

# **A HISTORY OF CCCS MATAUTU FALELATAI FROM 1830 - 1845**

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Bachelor of Theology

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

This work is an inaugural history of the origin and early beginning of the CCCS Matautu, Falelatai from 1830 – 1845. It explores the history and progress of the church during those early years, from a Christian perspective or approach. The research uses oral sources together with historical writings. Documenting a history of the CCCS Matautu, Falelatai contributes to the people of Falelatai and future generations understanding of how the church came into being, which is something dear to them.

## **DECLARATION**

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my late grandparents,  
Leasivao and Misa Esau.

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## **List of Abbreviations**

CCCS	Congregational Christian Church Samoa
LMS	London Missionary Society
EFKS	Ekalesia Fa’apotopotoga Kerisiano Samoa

# **Chapter 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Introduction**

This chapter serves as the introduction to the study. Its content will include the following elements to put us into perspective in reconstructing and understanding the history of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa<sup>1</sup> in Matautu, Falelatai from 1830 to 1845. Firstly, I will discuss the purpose of the study and the personal motivation that prompted me to pursue this research project. Secondly, I will outline the scope of this thesis in particular the time period of the history of the Matautu, Falelatai Church that this study intends to cover. Thirdly, I will discuss background information needed to familiarize us with the subject of this study; that is the village of Matautu, Falelatai. Here I will make mention of the geography, the people and village organization. Fourthly, I will discuss the sources that I will consult for historical information and how I am going to go about in search for relevant sources. Included in this section is a discussion of the types of historical evidence available for historical reconstruction. Fifthly, I am going to identify how I am going to interpret and reconstruct the history of the CCCS in Matautu Falelatai in order to present a coherent historical narrative of its first fifteen years. And lastly, I will briefly outline the content of this study. Here, I will give brief descriptions of the chapters following this introductory chapter.

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<sup>1</sup> Congregational Christian Church of Samoa will be abbreviated to CCCS for the purpose of this research. The name Congregational Christian Church of Samoa (CCCS) was adopted to replace the title London Missionary Society Church (LMS) in the annual meeting of the Church in 1962. See, Featuna'i Ben Liuaana, *Samoa Tulai: Ecclesiastical and Political Face of Samoa's Independence 1900-1962*, (Apia: Malua Printing Press, 2004), p.3.

## **Purpose and Motivation**

No one has ever made a serious attempt to write a history of the CCCS in Matautu, Falelatai. So, as a current theological student and a descendant of Matautu, Falelatai, I am both obliged and humbled to attempt such a feat. However, due to word restrictions for this project, I decided to limit my search to the first fifteen years of the CCCS in Matautu Falelatai. Thus covering the establishment of the Church in the early 1830's, significant developments that aided the growth of the Church up until the calling of the first Samoan minister. It is hoped that this study will serve the purpose of informing present and future generations interested in the history of the CCCS, not only in Matautu, Falelatai but Samoa as a whole.

Furthermore, this work is also inspired by a personal desire to honour my descendants on my mother's side by providing a piece of history of the CCCS Matautu, Falelatai. This deed in a way will acknowledge their fortitude in accepting the Word of God and their hard work in developing the CCCS not only in Matautu, Falelatai but within Samoa as well. It is my hope that constructing a history of the CCCS in Matautu, Falelatai with my preconceptions as a descendant of Matautu Falelatai village will highlight and bring to the fore the contributions of my ancestors and the people of Matautu, Falelatai in the establishment of the CCCS in Samoa and its early mission work to neighbouring Pacific islands.

## **Scope**

As mentioned above this study will focus mainly on the history of the Church in Matautu, Falelatai from 1830 to 1844. The scope of the study is deliberately limited to this period not only because of the limitation of time and space allowed for this project, but also because of the fact that the knowledge concerning this period of the Church in

Matautu is scarce with gaps in the records of the Church and the written accounts in the works of Samoan historians such as Kenape Faletoese, Malama Meleisea and Oka Fauolo. The scope of this work basically covers the early developments of the Church in Matautu Falelatai, from its first convert in 1830, to the election of its first Samoan minister in 1844.

## **Matautu Falelatai**

A vital prerequisite to understanding history is to have knowledge of the place and people of the studied locality. Therefore, this section is an attempt to briefly highlight some of the background information concerning the village of Matautu Falelatai, to bring some perspective in understanding its history.

Geographically speaking, Matautu is a sub village of Falelatai situated on the South West of Upolu, the second largest island of Samoa in the South Pacific. It is in the political district of Aana covering the Western side of Upolu. Falelatai has ten sub-villages which include the sub-villages of, Sama'i, Falevai, Matamatanonofo, Levi, Sagogo, Matautu, Puna, Matautu, Pata and Si'ufaga. These sub villages are named after the *maota* (resident of a high chief) and *laoa* (resident of an orator) of the leading *matai* of the respected area. Eight of the ten sub-villages of Falelatai (with the exception of Pata and Siufaga) are merged together to form what is now known (and referred to in the course of this thesis) as Matautu, Falelatai. Demographically speaking the population of Matautu, Falelatai is approximately 925 people according to the 2016 Samoa Census.<sup>2</sup> This is a significant decrease from previous government census due to external migration (rural urban drift plus emigration).<sup>3</sup> Mataia Malaki Aperaamo

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<sup>2</sup> Samoa Bureau of Statistics (Population and Demography Census, Dec 2016)

<sup>3</sup> Samoa Bureau of Statistics (Population and Demography Census, Dec 2016 )

lamented this trend by claiming, “*ua leai ni tagata o aiga*” (families have no members).<sup>4</sup> This decrease in population had dire consequences on the development of individual families, the Church and the village as a whole. Morgan Tuimalealiifano also sees such trend and claims village banishment as the major factor for the people to abandon their ancestral lands for freehold lands bought in the Apia Urban Area.<sup>5</sup> However, Aperamo and Tuimalealiifano’s observations are contrary to Malama Meleisea’s claim that Falelatai “is a strong, traditional village ... and it is one of the biggest *nuu* in the whole of the country.”<sup>6</sup>

Despite the decrease in population I agree with Meleisea that Falelatai is a strong traditional village. This is partly because Falelatai is one of the ancient villages in Samoa with a Fijian origin.<sup>7</sup> Local legends revealed that a Fijian couple by the names of Too (husband) and Maga (wife) migrated to Samoa and settled in an area known as Tua o Maauga. Maga gave birth to twins and their names were Latai (close to the ocean) and Se’ela (move away from the sun). As the twins grew older they built themselves houses. The locality of Latai’s house is the area now called Falelatai, meaning house of Latai while Se’ela moved further up in the mountains and built himself a house and named the area Falese’elā, meaning house of Se’elā. In this case, Matautu Falelatai the subject of this work is an ancient Samoan village.

Another factor that makes Falelatai a strong traditional village is the fact that Tuimalealiifano resides there in an area known as Matamatanonofo (sit and observe).

