickness I could have passed the time very pleasantly. We spoke an American whale ship on the passage, from that we got some green bananas; they were the first I had ever seen, and tho' very hard and unfit to eat I snatched them as if determined to make them relish whether they would or not, the steward told me to wrap them in a woollen cloth and lay them aside for a few days; which I did, and found quite an improvement. On the whale ship they were trying out oil, we could smell it plain tho' quite a distance from us. The Capt. came on our ship and brought a little girl about six years old a very pretty child; his wife was sailing with him; she had a pair of twin boys born at sea, they were at that time near six months old; their father held them up for us to look at, and though we could not seem them plain, we praised them and remarked they were fine boys to be born on the boisterous ocean.

Five days before we reached Tubuai we saw the Pamutus at a distance an Island at sea is a gratifying sight; it breaks the monotony and excites hope, and ere long we shall enjoy land again! We looked through the spy glass and saw cocoanut trees, but were not near enough to discern buildings. Hope then began to spring up in my heart that the voyage would soon be over; two days before we landed I had a fainting turn the severest I had ever had in my life: I called on the Elders to administer to me, they did so, and from that hour my darkness fled, and I was relieved in body and mind.

As we drew near the Island, the children began to talk of meeting their father; it never once occurred to them that they should not meet him the first moment when we landed. Frances, the second daughter had often been sad on the way; frequently would retire to some secluded place to indulge in silent reveries; when the Ship hove in sight of Tubuai which was on the 19 Oct She was constantly on deck looking over the railway towards the desired haven, her countenance brightened up with joy no traces of subsequent sadness remaining; the hours seemed long, the wind was contrary for a whole day we lay off and on; often looking through the Spy glass endeavouring to descry some object to confirm our hopes that all would be well with us when we landed nothing could we see resembling human life: the great cocoanut trees towered their majestic heads far above the horizon and their long leaves were waving in the breezes; but the living beings were enshrouded in the thick foliage of the shrubbery which grows everywhere over the Island. Ellen was certain her father would come on board the brig as soon as it landed, as for myself the thought of getting off the water and leaving my seasickness behind was my highest ambition. What I should find or whom concerned me very little. I wanted fried chickens and fish and something I could eat, a good soft bed to sleep on; ah, thought I how thankful I shall be!
[Family on Tubuai, Pratt detained by French at Tahiti]

The 21st day in the afternoon the pilot come off to us. I looked at him from head to feet as a representative of the people with whom I must reside he had a rather huge appearance tho' I thought him good looking. I spoke to the Capt. to ask him if Paraita [Pratt] was on the Island. he answered he was not; in a moment Ellen's face was like marble. She sat down with folded hands and closed lips. I was prepared for the disappointment for I had pondered it in my heart and said to myself that such a thing would be like the rest of my luck or fortune. The idea was he was a prisoner on Tahiti the pilot said he was kept there by the governors orders: it did not alarm me; so seared was my heart with what I had suffered on the vessel I was sure all would be right when I was righted again. The man went off and the Capt sent word to have Mr. Grouard come on board, during the interval the daughters walked thoughtfully about deck.

At length brothers Grouard and Alexander came off to the Brig; they could scarcely believe their own eyes that such a company of American brethren had come to their Island. Br. Grouard had been seven years shut out as it were from the world; he had acquired an air of dignity and sobriety very nearly simulating him with a Catholic monk; his eyes were sunken apparently with sorrow and his whole appearance was grave and majestick. I had seen him in the vigor of youth and thought him a gay lively man, now his look was full of wisdom and years. he however appeared happy to see us and very respectfully invited us to go on shore.

