

The Archives of Hawaii¹

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ONE of the most colorful and interesting archives in the United States is the Archives of Hawaii. Documentary treasures of a kingdom, a provisional government, a republic, and a United States Territory are all housed in Honolulu in the first building erected on United States soil solely for the housing of public archives.

The discovery of the Hawaiian Islands by Capt. James Cook, the British navigator, on January 18, 1778, was the beginning of the islands' sustained contact with the West. As specific commerce developed, the islands became a convenient stopping place for traders and whalers to winter. At the time of Cook's discovery, each of the islands was autonomous, ruled by an independent chief. In a succession of local wars, one chief, Kamehameha I, gradually conquered the others. By 1795 he had achieved effective control and had founded the Kingdom of Hawaii.

With the arrival from Boston in 1820 of the first American missionaries, Western influence accelerated. As a result, in the 1840's, a cabinet system of government was formally organized. The kingdom's domestic production and trade increased, and it came to conduct a worldwide diplomatic program. Legislatures held regular meetings. Finally, on January 17, 1893, Queen Liliuokalani was unseated and the kingdom was overthrown. A provisional government was formed, which on July 4, 1894, became a republic, with Sanford B. Dole as its president.

Annexation to the United States was the next issue. Partly as a result of the Spanish-American War, Hawaii was annexed to the United States by joint resolution of Congress, July 7, 1898. The present Territorial Government was not legally established, however, until 1900.

¹ This article is based in part upon the personal observation of the writer, made during research at the archives for a graduate degree in history from the University of Hawaii. It is also based upon such other main sources as the annual reports of the governor of Hawaii to the Secretary of the Interior; Thomas G. Thrum's *Hawaiian Annual*; reports of the Historical Commission of the Territory of Hawaii; reports of the librarian of the Board of Commissioners of Public Archives; and personal correspondence with Miss Maude Jones, the Archivist.

The Hawaiian archives first came into being as such in March 1847, when at the suggestion of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Robert Crichton Wyllie, the Privy Council passed a resolution ordering that "all the chiefs collect the papers they may possess and send them in for examination to the minister of foreign affairs." The order was issued on March 13, 1847.

Further concern for the care of the kingdom's valuable historical records appeared again some decades later during the reign of King Kalakaua, 1874-91. A member of the legislature, Judge John Lot Kaulukou, presented a bill providing for an appropriation to gather the scattered documents of the Hawaiian Government.

During the reign of Queen Liliuokalani, on June 30, 1892, the Committee on Foreign Relations of the legislature presented a report on a requested appropriation of \$6,000, urged by the Minister of Foreign Relations "for the preservation and arrangement of the Government Archives and the preparation of a bibliography of the Hawaiian Kingdom." The committee reported that it had found the physical condition of the Hawaiian archives deplorable. It had also learned that such of the earlier records as remained were stored in boxes in the basements of various buildings. The 1892 legislature, as a result, appropriated \$2,500 for the care of the archives.

Part of this sum was used to engage the services of the Rev. Roswell Randall Hoes, United States Navy chaplain attached to the U. S. S. *Pensacola*, which was then stationed in Honolulu. Chaplain Hoes was appointed to examine all the old records; to compile a report on them, including a proposed bibliography; and to propose a method for their preservation and use. Hoes took leave of absence from the Navy for several months in 1892-93 and busied himself in arranging and classifying some of the records. The requirements of his naval service, however, prevented his continuing long in this work. In 1895 the work was resumed by Dr. N. B. Emerson, who placed some of the Foreign Office files in chronological order.

Shortly after the annexation of Hawaii in 1898 by the United States, the chief of the Bureau of Archives of the United States Department of State went to Honolulu to inspect Hawaii's records with a view to having them transferred to Washington. This transfer was opposed by Hawaiian leaders, particularly on the grounds that the relation of the records to land titles was too important for the records to leave Hawaii. The Federal official therefore finally consented to leaving the records in the Territory on condition that

every effort would be made to secure a fireproof building for their preservation.