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<sup>4</sup> Mataia Malaki Apereamo, conversation with author, (21 March, 2020)

<sup>5</sup> Morgan Tuimalealiifano, Village Authority & Governance in Samoa: The case of O le Afioga Tutasi a le Aiga Taua'ana, Falelatai (Samoa Conference II: Tracing Footprints of Tomorrow: Past lessons, present stories, future lives: National University of Samoa, July 2011), p5.

<sup>6</sup> Malama Meleisea, The Making of Modern Samoa: Traditional Authority and the Colonial Administration in the Modern History of Samoa (Suva: USP, 1987), 218.

<sup>7</sup> Morgan Tuimalealiifano, Village Authority & Governance in Samoa: The case of O le Afioga Tutasi a le Aiga Taua'ana, Falelatai (Samoa Conference II: Tracing Footprints of Tomorrow: Past lessons, present stories, future lives: National University of Samoa, July 2011), p5.

The Tuimalealiifano title is one of the four *tama-aiga* (paramount chief) titles in Samoa. The present Tumalealiifano title holder Sualauvi II is Samoa's current Head of State.<sup>8</sup> Like any other Samoan traditional village Falelatai is governed by the *faamatai*<sup>9</sup> (chief system). The *matai*(s) are organized hierarchically according to rank and status. These ranks are preserved within the village *faalupega* (honorifics).

Afio mai le Aiga Tauā'ana ma le latou tama (Tuimaleali'ifano)  
 Afifio mai le Falefitu o le Āti Tagaloa (Misa, Taēfu, 'Anae,  
 Fa'alava'au, Nanai, Lealaitagomoa ma Lupematasila) ma le matua o  
 Tonumaivao  
 Afio mai Tai'ivao, na falefia i ai Aiga  
 Afifio mai Fasavalu, Salu, Auva'aiepeau ma Tama a Tausala  
 Susū mai Tau'ivae  
 Alalata'i Galuefā iā Falelatai, le tagata o le Vavau (Va'atu'itu'i) ma  
 le tula o Sālogo  
 Afio mai Tole'afoa ma le 'aumaga, ma vae o le Nofoafia.<sup>10</sup>

Greetings to the House of Taua'ana and his kinship  
 Greetings to the Seven Houses of Ati Tagaloa  
 Honorary Tai'ivao chieftain of the Aiga ; Honorary Fasavalu and the  
 House of Fasavalu.  
 Greetings to Tau'ivae  
 Greetings to the chieftain Galu e Fa of Falelatai,  
 Greetings to the Tagata o le Vavau and the Tula o Salogo and the Vae  
 of the Nofoafia.

In particular Matautu, Falelatai is represented in the above *faalupega* (honorifics)

as;

Afifio le Falefa, Le Matua Moe Po ma le Aiga Sa Fasavalu  
 Alalatai le Tula o Salogo ma Tagata ole vavau  
*Greetings to the Falefa*  
*Greetings to the Matua Moe Po and the House of Fasavalu*  
*Greetings to the Tula of Salogo and Tagata ole vavau*

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<sup>8</sup> The other three paramount titles in Samoa are Malietoa, Tupua and Mataafa.

<sup>9</sup> The *faamatai* (chief system) is the traditional Samoan system for governing villages. In Matautu Falelatai, each *aiga* (family) have a *matai* or multiple *matai*(s). The *matai*'s responsibility is to represent the aiga in the village *fono* (council). Also see: Fana'afi Le Tagaloa, Aiono, Western Samoa: the sacred covenant: *Land Rights of Pacific Women*, (Suva: Institute of Pacific Studies of the University of the South Pacific, 1986) p. 103 ff; Malama Meleisea, Lalaga: A Short History of Western Samoa, (Suva: University of the South Pacific, 1987) p. 117.

<sup>10</sup> Vaega o Mataupu Tau Lotoifale, Tusi Faalupega o Samoa Aoa (Malo o Samoa, 2012).

Judging from this honorific Matautu Falelatai seems to be an *alii* (high chief) oriented community as oppose to Pata where the *tulafale* (orator) exercise autonomy.<sup>11</sup> Therefore in Matautu, Falelatai the *alii* makes up the *fono a matai* (village council). This council exercise authority over the day to day affairs of the village. According to Morgan Tuimalealiifano “the decision of this council is intoned censoriously as the *afioga tutasi* (council degree).”<sup>12</sup> That is their decisions are irreversible. Those who disobey and disrespect the council degrees will face the consequences that range from monetary fines to banishment from the village. The *afioga tutasi* worked to the advantage of the CCCS as we discovered later on in this work.

However, although Matautu, Falelatai has remained a strong traditional village in its political affairs and governance physically it has become modern over the years. Matautu, Falelatai was the one of the first villages in Samoa to enjoy electricity with the operation of their own diesel generator in 1960. Nearly all of families are now staying in modern style houses and own cars funded from their cash crop sales and remittances from their families overseas.

All in all, this brief background of Matautu, Falelatai has revealed that it to be a strong traditional village. This is clear in the traditional way that is governed by the *fono a matai* and its *afioga tutasi*. However, modernity has arrived to Matautu, Falelatai as shown in its physical appearance.

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<sup>11</sup> See: Morgan Tuimalealiifano, ‘*Talofa e Aiga, ua ai e lago le tofa! : Village governance and development in Falelatai*,’ in Elise Huffer and Asofou Soo, (eds.) *Governance in Samoa* (Canberra/Suva: Asia Pacific Press/U.S.P, 2000), p173.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p175.



## **Methodology and Sources**

As mentioned above there is no published material directly concerned with the history of the CCCS C in Matautu, Falelatai. Therefore, there is a big void in academia concerning the history of Matautu that this research is intended to fill. In this sense, this work therefore will heavily rely on primary sources. This includes interviews, Church records, and archival materials and landmarks visitations to acquire the necessary information needed for this work. However, this does not mean that I will completely neglect the secondary materials available in libraries around Samoa. I will use the works of known historians concerning the history of the CCCS to make sense of the primary materials that I will gather. For example are the works of Oka Fauolo, Featunai Liuaana, and Kenape Faletoese.

Moreover, the primary materials that I will consult for this work includes the Church Records of the CCCS Church in Matautu, Oral Traditions acquired through interviews, Archival materials and Landmarks.

## **Local Interviews**

Furthermore, I have interviewed the elders of the CCCS Church in Matautu. For the purpose of acquiring the oral traditions and stories passed down from generation to generation regarding the history of the CCCS in Matautu. However, I am critically taking into consideration the fact that these elders are second and third generation descendants of those present at the time that Christianity arrived in Samoa in 1830. This chronological gap can yield inadequacy in the accounts of the historical events in question. To overcome such a problem I will address these accounts carefully and

critically to obtain accurate insights for the construction of the history of the CCCS in Matautu Falelatai.

## **Genealogies**

Genealogies can be viewed as store houses of historical information. In this sense, I will also search the genealogies of some families in Matautu to establish genealogical linkages between the people of Matautu, especially To'oa Sualauvi and Malietoa Vainuupo who first accepted Christianity. It is important to make this connection since Malietoa and his families were among the first Samoans to be Christianized.<sup>13</sup> In this case, the genealogies of To'oa Sualauvi who later became Tuimalealiifano will be examined to identify and prove his genealogical connections to the Malietoa family.