We were conducted over the coral reef with great care; the Island at a little distance presented a pleasing appearance, the beach being skirted with ito [aito], and boorou [purau] trees, together with bananna and cocoanuts, and a variety of shrubbery of the most living green; it being then the 21st of Oct. a season in which we expect to see the leaves turn yellow and fall off; not to see the least symptom of such decay, conveyed a pleasing sensation to the mind. The buildings tho far from being elegant, had an appearance of romance; little white cottages in the woods, shining through the green trees away from the hustle of the busy world, far, far away over the mighty ocean! to find the remnants of Israel enjoying tho' in a rude state an incessant Spring; this idea was exhilarating to one tired of the sea as I was. The buildings are built low but very long; plastered with lime made from the coral rock inside and out; there cannot be a purer white. I thought of eating the good fruit and weak as I was I walked with a light step.

A multitude of people were assembled on the beach as soon as we stept on the land they saluted us with ia, ora, na oe [greeting; peace to you], calling us each by a Tahiti name as we were introduced by Mr.
Grouard the Missionary. I first inquired for Paraita’s old friend namely Nabota and Terii; the head governor took me by the hand and said “vau aratai oe [vau araitai ai, I will lead you]”; he would lead me; he had a piece of blue drilling bound about his loins coming a little below the knees, then a short blue jacket which did not meet the “para” by four inches; a place between showing the naked skin. We led the way, and the whole company followed. I could hear them laughing behind me but did not look back. I was trying hard to talk with my guide, but little could I understand of his language.

We soon reached the place where our friends resided. Telii had been sick with the measles, and was in bed when she heard the news that “no Paraita fetii [belonging to the Pratt family]” had come, she immediately laid aside the sickness and commenced cooking; in the same dwelling we found brother Gruard’s native wife; sitting in the window with a loose dress on and a young babe in her arms. She appeared very diffident and inclined to hide herself. She would stay outside the house and occasionally peep in at the windows. All the people on the Island were in a short time assembled, and we were introduced to them and received the accustomed salutation ia ora na oe, peace be with you, ia ora na tou haere mbi te Tubuai nei” that is peace be with you in coming to Tubuai.

Supper was then served up, a large table was brought to the house, pigs baked under ground fish fried, bread made of pea [pia, arrowroot] a variety of the fruits of the Island all cooked in the native ovens. We ate and rejoiced. I saw a little man standing outside who I thought resembled an american; I accosted him, saying, I suppose you call yourself a white man among the people here? he replied that he was an american and the first man Parita baptized on the Island. I then recollected hearing him spoken of as being a faithful man.

The evening drew on, and the people came in to sing; the house was crowded, there was long grass spread for a floor on which the people all seated themselves; the musick was delightful; their voices are loud and clear and no singers can excel them in keeping time. Queen Rapah [?] came with the rest, and urged her to be seated in a chair, but she refused, preferring to be on a level with the others. The moon was then at the full, and the house was surrounded with large shade trees covered with bright yellow flowers; I looked upon the humble people seated on the ground singing the praises of God. I gazed upon the scenery which surrounded the dwelling, the pale rays of the moon shining through the trees in a thousand shapes, the tall cocoanuts were growing in front of the house, their branches high up in the air, the great itoes above all, which seen by the queen of night throwing her rays so gently over them, while the immagination made warm with the reality of the distance we had come and the suffering it had cost us to gain an admittance here, the object of
From San Francisco to Tubuai

our coming, all conspired to fill the mind with ideas great with meaning and I felt that God was in it all.

Br Gruard endeavoured to encourage us by telling us often that when the Messenger returned from Tahiti he was certain Br P would be on it. Sometimes a thought would cross my mind "he is the same as a prisoner", the next would be it is for the Gospel; and that reconciled me.

We spent the first day or two in gazing at everything strange and new, in looking at the people, and trying to speak their language; feasting on the fruit, and so forth.

The Second morning the Messenger hove in sight. Br. Gruard came in with the news, while I was yet in bed; he said to me, take courage Sister Pratt I believe Br P is on the vessel; but it did not prove so; a letter came saying the governor would not consent to have him come at that present; it was a disappointment, but we submitted to it patiently.