By an act approved July 11, 1903, the Territorial legislature appropriated funds for such a building. Erected at a cost of some \$36,000, it was completed on August 23, 1906, and was opened for public inspection the following day.

Meanwhile, by another act of the legislature approved April 3, 1905, the broad organization and functions of the Archives of Hawaii were established. The act still remains in effect. It provides for the establishment of a three-man Board of Commissioners of Public Archives. The board held its first meeting on September 29, 1906.

The secretary of the Territory is chairman of the board, *ex officio*. The other two members are appointed by the governor with the approval of the Territorial senate; their terms of office are for 4 years. Board members receive no compensation except for expenses incurred because of their membership.

The board's duty is to collect all public records, historical documents, or other valuable papers relating to the Hawaiian Islands and to arrange, classify, file, and preserve them. The board is made responsible not only for collecting material, but also for compiling and furnishing information regarding it and for making such information available to the public. Regular legislative appropriations provide for a salaried archivist (long called the Librarian of the Archives) and a staff to do the work.

Robert Colfax Lydecker was appointed the first Archivist by the Board and began work on May 10, 1905. Members of the first board were Secretary of the Territory Atkinson; Prof. W. D. Alexander, a leading historian of Hawaii; and A. F. Judd.

The acts establishing the board and providing for the construction of an archives building were hailed by the governor of the Territory in his report to the Secretary of the Interior in 1905. The governor wrote:

It is a matter of congratulation to the Territory that the work of caring for and preserving these valuable documents, tracing as they do the history of Hawaii from the darkness of heathenism, through the sunlight of Christianity, and down to the present time, is at last to be undertaken in a manner that will insure their future preservation. It is a duty that has been too long neglected and one that the country owes to posterity.

Lydecker served as Archivist until his death on June 12, 1924. His successor, Albert Pierce Taylor, assumed office on December 1 of that year and served until his death on January 12, 1931.

Charles E. Hogue followed Taylor in office, but he served for only 3 months before being succeeded by Maude Jones, the present Archivist.

The original 1906 building was enlarged in 1930, and construction of an annex is scheduled to begin soon. The 1906 building is located in Palace Square in downtown Honolulu, the Territorial capital. In the center of the square is Iolani Palace, the capitol building, formerly the palace of the reigning Hawaiian monarch, and now the office of the Territorial governor.

The Archives Building is a few hundred yards southeast of the palace across the street from the former site of the royal tomb. The one-story high, T-shaped building has classic exterior lines. The 1906 building, constructed of brick covered by cement, consists of two main sections, each of which was enlarged in 1930 because the volume of records had become so great that some records were again being stored in the basement of Iolani Palace. The rear part is a vault, 30 by 40 feet with basement, fitted with steel cases to store archives. The front part is divided into thirds. The central third is a lobby, across the rear of which runs a counter to which requests for records are brought and behind which is the entrance to the vault. Only Archives staff members are allowed access to the vault. To the right of the lobby is a research room containing the card indexes which constitute the finding aids to the archives, and tables and chairs for users of records. The Archivist's office opens into this room. To the left of the lobby is another research room and a filing room for bound volumes of newspapers. There are no special quarters for fumigation or rehabilitation in the building. All physical rehabilitation of records has been done in the Archives, however, except for binding, for which contracts are let.

The projected two-story annex, for which the Territorial legislature recently appropriated \$300,000, will provide additional modern facilities. It will be situated directly behind the present Archives Building and will front on Hotel Street. Since it will not be large enough to house all of the records, the present building will continue in use. The necessity for the new building arises from a renewed problem of lack of space. Overcrowding became very serious when the termination of World War II emergency agencies led to a flood of transfers to the Archives. "Legislative records are still piled in heaps and boxes in the vault aisles as there is no space available," the governor reported in 1951.