## ***Api o le Galuega* (Church Records)**

To gain valuable information for this thesis I will also consult the Church Records of the CCCS in Matautu, Falelatai. The *Api o le Galuega* is a written report kept by the Church minister to record every detail of the works of the Church. This book is supposed to be kept with the upmost care and to be passed from one minister to the other before they leave the parish. The *Api o le Galuega* therefore is a valuable source of information for historical reconstructions. The *Api o le Galuega* for the Matautu, Falelatai CCCS is well kept, highlighting some of the most significant developments in the Church in its first fifteen years. However, some entries are brief without an

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<sup>13</sup> Kenape Faletoese, *O Le Tala Faasolopito o le Ekalesia Samoa [L.M.S]/A History of the Samoan Church [L.M.S]* (Apia: Malua Printing Press, 1959).

elaborated explanation of historical events. In this sense, the content of the book needs to be carefully and critically examined, in order to retrieve and make sense of the historical information for the construction of the history of the CCCS in Matautu Falelatai intended for this work.

## **Landmarks**

Furthermore, I will also explore the significance of the site of the old church building of the CCCS in Matautu and grave yards. Observing these landmarks could yield historical insights valuable for the purpose of this study, considering that there were location shifts for the Church center and building in Falelatai. Moreover, Falelatai was also the location for the first printing press in Samoa, and there is a mount in Falelatai to prove this claim.

## ***Sulu Samoa (Light for Samoa)***

In addition, I will also consult the EFKS archives (Malua Theological College Library and EFKS Headquarters Tamaligi), and old publications of the EFKS Newsletter, *Sulu Samoa*<sup>14</sup> for any information relevant to the establishment and history of the EFKS Matautu, Falelatai.

In summation, the sources for historical formulation that I have identified for this study contain both primary and secondary sources. The historical accounts from these sources will be critically examined to yield a clear historical portrait of the significant events in the first fifteen years of the Church in Matautu, Falelatai. The historical portrait of the Matautu Falelatai presented in this work will be tainted with theological

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<sup>14</sup> Sulu Samoa is a monthly newsletter of the CCCS Church published at the Malua Printing Press at Tamaligi. It was first published in 1839

insights, since I am intending to construct and present a history of the Matautu, Falelatai CCCS from a Christian perspective.

### **Christian Approach to History**

As aforementioned my intention for this work is to interpret and reconstruct the history of the Matautu, Falelatai Church from a Christian perspective since I am a Christian and a theological student studying to serve God through the mission and ministry of the Church. According to David Bebbington, such an approach to history derives from the Christian belief that God intervenes in world events. That is, God gets involved and guides history to the end that he has planned.<sup>15</sup> For Bebbington, such an approach to history found its roots in the Old Testament where the Jewish writers believe that divine intervention was the norm in history. The Jewish authors wrote that Yahweh their God intervened and directed human affairs. For instance, in the Exodus event the Jewish writers recorded that Yahweh directed the desert wanderings of their ancestors, engaged in a covenant with them, and even brought them to the land of Palestine that the Divine has promised to them.<sup>16</sup> In this sense, the Christian approach to history therefore refers to the way of interpreting and recording historical event that sees God as the history maker who directs and intervenes in the course of history.

This approach was employed by Oka Fauolo in writing the history of the EFKS (CCCS). This is apparent in the title of his book, *'Vavega o le Alofa Lavea'i', (Miracles of the Saving Love)*.<sup>17</sup> The title discloses Fauolo's Christian conviction that the history of the CCCS is a miracle directed by the saving love of God. In his work, Fauolo

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<sup>15</sup> David Bebbington, *Patterns in History: A Christian Perspective on Historical Thoughts* (Leicester: Apollos, 1990), p43.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p44.

<sup>17</sup> Oka Fauolo, *Vavega o le Alofa Laveai: O le Talafaasolopito o le Ekalesia Faapotopotoga Kerisiano Samoa* (Apia: Malua Printing Press, 2005).

interpreted historical events from a Christian viewpoint. This is illustrated throughout the book with theological insights made by the author to explain the occurrences of historical events.<sup>18</sup>

Similarly, Kenape Faletoese in his work '*O le Tala Faasolopito o le Ekalesia Samoa [L.M.S]/ A History of the Samoan Church [L.M.S]*'<sup>19</sup>, recorded the history of the L.M.S Church with the belief that the history of the L.M.S Church in Samoa was directed by the Divine. This is evidenced in his interpretation and attribution of historical events in the history of the L.M.S to God's initiative. For example, Faletoese explained pre-Christian Samoa as;

O le Alofa lava o le Atua na fanauina ai lenei atunuu i le vavau, ma tuputupu a'e pea i seneteri e tele seia taunuu i le tulaga o le a feagai ma Lona faaali mai, ma le aumaia o le Tala Lelei o le Faaolataga. (It was God's Love that gave birth to this country in the beginning and its growth throughout the centuries until it reaches the state when it will see His revelation and the arrival of the Gospel of Salvation)<sup>20</sup>

In Faletoese's explanation it is clear that he sees history from a Christian perspective and claimed God's directions guided Samoa and its growth towards the arrival of Christianity. Furthermore, the book is tainted with similar theological notes, thus suggesting that Faletoese not only perceived but wrote history from a Christian perspective.

As a Christian training to be a minister, I intend to approach the history of Matautu, Falelatai CCCS from a Christian viewpoint. In doing this I will approach the history of the Matautu, Falelatai CCCS, with the conviction that the historical events in its development were guided by God. I will also make this belief apparent in my work

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Kenape Faletoese, *O Le Tala Faasolopito o le Ekalesia Samoa [L.M.S]/A History of the Samoan Church [L.M.S]* (Apia: Malua Printing Press, 1959).

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p5.

with the insertion of theological insights and interpretations of historical happenings in the history of the CCCS in Matautu, Falelatai.

## **Chapter Outline**

This thesis has four chapters. Chapter 1 serves as the introduction with the necessary insights vital to understanding this work. Chapter 2 provides a chronological presentation of the significant developments in the history of the CCCS in Matautu, Falelatai from 1830 – 1838. Chapter 3 provides a chronological presentation of the significant developments in the history of the CCCS Matautu, Falelatai from 1839 – 1844. Chapter 4 is the conclusion of the study, where I will summarize the findings of the study and state the significance of this study to the present and future generation of the Matautu, Falelatai CCCS and the CCCS as a whole.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter I have set the stage for understanding this study. My intentions are to paint a clear picture of the aims and objectives of this study and to provide the necessary backdrop for understanding the history of the CCCS in Matautu Falelatai. In addition I have also identified the sources of information that this study will rely upon. These sources need to be critically scrutinised to yield the information needed to construct a chronological account of significant developments in the CCCS in Matautu, Falelatai from 1830 - 1844. In addition, I have also stated that I will approach the history of the CCCS in Matautu, Falelatai from a Christian perspective, with the conviction that God intervenes and guides historical developments.