The church here had commenced to build a ship. Soon the elders who came out with us engaged with them, except Br Dunn who went to Tahiti on the same ship we came in. One week was spent in conversation. Br. Gruard had been preaching among the Islands seven years, and had seen no one direct from the Church, his mind was excited at seeing so many, he had many questions to ask. Our native friends repaired the house and fenced a lot for us; we planted a garden; it began to be November when we planted corn and beans; we had only to dig up the ground with a spade, it was very loamy and mellow; vegetation grew finely; the man who fenced the lot planted out 80 banana trees; beneath all these were the vegetables and flowers planted. Soon we had a fine garden to look upon.

The second week we went to Mahu on a visit; here was where Mr. P. landed when he first came to this Island, and where he took up his abode; the family was still living there with whom he resided; they appeared friendly; their daughter a little girl about 13 was the wedded wife of Br. Alexander. She looked like a child, and appeared like one. The old Fare bure ra, stood near the beach, a tall ito in front of each door. I went into the house where six years before my husband had been want to pray. I went up into the pulpit as the sun was setting, and on my knees I gave thanks to my father in heaven who had preserved our lives in crossing the great waters! The second day I returned on horseback. The children complained some of being lonely, often expressed a wish that their father was here to take them about the Island, and show them the curious places he had told them of. I tried to be resigned, and endeavored to amuse myself with learning the native sisters to knit, it helped to pass off the time tho' it seemed long at the best.

Christmas came, Sister Crosby myself and our children made a little feast, invited Br and Sister McMertry to eat with us; the rest of the white brethren were all at Mahu; we had string beans and cucumbers; for New
Years we had green corn; the weather was very warm. It seemed strange to us who had been raised in a cold country, where at that season it was common to see 6 feet of snow.

The people seemed very anxious to teach us their language nearly all our evenings were spent in reading and translating the Scriptures it was a source of great amusement to us to be learning a new language or at least new to us. There were so many mistakes made to excite merriment and a little ridicule, it answered well for diversion; the house for the two first months was nearly always thronged at night with the people talking reading and singing; many of the people had never seen european females before; our eldest daughter played the accordian which was great amusement for them, it was diverting to us to exhibit our little curiosities, to witness their admiration and pleasure in examining them, they think no country can be like America to contain so many wonderful things; they seem to have an idea of their inferiority and are willing to learn any thing that does not require too close application.

I brought with me the likeness of brother Joseph Smith and Hirum which I hung up against the wall in the sleeping room; all the people on the Island came to look at it; there was a brother here from Ana, one of the pamutu's, one evening when we were all seated about the table reading, he left the room and went in to look at the picture; he kneeled before it in order that the painting might come in range with his eyes, (as it was hanging low). For a quarter of an hour he looked steadfastly upon it, I believe without turning his eyes; I did not suppose it was an act of worship but he wished undoubtedly to imprint the lineaments of the features upon his mind. I could not help admiring his devotion. I knew his faith in the Gospel was strong and he felt a solemn pleasure in surveying the features of the murdered prophet and patriarch.

The natives generally have a great share of reverence they have great faith in the ordinances of the Gospel such as baptism and the laying on hands for recovering the sick to health. I brought with me a bottle of consecrated oil which was blessed by brother Brigham Young and other of the authorities, previous to my leaving Salt Lake. The females had great faith in the oil, when I told them from whence I had brought it, and by whom it had been blessed. They would frequently bring their young children to me when they were sick to have me annoint them, give them oil inwardly, and lay my hands upon them in the name of the Lord; if I told them they would soon be better, they seemed to have no doubt about it, and so it was to them according to their faith. They take great pleasure apparently in reading the Scripture and in prayer; they are very punctual to observe family devotion, early risers, often before the dawn of morning, they rise, the first thing done is to call the family together and fall on their knees in prayer; they then ring the bell and go to the house of worship, to
read the bible; if their teacher is present they require him to explain what they read, if it is not decidedly plain to their understanding. They have very little reading except the bible, some few small pamphlets containing Catechisms, books to learn the use of figures &c. They make many feasts; instead of eating in large companies they divide out the food and carry it about among the friends of which their teachers get a large supply.