The plans for the new building provide for the following facilities on the first floor: Administrative offices; index and search rooms;

rooms for immigration records and for photographic and microfilm records; a receiving and repair room; and a fumigation chamber. The second floor will be occupied by an air-conditioned fireproof vault for records storage. A flagged balcony will extend along two sides of the building. Funds for equipment will be requested at the next session of the legislature.

The Archives regularly receives records from the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the Territorial government. These records are organized according to originating agency. A similar arrangement exists for most of the nineteenth-century records, the principal groups of which are the Foreign Office and Executive files, the land files of the Interior Department, the Cabinet Council files, the Privy Council files, and the Legislative Assembly files. All of the records collected in 1847 as a result of the Privy Council's order of that year are preserved in these holdings.

A significant portion of the nineteenth-century holdings consists of material, some of it originally official records, donated by individuals. Among these valuable collections are the Alexander Cartwright, Paty, Castle, Sanford B. Dole, Lorrin Thurston, Liliuokalani, Hatch-Hartwell and H. A. P. Carter collections. Of particular interest is the Williams collection of some 35,000 photographic prints and negatives depicting local people, events, and scenes of historic interest extending over half a century.

In 1934, through the interest of M. B. T. Paske-Smith, British consul at Honolulu, Miss Jones, the Archivist, was able to arrange for copies to be made of nineteenth-century British consulate records. In addition, extensive files of English, Hawaiian, and Oriental-language newspapers published in the islands are maintained, the earliest dating from 1836. The newspaper files are kept current. Their acquisition is aided by a 1921 act of the legislature requiring that copies of foreign-language newspapers be deposited with the Archives.

The Captain Cook memorial collection comprises a major part of the Archives' holdings of eighteenth-century material, which increase a little each year by purchases financed by the Captain Cook memorial fund. This fund was created during the 1928 celebration of the discovery of the Hawaiian Islands 150 years before by Captain Cook. A. P. Taylor, then Archivist, was a member of the Captain Cook Sesquicentennial Commission, which staged the celebration. The Captain Cook memorial collection seeks to acquire material to bridge the gap between the discovery of the islands and the inauguration of the monarchy. Enabling legislation permits the Ar-

chivist to use the fund to collect documents relating to Cook's life or connected with his discovery of the islands. The collection includes photostats and other copies of logs, journals, and diaries of members of the Cook and Vancouver expeditions to Hawaii.

The first Archivist's plan for segregating and classifying records called for the following headings:

1. Form of government
2. Departments under the different governments
3. Bureaus of the departments, and any further subdivisions found necessary
4. Miscellaneous documents not classifiable under the above headings
5. Segregation by years as far as practicable
6. Collecting together all documents relating to any important event in the history of the country so that in looking up such an event or any document bearing on it, all relevant papers would be together so far as possible

After segregating and classifying the records in this manner, Lydecker planned to make a "summary" index under these different headings to serve as a finding aid.

His plan proved too ambitious. The principal extensive detailed indexing done by him and his staff involved material of value to persons searching land titles. The mass of materials in the Archives was so large, however, that his efforts were directed towards obtaining at least a workable minimum of control over everything. By 1923, his project had prepared and filed 218,189 index cards. Much effort had also been expended in copying fading records and in translating records from Hawaiian to English.

In collecting records, Lydecker concentrated on obtaining them from official sources. He was aided by a legislative act of 1915 making the Archives a depository of all Territorial government publications, thus enabling the institution to secure up-to-date files of departmental reports and the like.

Under A. P. Taylor, who served as the second Archivist from 1924 to 1931, the emphasis of the Archives' program shifted. A major effort was made to obtain material still in private possession. Many of the Archives' special collections date from his tenure of office.

Taylor was aided in his collection efforts by the Historical Commission of the Territory of Hawaii. This commission, active from 1922 to 1932, was created by a legislative act approved April 18, 1921. It was provided with funds and directed to publish a revised history of Hawaii and also a record of Hawaii's participation in World War I. It was authorized to collect and purchase any documents, records, photographs, or other material necessary for its

work. The act required that any material so collected be deposited in the Archives. As a result of its efforts, the Archives obtained copies of material in continental United States libraries and copies of documents in archives in Washington, London, Paris, and Mexico City. The archival material was primarily diplomatic correspondence.