## **Chapter 2**

### **HISTORY OF THE CCCS MATAUTU FALETAI 1830 – 1838**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter will present a chronological account of the significant developments in the history of the CCCS Matautu Falelatai from 1830 to 1838. In this Chapter I will document the first Christianity convert in 1830; the establishment of the CCCS Church; the first resident island missionary; the transfer of the Church from Matamatanonofo to Matautu Falelatai; the first white missionary and second island missionary; and the building of the first Church building. Such developments revealed God's love for His people and His guidance in planting the Gospel in Matautu Falelatai so that Salvation through Jesus Christ is made available to them.

#### **First Christian Convert of Matautu Falelatai– 1830**

On the 24<sup>th</sup> of August 1830 the 'Messenger of Peace' anchored at Sāpapālii on the island of Savaii bringing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to Samoa. On board were John Williams, Charles Barff, eight Tahitian teachers and a Samoan chief name Fauea and his wife Puaseisei whom they picked up from Tonga as their interpreter.<sup>1</sup> Their intention was to meet Malietoa Vaiinupo who was one of the most influential chiefs on the islands. The official meeting between John Williams and Malietoa was held at Malietoa's residence at *Mataniu Feagai ma le Ata*,<sup>2</sup> on August 24 1830. At the meeting, Williams revealed to Malietoa that the purpose of his visit was to bring the

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<sup>1</sup> Neil Gunson, *Messenger of Grace; Evangelical Missionaries in the South Seas 1797-1860* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1978), p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Cultural meeting place of chiefs and orators of Sapapalii village

Gospel of Jesus Christ. Malietoa in response expressed his desire to receive Christianity and assured that he would devote his efforts to spread the Gospel throughout Samoa. This is a momentous occasion for the people of Samoa and it is indeed a day that the Lord has made. The instant acceptance of Christianity reveals God's hand in history. He melted the hearts of the people for them to receive the Gospel of Salvation.

Among Malietoa's hosting party was To'oa Sualauvi of Falelatai. Featunai Liuaana listed him as one of the *matai*(s) to accept Christianity.<sup>3</sup> Featunai's claim was verified by his Highness Tuimalealiifano Sualauvi II who claims that To'oa Sualauvi was the nephew of Malietoa Vaiinupo and he often visited Sāpapālii to visit his mother's family where he was bestowed the title To'oa; especially at this time when Malietoa and his allies were raging war on the district of A'ana to avenge the murder of his kinsman Tamafaiga. After the war To'oa Sualauvi continued with his visitations and often traveled to and from Sāpapālii to receive Christian instructions from the island missionaries.<sup>4</sup> This is because Malietoa Vaiinupo decided that he and his brother Taimalelagi would share the eight Rarotonga and Tahitian missionaries and they should remain in Sāpapālii under their care.

Malama Meleisea sees Malietoa's move as a way of monopolizing Christianity.<sup>5</sup> However, I see this as divine intention of nurturing Christianity until it is hatched and ready to be released to the rest of Samoa. If it was for material benefit then Christianity would not have spread and flourished in Samoa in its early years. God works in

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<sup>3</sup> Featunai Liuaa, 'Errand of Mercy: Samoan Missionaries to Southern Vanuatu, 1839-1860', in Doug Munro and Andrew Thornley, *The Covenant Makers: Islander Missionaries in the Pacific* (Suva: Star Printery, 1996), p.41.

<sup>4</sup> Afioga Tuimalealiifano Vaaletoa Sualauvi II, interview with author. Vailele, 22 May, 2020

<sup>5</sup> Malama Meleisea, *The Making of Modern Samoa: Traditional Authority and Colonial Administration in the Modern History of Western Samoa* (Suva: Institute of Pacific Studies, 1987), p.13.



mysterious ways and he touched the hearts of people like To'oa Sualauvi and made them eager for the Gospel that they travelled long distances in primitive ways to be converted and helped spread the Good News to other parts of Samoa. To'oa Sualauvi's efforts were later recognized when the Church later on made him a lay preacher to assist the ministry in Matautu, Falelatai.<sup>6</sup>

### **Establishment of the First Church – 1832**

After his conversion and receiving Christian instructions To'oa Sualauvi decided to establish a Church in his residence in Matamatanonofo in 1832. Oka Fauolo documented that it was under Malietoa Vainuupo's advice that encouraged Tuimalealiifano Sualauvi to establish the Church in his village.<sup>7</sup> The Church started small according to the *Api ole Galuega* (Church Records) as the Church started with a small gathering of 28 people. These 28 people were mainly Tuimalealiifano Sualauvi's relatives.<sup>8</sup> Soloi Keilani recalls that the reason for this low attendance was the hesitation on the part of the people of Falelatai to set foot on the Tuiaana's residence. The residence of the Tuiaana is considered sacred by the people of Falelatai thus no one shall set foot without any good reason on these grounds.<sup>9</sup> Morgan Tuimalealiifano also mentions that in a family belief, the Tuimalealiifano land at Matamatanonofo was guarded by the aitu Tutogi and her daughter Tala'ole. Tutogi is believed to be Tuimalealiifano's daughter. The one who requested for her church (Catholic) to be built in Falelatai also, but was held off because of her father's wish for Falelatai to only have one church and that was the L.M.S church.

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<sup>6</sup> *Api o le Galuega* (Church Records): Matautu Falelatai

<sup>7</sup> Oka Fauolo, *Vavega o le Alofa Laveai: O le Tala Faasolopito o le Ekalesia Faapotopotoga Kerisiano i Samoa*, (Apia: Malua Printing Press, 2005), p.39.

<sup>8</sup> *Api o le Galuega* (Church Records): Matautu Falelatai

<sup>9</sup> Soloi Keilani, interview with author, (22<sup>nd</sup> April 2020).

Later in 1832, To'oa Sualauvi in an attempt to increase Church attendance decided to name the Church the “Lotu a le Tuia’ana Tuimalealiifano To’oa Sualauvi” (The Church of the Tuiaana Tuimalealiifano To’oa Sualauvi.<sup>10</sup> As mentioned in Chapter 1 the title Tuimalealiifano is one of the four paramount chiefly titles of Samoa. The naming of the Church after his Highness had a profound effect on Church attendance. That is, Church membership increased to 89.<sup>11</sup>

This reminds me of how the Church began from humble beginnings in Europe and Asia Minor in the Apostolic Age as evidenced in the Book of Acts and the Letters of the Apostle Paul. The Church began as house churches with a few in attendance. House churches were obviously family homes where early Christians would congregate and contemplate the life and message of Jesus and mature in their faith, supporting each other with prayer and love. God nurtured these small churches into widely-acclaimed churches as witnesses to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.



**Figure 1:** Sagogo in Matautu, Falelatai.

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<sup>10</sup> *Api o le Galuega* (Church Records): Matautu Falelatai. - Lotu a Tuia’ana Sualauvi – This was the name of the church at the time, so that people would attend.

<sup>11</sup> *Api o le Galuega* (Church Records): Matautu Falelatai.