[Grouard's Birthday Feast]

January 4th 1851 Elder Gruard made a great feast to celebrate his birthday; it being the 33d anniversary: it was held at his dwelling house, a very long building; about one hundred people were invited. The food was purely native, with the exception of 50 mince pies, which were made for the special purpose, and they were nothing less than splendid. The guests did not assemble until the table and food was all arranged in order; a large quantity of leaves were spread upon the ground extending from one end of the room to the other, on which were placed the dishes in form; the food standing in the centre as is usual; a young cocoanut was laid at each plate; that fruit bearing upon a light yellow, contrasted beautifully with the dark green leaves; as I walked into the house and beheld the great quantity of food, which I knew was of a most delicious kind, all arranged in such native neatness; I looked upon it with great admiration. I thought I had never seen anything to equal it. The guests were then seated around the low table and enjoyed themselves I have no doubt better than many in high life do, with all their extravagancies and superfluities. We complimented the Lord of the feast upon the good quantities of every dish; and after a little season spent in lively conversation having feasted ourselves to the full, we returned home.

Elder Gruard remarked, that in thirty three years from that day, he designed making another feast at which time if living he should have attained his sixty sixth year. We all replied that it was hopeful (tho' doubtful) that we should be able to attend, and that the feast might equal if not surpass the present one in excellence.

Mr. Gruard is a gentleman somewhat distinguished for beauty and graceful appearance: not many of his years show so evident marks of beauty as he does at the present, tho' by being excluded too much from Society, he has acquired too much gravity and sedateness; though well informed and accomplished he is often rather abrupt; he combines the orator the philosopher the preacher of truth and righteousness, with the Sailor and native of the Islands; varying in his appearance to suit the circumstances; [Memoir: He feels himself to have been victim of misfortune from his early life; he is . . . still a firm believer in the fullness of the everlasting Gospel, as revealed through the Prophet Joseph Smith, and through it hopes to be
redeemed.] he has had two native wives by whom he has had three children, one daughter and two sons: the mother of the daughter being dead I proposed to Elder Gruard on my first coming to the Islands to place the little girl in Ellen’s charge. She is an unusual sprightly child and has made a rapid improvement: being at this time able to speak tolerable English and to read small spellings; now only four years old; she had never learned one word of English from her father.

Mr. Whittaker an intelligent Englishman was living here with his Tahitian wife a very good disposed woman: resembling himself in appearance about as much as a sheep resembles a bear. He has since removed with her to Tahiti where he is zealously engaged in preaching the fullness of the Gospel. He is an excellent man, full of faith and good works. I have no doubt that there are thousands of men less accomplished and less amiable than he is who have married women of refinement and sensibility; he appears satisfied with his coloured wife, says she is very useful to him, how unequally paired are many in this world.

Thus the time passed on and the children were every day wishing for their father to come; it seemed cruel to them that after performing a journey of five thousand miles they were not permitted to meet him, for whose sake alone they had endured the hardships of so long a journey.

[Pratt’s Arrival at Tubuai, January 1851]

Towards the last of January Capt Johnson’s vessel from Tahiti was descried at a distance the pilot went off to it and returned with the joyful intelligence that “Parita” was on board! The children were so elated they were afraid to believe it, fearing it might possibly be a mistake. It was soon confirmed, and straight way we all repaired to the beach; where the help of Tamatoa’s spy glass we were enabled to discern him walking the deck, he had grown exceedingly fleshy and to the children he looked like a man of renown, and such he is. He was soon on shore with his luggage, of which a part consisted of a large bag full of Tahitian oranges much larger and sweeter than those growing on Tubuai. It was a great day with us all; and the tales of one year and a half’s separation were not soon told. Br. Busby had left the day before for Tahiti, which we all very much regretted; it seemed providential that I did not go. I had several times almost concluded to take passage on board the ship with Mr. B. but the morning he sailed, I had an impression it was not best; had I gone, I should have missed my husband on the way, and been left three months on Tahiti without any chance to return.