Archivist Taylor engaged in more intensive indexing of special subjects than did his predecessor. He also placed increased emphasis on the translation of Hawaiian-language documents into English on the grounds that many of the Hawaiian words and phrases of 75 and more years earlier were becoming unintelligible to the new generation of Hawaiians. Such Hawaiian-language documents, of course, comprise only a fraction of the Archives' holdings, for even under the monarchy the bulk of the government business was recorded in English.

Taylor, who had been a newspaperman in Honolulu for more than 20 years before becoming Archivist, was the most prolific writer on Hawaii of the four archivists to date. He was the author of several books and a contributor to many magazines. He sought as much as possible to publicize the treasures of the Archives and the rich history therein. He, his successors, and their staffs have given many illustrated talks, particularly to school groups, on the history of Hawaii and on valuable documents in the Archives.

Most of Taylor's writing was unofficial. Several publications, however, have been officially issued by the Archives, three during Lydecker's tenure in office, three during Taylor's tenure, and one during the early part of Miss Jones' tenure. Lack of funds has prevented issuance of any further publications in the last 15 years. The titles and dates of publication of the seven official Archives issuances follow:

R. C. Lydecker, comp. *Roster of the Legislatures of Hawaii, 1841-1919*. 1919.

Includes also the constitutions of the monarchy and republic, and the speeches of Hawaii's sovereigns and president.

R. C. Lydecker. *History of Washington Place*. 1919.

Washington Place is the governor's home.

Lorin Andrews. *A Dictionary of the Hawaiian Language*. 1922.

Responsibility for compiling and publishing a new Hawaiian dictionary was placed under the Board of Commissioners of Public Archives by Act 18, Session Laws of 1913. The Archives was very interested in this project because of its translation work.

A. P. Taylor. *Sesquicentennial Celebration of Captain Cook's Discovery of Hawaii, 1778-1928*. 1929.

Published jointly with the Captain Cook Sesquicentennial Commission.

A. P. Taylor and R. S. Kuykendall, eds. *The Hawaiian Islands: Early Relations With the Pacific Northwest*. 1930.

Published jointly with the Captain Cook Sesquicentennial Commission. Includes major papers, read during the sesquicentennial celebration, covering Hawaii's early relations with England, Russia, and France.

A. P. Taylor. *History of Iolani Palace*. 1930.

Andrew Farrell. *The Story of Iolani Palace*. 1936.

Under Maude Jones, Archivist since 1931, more systematic indexing and filing methods have been adopted. The staff has increased from a total of 4 in the 1920's to 11 at present, including 1 person used exclusively for translation of Hawaiian-language documents both as a reference service and as part of a planned program. Much material was indexed by WPA workers in the 1930's. In 1938, 50,193 index cards (3" x 5") were typed; in 1939, 56,015; in 1941, 36,194; in 1948, 39,023. The indexing projects include the indexing of current Honolulu newspapers. Part of Miss Jones' enthusiasm for her work probably stems from a deep personal interest in Hawaii's past; her mother was a close friend of the last three queens of Hawaii.

The reference-service load has grown rapidly since Miss Jones has been in office, the total services increasing from 867 in 1932 to 5,738 in 1941. Since the end of World War II it has dropped somewhat, with 3,361 services reported for 1948. Almost half of the postwar reference load has involved the servicing of requests from Federal, Territorial, and county agencies and officials.

Most of the reference service for private individuals involves efforts to establish United States citizenship, date of birth, and/or date of arrival in the islands. Probably the most-used files in the Archives are the ships' passenger manifests, containing the names of all immigrants to and emigrants from the islands, 1843-1900; and the naturalization records, methodically kept from 1844 to 1900. These records have been extensively indexed to make possible more rapid service. The indexing has been particularly difficult because of the large number of Chinese and Japanese names involved. The records are the only means that many individuals have of proving citizenship or pension rights, and — in the case of many older Orientals — of obtaining permission to visit abroad and return.