## **First Island Missionary and Minister: 1832 – 1837**

In 1832, Williams returned to Samoa and found out that Malietoa had been true to his promise and had supported the evangelization of Samoa. The evangelisation work in Samoa had reached the other islands as far as Manua. Thus, Williams decided to disperse the island missionaries to oversee the work in other villages. Meanwhile, To'oa Sualauvi on his occasional visits to Sapapali'i pressed Malietoa that he need an island missionary to aid him with the already established Church. With the dispersal of the island missionary in the pipeline Malietoa replied by assigning Tiare to Falelatai. Tiare was a native of Aitutaki Tahiti who accompanied John Williams in his second journey to Samoa in 1832.<sup>12</sup>

To'oa Sualauvi brought Tiare to Falelatai where Tiare helped with the affairs of the Church and administering the Word of God to the people. According to the *Api o le Galuega*, the people viewed Tiare as their first minister and he served there for five years from 1832 until his death in 17<sup>th</sup> November, 1837.<sup>13</sup> Tiare is believed to be buried at Peretania in Matamatanonofo, a place named after Britain the place of origin for most European missionaries who brought the Gospel to Samoa.<sup>14</sup>

Evidently, the perseverance of To'oa Sualauvi and Tiare echoes how God used people as vehicles to carry and transplant the Church and the Gospel in dark places. I consider their works in establishing the Church as the dawning of a new era in Falelatai. The fact that Tiare devoted his life to the mission and died in foreign lands made him a true man of God in my view.

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<sup>12</sup> Oka Fauolo, *Vavega o le Alofa Laveai* (2005), p. 39.

<sup>13</sup> *Api o le Galuega* (Church Records) Matautu Falelatai.

<sup>14</sup> Afioga Tuimalealiifano Vaaletoa Sualauvi II, interview with author. Vailele, 22 May, 2020

## The Move from Matamatanonofu to Matautu 1838

After the passing of Tiare, To'oa observed that the church wasn't growing under his leadership as a lay preacher. So he thought to transfer the Church to the Aiga Taua'ana in order for the Church to grow. The Aiga Taua'ana is made up of four important chiefly titles of the village of Falelatai; namely, the titles Misa, Nanai, Anae and Lupematasila with Tuimalealiifano as their Tama Aiga or highest ranking paramount chief. Tuimalealiifano requested to the Aiga Taua'ana for the Church to be transferred under their guidance. The *Api o le Galuega* entry states that Tuimalealiifano agrees that "*O lea aumai lana Lotu i lona Aiga Tauaana latou te tausia ma faamamaluina.*"<sup>15</sup> (The Church will be transfer to his Aiga Taua'ana for them to monitor and respect).

To'oa Sualauvi's request was gladly welcomed by the Aiga Taua'ana and the Sa Nanai family of Matautu<sup>16</sup> offered their meeting place to house the Church thus derived its new name "*Malae ole Filemu*" (Place of Peace).<sup>17</sup> The move attracted more people to attend this new belief and the house of the Sā Nanai family was getting smaller for the multitude that turned up to worship thus rose the need for a new and bigger place to worship. Lupematasila Fa'amanu attributed this increase in Church attendance to the *Afioga Tutasi*. For him this was the workings of the *Afioga Tutasi*, when the Afioga Tutasi instructed Church attendance to be compulsory that means everyone must attend Church.<sup>18</sup> This resonates with an old saying recalled by Tumalealiifano as "*E mafai e le*

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<sup>15</sup> *Api o le Galuega* (Church Records): Matautu Falelatai. Also see Fauolo, Vavega o le Alofa Laveai (2005), p. 40.

<sup>16</sup> Matautu – Maota o le aiga Sa Nanai also known as Maota ole Filemu.

<sup>17</sup> *Api ole Galuega* (Church Records): Matautu Falelatai.

<sup>18</sup> Lupematasila Tumusolia, interview with author. Falelatai, 14 May, 2020

*tagata ona alo i le pulufana, ae le mafaia ona alo le Afioga Tutasi*” (One can run from a bullet but not from the Afioga Tutasi).<sup>19</sup>

From my Christian perspective this is a clear example of how God uses cultural entities for divine works. Our culture is from God and the employment of the *Afioga Tutasi* for the betterment of the Church is a reminder of how we should use our God given cultures.

### **The First White Missionary and the Second Island Missionary-1838**

According to the *Api o le Galuega* the first white missionary to reside in Matautu Falelatai was Mr. Stair<sup>20</sup> also known as Rev. John Betteridge Stair. This claim was verified by Fauolo<sup>21</sup> and Faletese.<sup>22</sup> The twenty four year old Rev. Stair and his wife arrived in Samoa in 1838 as part of the L.M.S consolidation plan and were immediately assigned to Matautu Falelatai. This was probably to fill the gap left by the death of Tiare. Rev. Stair was a printer by trade and his mission to Matautu Falelatai was to set up a printing press for the purpose of printing materials for the L.M.S. mission.<sup>23</sup> But not only that according to the *Api o le Galuega* in Stair’s five year tenure in Matautu Falelatai he also assisted in the planning of the first Church building.<sup>24</sup> Apparently, Rev. Stair was a blessing from God for the Matautu Falelatai Church and the L.M.S mission as a whole. His skills and knowledge not only assisted the development of the local Church but also the L.M.S Church in Samoa. This reveals how God provide us

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<sup>19</sup> Morgan Tuimalealiifano, Village Authority & Governance in Samoa: The case of O le Afioga Tutasi a le Aiga Taua'ana, Falelatai (Samoa Conference II: Tracing Footprints of Tomorrow: Past lessons, present stories, future lives: National University of Samoa, July 2011), p6.

<sup>20</sup> *Api o le Galuega* (Church Records) Matautu Falelatai

<sup>21</sup> Fauolo, *Vavega o le Alofa*, (2005), p38.

<sup>22</sup> Faletese, *Talafaasolopito o le Ekalesia Samoa*, (1959), p22.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> *Api o le Galuega* (Church Records) Matautu Falelatai

with the people and the necessary knowledge for the betterment and advancement of his Word and mission.

Accompanying Rev. Stair was an Island missionary named Moia or Moea, his wife and their children. There was no mention of Moia and his family in the *Api o le Galuega*. There is a dispute among historians when Moia started working in Matautu Falelatai. According to John Garrett, Moea or Moia was sent to Falelatai in 1834 after his time in Savaii<sup>25</sup> but Fauolo claimed that he was assigned together with Rev. Stair in 1838 to assist in the establishment of the Printing Press.<sup>26</sup> I agree with Fauolo since Garrett's time frame seems to overlap with Moia's tenancy in Matautu Falelatai overlaps with the time Tiare was working in Matautu Falelatai. Moreover, the reason Fauolo stated for the selection of Moia for Matautu Falelatai was because he learned the printing trade while working in the L.M.S. first printing press in Huahine Rarotoga.<sup>27</sup> On the other hand, both Garrett and Fauolo agree on the year Moia finished working in Matautu Falelatai. They both agreed that Moia's time in Matautu Falelatai ended in 1842.<sup>28</sup>

Similar to Rev. Stair, I also see Moia as a blessing from God. God used his talents and gifts for the betterment of the mission not only in Matautu Falelatai but also in Samoa and the Pacific. This again reveals God's providence in guiding and providing His mission with the personnel and the needed knowledge.

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<sup>25</sup> John Garrett, *To Live Among the Stars: Christian Origins in Oceania* (WCC/USP: Geneva/Suva, 1982), p. 122.

<sup>26</sup> Fauolo, *Vavega o le Alofa* (2005), p. 37-38.

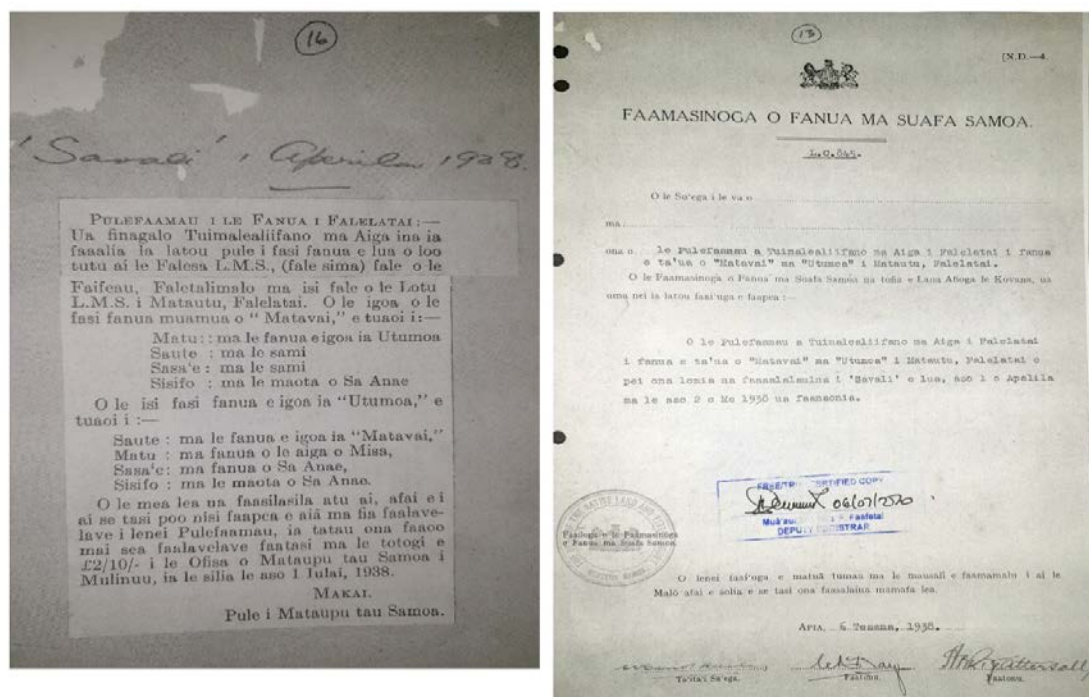
<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., Garrett, *To Live Among the Stars* (1982), p. 122.

## First Church Building - 1838

As mentioned above when the church moved from Matamatanonofo to Matautu, Church attendance increased dramatically. Such a trend caused an infrastructural problem, which was that the guest house of the Sā Nanai family used as a Church at the Malae ole Filemu could not cater for the increasing number of worshippers.

So the Aiga Taua'ana decided it was time for them to build a Church large enough to cater the worshippers on Sundays and Church activities during the week. To uphold their offer to God through the Church the Sā Nanai clan offered another piece of land called Utumoa specifically for the Aiga Tauaana to build its Church on. This piece of land together with a later land offering by the Sā Nanai family was formally registered by law under Tuimalealiifano and the Aiga Taua'ana in 2010. This is evident in the caption below in the announcement made in the Savali Newspaper and the Lands and Titles Court document.<sup>29</sup>



**Figure 2: Documentation of Land Ownership**

<sup>29</sup> Rev Dr Vaitusi Nofoaiga, interview with author, (May 23<sup>rd</sup> 2020). He is a descendant of the Nanai Family that own the Utumoa land.

It is stated in the *Api o le Galuega* that the planning and construction of the Matautu Falelatai CCCS first Church building began in 1838 in conjunction with the arrival of Rev. Stair who assisted the Matautu Falelatai congregation with the planning and construction work. However, there was no detailed account of the planning and work of the Church building in the *Api o le Galuega*. The only note that alludes to the plan of the Church building is that the Aiga Tauaana decided to put all efforts to build a Church building.<sup>30</sup> This note is suggestive of the desire to build a Church building massive in size that could house every worshipper.

However, the date for the completion of the first Church building in Utumoa is unsure. The only hint found in the *Api o le Galuega* is an entry that stated the completion of the Church building subsequently followed by the Aiga Tauaana's decision to search for a new minister to reside and serve the congregation. In hindsight, the minister whom they decided on began his service in 1844. Thus suggesting a completion date around 1844 for the first Church building for Matautu Falelatai. Below are captions of the current Church Building which many locals believe to be located in the Utumoa, the parcel of land that was donated by the Sā Nanai family.

Viewing the events of the building of the First Church building of the Matautu Falelatai CCCS from my Christian perspective reveals how God works the hearts of the people for His works. This is apparent in the dedication of the Sā Nanai family who offered their precious inheritance for the Church and mission.

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<sup>30</sup> *Api o le Galuega* (Church Records) Matautu Falelatai





**Figure 3:** Photos of the 3<sup>rd</sup> church building that is situated at Utumoa in Maututu

Falelatai.

## Conclusion

In this chapter I have documented the development of the Maututu, Falelatai Church from 1830 – 1838. This includes the first Christian convert in 1830; the establishment of the CCCS Church; the first resident island missionary; the transfer of the Church from Matamatanonofo to Maututu; the first resident white missionary and the second island resident missionary; and the construction of the first Church building of the Maututu Falelatai CCCS. These developments highlighted the determination of people such as To’oa Sualauvi, Tiare and the Aiga Taua’ana to ensure the growth of God’s work in Maututu, Falelatai. It is also apparent that through these developments we can see the hand of God guiding and directing the Church.

## Chapter 3

### HISTORY OF THE CCCS MATAUTU FALELATAI 1838 – 1845

#### Introduction

This chapter is a sequel of the previous one, continuing the history of the Matautu Falelatai CCCS Church from 1839 to 1845. Here, I will document the establishment of the first ever Printing Press in Samoa; parishners from Matautu Falelatai who offered their services to the LMS mission in Samoa and abroad; and the first Samoan Minister to serve in Matautu Falelatai. Viewing these historical events from my Christian perspective reveals God's guidance and blessings for the people of Matautu Falelatai.

#### Establishment of the First Printing Press in Samoa – 1839

The first ever Printing Press in Samoa was in Matamatanonofo, Falelatai where Tuimalealiifano resided.<sup>1</sup> The Printing Press was established on May 1839<sup>2</sup> and was built on a piece of land called Peretania; named after Britain where the LMS was originally from.<sup>3</sup> The Printing Press was equipped with the printing machines from Sydney, Australia and on the 18<sup>th</sup> July 1839, the first materials were printed. The first sheet to be printed was *O Le Tala i Lotu Eseese* (A Talk about different Religions).<sup>4</sup> The first six volumes of the Samoan Newspaper called "*The Sulu Samoa*" (The Light of Samoa) was also printed at Peretania. The purpose of the *Sulu Samoa* was to inform the

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<sup>1</sup> Morgan Tuimalealiifano, Village Authority & Governance in Samoa: The case of O le Afioga Tutasi a le Aiga Taua'ana, Falelatai (Samoa Conference II: Tracing Footprints of Tomorrow: Past lessons, present stories, future lives: National University of Samoa, July 2011), p6.