To service similar requests involving persons born in the islands before the annexation by the United States, the Archives has completed a name index to all birth, deaths, and marriages reported in newspapers published in Hawaii from 1836 to 1897. The necessity for the index arose from the fact that such records prior to 1896 are very vague. The passage of Act 50, Session Laws of 1896, provided for the keeping of such records from that time on. Such data are used also by genealogists, and the presence in the islands of a large Mormon colony adds to the number of genealogical reference services performed by the Archives staff.

Because of Hawaii's geographical isolation and its exposed condition with respect to Japan, the Archivist faced pressing security problems during the period 1940-43. By the first part of 1941 many of the more valuable documents had been microfilmed and the copies had been stored elsewhere. A plan was also worked out for the evacuation of certain records to the chapel in the grounds of the Royal Mausoleum in Nuuanu Valley. There they would be out of the city proper and not near any important targets. In addition, in October 1941, access to ships' passenger manifests and immigration records was limited, and after the attack on Pearl Harbor, access to the Archives Building itself was limited.

Probably because of the lack of space in the Archives, when the Territorial legislature in 1943 provided for the special collection and preservation of material relating to Hawaii's part in World War II, preparatory to the publication of a book about Hawaii's role in the war, it designated the University of Hawaii as the depository for such material. As a result the War Records Depository was established at the university. This was the direct opposite of what was done after World War I, when the Archives was the depository for all material collected by the Historical Commission.

Despite lack of space, and because of belief in the local value of the records involved, the Archivist after World War II accessioned the records of the Territorial offices of a Federal agency, the Office of Price Administration. These records had been approved for destruction by the National Archives. The governor's 1951 report indicates that these records have been used by new emergency agencies. Many of the official Territorial wartime records are, of course, also in the Hawaiian Archives, including the files of the Office of Civilian Defense, the general orders of the military governor, and the rules, proclamations, and executive orders issued under the Hawaiian Defense Act.

During Miss Jones' administration of the Archives a compre-

hensive system of fees for services rendered has been established by legislative fiat. The fee schedule in effect includes the following:

1. Comparing copy of record privately made, at 5 cents for each 100 words or fraction thereof
2. Copying any record, at 60 cents for each 100 words or fraction thereof
3. Searching ship's manifest, at 75 cents
4. Each hour or fraction thereof, required for research or in transport or safeguarding records temporarily removed from Archives, at \$1.00
5. Photographic or similarly reproduced copy of any record, at the cost thereof
6. Certification of any copy, at 25 cents

The money received is paid into the Territorial treasury.

In the last few years the Archives has embarked on a records disposal program aimed at bringing under control the mass of records created in recent years and still being created. In 1945 the legislature authorized Territorial agencies to dispose of records after microphotographic copies of the originals were made. These copies were specifically declared acceptable in a court of law.

By an act approved April 21, 1949, the legislature passed a records disposal charter for the Territory. The act requires that all Territorial agencies submit disposal lists to the Archivist for approval. The lists are to include "the name of the office, subject of the records and inclusive dates." The Archivist is required to make recommendations to a disposal committee consisting of (1) the chairman of the Board of Commissioners of Public Archives; (2) the attorney general of the Territory or his representative; (3) the head of the office, department or bureau where the records originated; (4) the auditor of the Territory; and (5) the president of the University of Hawaii. The Archivist may recommend (1) retention by the office involved; (2) transfer to the Archives, the University of Hawaii, the Hawaiian Historical Society, or another agency; or (3) destruction.

The 1949 records disposal act is slowly being utilized by the agencies concerned and the full program has yet to make its effect. It will probably be necessary, however, to amend the act to provide for disposal schedules. These provide authorization for the disposal of future accumulations of specified records. Whether a full-scale program of records management will also be instituted remains to be seen.