<sup>2</sup> Oka Fauolo, Vavega o le Alofa Laveai (2005)

<sup>3</sup> *Api ole Galuega* (Church Records): Matautu Falelatai.

<sup>4</sup> Meiolandre Tui Tagoilelagi Tima, Youth Participation: Does it have a place in the Samoan traditional church? Exploring youth perceptions of the EFKS in South Auckland (Youth Development: Auckland University of Technology), p29.

Church of the Gospel and update the Church with what is happening and to keep everyone informed of Church developments around Samoa. In addition, the paper also contained myths and legends of the white men and Samoan and scientific information regarding plants and animals, geography and so forth. The very first volume of the *Sulu Samoa* disclosed that;

*o le tusi uiga ese lenei, e faailoa ai le aga o le Atua, ma lona poto ma lona alofa, i ana mea na fai uma lava. O le tusi foi i le tala o le vavau a papalagi ma le tala i le nuu po o Samoa ma le tala fou a atunuu ese ese, ma le amioga a laau ma manu. O le tusi foi e faailoa ai tu ma tula fono a papalagi atoa ma tu ma tula fono a Samoa; ma mea e faatutupu ai le manuia, ma le laulelei ma le oloa o le nuu. Aemaise i mea e tuputupu ai le mata'u i le Atua ma le soifua i le Agaaga ia Iesu lona alo.*<sup>5</sup>

(this book is different, it is to make known the nature of God, His wisdom and love in everything that He has done. It is also a book of the white men's myths and legends, the legends of the dark days in Samoa, the new stories of different countries and the nature of plants and animals. It is also a book to reveal the ways and ordinances of the white men and ways and ordinances of Samoa; and the things that accumulate the wellbeing and wealth of the whole village. But crucially are the things that nurture faith in God through the Spirit of Jesus His son)

The editorial above clearly describes the subject content of the *Sulu Samoa* and it reveals that the *Sulu Samoa* is a multi-purpose paper providing the Samoans and the Church with a source of theological, scientific, social and economic insights.

During the Printing Press time in Peretania it was able to print material in the Samoan Language. This included passages of scripture, text books, pamphlets, the Tusi Pese and so forth.<sup>6</sup> According to Faletese in 1841, 5,000 copies of the Gospel of John were printed.<sup>7</sup> This is further testament to the usefulness of the Printing Press to the

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<sup>5</sup> *O Le Sulu Samoa*, vol 1 (1939), p1.

<sup>6</sup> Richard Lovett: History of the London Missionary Society, 1795-1895, vol 1 (London: Oxford University Press 1889), p373

<sup>7</sup> Faletese, *O Le Talafaasolopito O Le Ekalesia Samoa* (1959), p. 22-23.

early mission of the L.M.S Church in Samoa. Viewing this significant historical development from my lens as a Christian reveals the Printing Press as an instrument of God to serve the advancement and spreading of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in Samoa.

However, the Printing Press was only in Peretania for four years before it was relocated to a new locality. The word was, at night time the village people would hear the printing machine turn on while no one was working. Some said that it must be some bad spirit turning the machines on and off. The noises according to the members of the Tuimalealiifano family were their family ancestors who were awakened by the sound of the old printer. Mrs Stair was terrified of the noises and complained that there was too much noise at night and could not sleep, and so Rev. Stair was concerned for his wife and asked To'oa Sualauvi for the printing press to be relocated. To'oa Sualauvi answered Rev. Stair's plead and thus the Printing Press was relocated to Nuuasala, Leulumoega<sup>8</sup> in the year 1843 to a piece of land own by To'oa Sualauvi's family.<sup>9</sup>

Today, there are no remains of the Printing Press at Peretania in Matautu, Falelatai. But, in front of where villagers believe the Printing Press was is now the Falelatai Primary School. The photo below is a caption of the Falelatai Primary School in Peretania Matautu Falelatai. Behind the Primary School is a mount the villagers believe the Printing Press used to be located and referred to as the Printing Press mount. The locals also believe that to this day the place is still haunted by the ancestral spirits of the Tuimalealiifano family.<sup>10</sup>

However, despite the eerie cause of the relocation of the Printing Press I still see the move as a Divine initiative. This view correlates with the consideration that the move made the Printing Press geographically more central and accessible to the various

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<sup>8</sup> Leulumoega- o le isi lea maota a le Tuia'ana.

<sup>9</sup> Afioga Tuimalealiifano Vaaletoa Sualauvi II, interview with author. Vailele, 22 May, 2020

<sup>10</sup> Misa Atapana Esau, interview with author. Falelatai, 22 May, 2020

mission stations now developing around Samoa, especially the mission station located in Fasitootai where John Williams was stationed at the time. The improved accessibility of the Printing Press also made it handy for the printing of portions of the Samoan Bible translated by missionaries stationed at different mission posts throughout Samoa.



**Figure 4:** Falelatai Primary School at Peretania, and behind is the mount believed to be the location of the first Printing Press in Samoa

### **Missionaries from Falelatai- 1839**

In 1839 Rev. John Williams decided to fulfil his vision of taking the Gospel to Western Pacific. In the process Rev. Williams selected twelve islanders from a list of more than thirty Samoan volunteers who offered their lives and service to the mission.<sup>11</sup> Among the selected twelve were men from Matautu Falelatai. There is a dispute concerning the exact number of men from Matautu Falelatai who attended the mission. According to the *Sulu Samoa* of October, 1839 John Williams and other LMS missionaries selected four men of the village of Falelatai. Their names are, Sau,

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<sup>11</sup> Liuaana, *Errand of Mercy* (2000), p 41.

Lei'ataua, Paulo and Fasavalu.<sup>12</sup> I could not dispute this list since the mentioned version of the *Sulu Samoa* was printed in Peretania Falelatai. So, those in charge and who worked in the Printing Press would know about the backgrounds of the selected twelve for the mission. Faletoese on the other hand list just lists Fasavalu and Paulo as candidates for the mission from Matautu Falelatai, while Sau and Leiataua were listed to hail from Apolima and Manono respectively.<sup>13</sup> There is also ample validity in Faletoese's list since the name Sau and Leiataua in turn are chiefly titles of Apolima and Manono.

On the other hand, Fauolo claim Paulo and Fasavalu as the same person. For him Paulo Aniseko Faasavalu was the one who after the first mission to Vanuatu failed pioneered the mission to Niue from 1849 - 1859. His work in Niue was hailed for his achievements. He pioneered the translation of the Bible into the Niuean language and later on built the first Church building in 1852.

Despite the dispute on the number of early missionaries from Matautu Falelatai, what is certain is that there were men from Matautu Falelatai who willingly offered their services for God's mission work. Their calling from my Christian perspective is a blessing for the Matautu Falelatai CCCS. It is a sure sign that God gazed upon the Matautu Falelatai Church to call those fit for His mission work.

In addition, there were also personnel from Matautu Falelatai who served in parishes around Samoa within the focus period of this thesis. One of those was Ma'arona who served as pastor at Vaiee from 1841-1847. According to Soliga Aleki Teo, he was the first minister for the Vaiee CCCS despite the fact that he was not

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<sup>12</sup> The year 1839, *Sulu Samoa* printed in its section called "O MEA UA TUTUPU, MA MEA UA FAI I SAMOA NA", in pager 23 is where the four missionaries from Falelatai and the other eight are mentioned.

<sup>13</sup> Faletoese, *Talafaasolopito o le Ekalesia Samoa* (1959), p. 18.

ordained at the time. Ma'arona left Vaiee and enters Malua for further training to become a pastor.<sup>14</sup> Unfortunately, there is no further information concerning Ma'arona as a minister but his calling into minister in the Vaiee congregation again highlights the fact that God looked with favour upon the Matautu Falelatai CCCS, using its members as vessels for His Word and early mission in Samoa.

### **First Samoan Minister - 1844**

After completing construction work on the new Church building in Utumoa in Matautu Falelatai, Tama Aiga and his Aiga Taua'ana decided it was time to look for a new minister to continue the gospel work in Falelatai. Here they decided on Tagaloa.<sup>15</sup> There are no records of whom and where Tagaloa is from. But, according to an interview with Samoa's Head of State, His Royal Highness Afioga Tuimalealiifano Vaaletoa Sualauvi 2<sup>nd</sup>, Tagaloa might have been the surname of the first minister of Falelatai. Tagaloa served for 36 years from 1844 till 1880. He died there during his time of ministry and is believed to be buried in Matautu, Falelatai.<sup>16</sup> Tagaloa's long service to the ministry and the Matautu Falelatai CCCS testifies to God's providence for the people of Matautu Falelatai and the Church. God surely provided for the Church by raising ministers who can endure and serve diligently in His mission here on earth. In addition, Tagaloa's service is a clear portrait of a person who was touched by God's Spirit thus giving complete devotion to serve God through His Gospel and mission.

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<sup>14</sup> Soliga Aleki Te'o, *A History of the beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa CCCS in Vaie'e from 1841 to 1893* (BTh Thesis, Malua Theological College, 2016) p 23

<sup>15</sup> *Api o le Galuega* (Church Records) Matautu Falelatai

<sup>16</sup> Afioga Tuimalealiifano Vaaletoa Sualauvi II, interview with author. Vailele, 22 May, 2020

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter I have documented the development of the Matautu Falelatai Church from 1839 – 1845. This includes the establishment of the first Printing Press in Samoa at Falelatai in 1839; the selection of men from Matautu Falelatai as missionaries to take the Gospel abroad and to serve in local parishes; and the first Samoan Minister for the Matautu Falelatai CCCS Church in 1844. These developments highlighted the growth of the Church in Falelatai and the fact that God had gazed with favour upon the Matautu Falelatai CCCS.



## **Chapter 4**

### **Conclusion**

This thesis has attempted to paint a clear picture of the aims and objectives of this study and to provide the necessary backdrop for understanding the history of the CCCS in Matautu, Falelatai. As mentioned in Chapter 1, there has never been a serious attempt at a written history on the beginning of the CCCS church at Matautu, Falelatai. However with a few surviving written accounts by historians and the *Api o le Galuega*, I was able to construct a chronological account of significant developments in the CCCS in Matautu Falelatai from 1830 - 1845. In addition, I have approached the history of the CCCS in Matautu, Falelatai from a Christian perspective with the conviction that God intervenes and guides historical developments.

I have documented the development of the Matautu Falelatai Church from 1830 – 1838. This includes the first Christianity convert in 1830; the establishment of the CCCS Church; the first resident island missionary and the transfer of the Church from Matamatanonofo to Matautu, Falelatai. These developments highlighted the determination of people such as To’oa Sualauvi, Tiare and the Aiga Taua’ana to ensure the growth of God’s work in Matautu, Falelatai. It is also apparent that through these developments we can see the hand of God guiding and directing the Church.

I have also documented the development of the Matautu Falelatai Church from 1839 – 1845. This includes the establishment of the first printing press in Samoa and first white missionary in Falelatai 1839; the building of the first church building; the first Falelatai men as missionaries; and the first Samoan Minister in 1844.

These developments highlighted the growth of the church in Falelatai. Not only we see the growth of the church but we have people that have converted and ready to

serve God such as Sau, Lei'ataua, Paulo and Fasavalu. Here we also see the hunger that the Falelatai people had for the Gospel. Their commitment to seeing that the Church continued to grow in its life and ministry cannot be questioned. As mentioned before, the church building that is now present is the third building to ever be built by the church. It was moved between two places, which paints a clear picture of the people in Falelatai keeping the church dear and close to their hearts, and showing their service to God as they believed without God, all of the blessings in life they have received would not be in existence.

This thesis may also serve and contribute to the EFKS as a whole with its history. As mentioned earlier, this can be the beginning of putting together and constructing the history of CCCS Matautu, Falelatai. It is obvious that in the early years of the church, God saw that Falelatai were eager to know more about their new God. This is evident from offering family homes and sacred lands for the church to continue not only their services but for the church to keep moving forward. Together with the church moving between locations within Falelatai, here we see the people of Falelatai striving to do their best to serve God and learn more on His Gospel. .

As we have seen, Falelatai were not only active contributors to the acceptance of Christianity but also in developing the church. As mentioned, offering land and their services in building a Church building shows how quickly the people of Falelatai converted to be Christians. Their perseverance in working together to build the church through the constructions of the early Church buildings shows great strength of faith and conviction in new found God.

From the development and building of the first church building to the current building we can conclude that God mission and work was always at the forefront of their minds. There is no record of Falelatai ever struggling to build the church buildings

or even garner support for the projects. Instead, they would just meet, agree, and start building. This shows the commitment and dedication they had for the church and the Gospel, that they didn't hold back anything. They gave their all and everything they had, even customary land that was their heritage and sacred inheritance, was not withheld by some families.

In summary this short history of the CCCS Church Matautu, Falelatai is a story of inspiration and hope. But most of all, it is a story of the grace of God on the people of Falelatai. Theologically speaking, God's hand was in the midst of it all from the beginning of this history.

It is my hope that this inaugural work will serve to encourage the current members of the church in Falelatai that despite the many challenges they might be facing, God will never forsake them. As a village, and church, the young generation should be inspired in their own journey of faith that they are part of a history that was laid down by their forefathers for the glory of God. It is my prayer also, that as a history of the beginnings of the CCCS of Matautu Falelatai, this research will be recognised as only a starting point for future researchers to engage even more critically in the history of the church, revealing even more ways that God has been the origin and sustainer of the life of both the people and the church as a whole.

## **Glossary**

Alii	high chief
Faalupega	honorifics
Faamatai	chief system
Fono a Matai	village council
Matai	chief
Nuu	village
Tulafale	orator

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