

Book Reviews

Unconquerable Rebel: Robert W. Wilcox and Hawaiian Politics, 1880–1903. By Ernest Andrade, Jr. Niwot, CO: University Press of Colorado, 1996. 299 pp. Bibliography. Index. \$34.95.

Women and Children First: The Life and Times of Elsie Wilcox of Kauaʻi. By Judith Dean Gething Hughes. Honolulu: University of Hawaiʻi Press, 1996. xii + 196 pp. Appendix. Genealogies. Bibliography. Index. \$22.95.

Two new biographies of important figures in Hawaiian history are welcome additions to the literature, providing much needed detail and perspective to our understanding of the recent past. Ironically, while sharing the Wilcox surname, the subjects are not only unrelated by blood, but their politics also put them at opposite ends of the Hawaiian political spectrum. These two books, *Unconquerable Rebel: Robert W. Wilcox and Hawaiian Politics, 1880–1903* by Ernest Andrade, Jr., and *Women and Children First: The Life and Times of Elsie Wilcox of Kauaʻi* by Judith Dean Gething Hughes, clearly illustrate the nature of reform in the Islands in the late nineteenth century and the direction that reform would take in the twentieth.

Robert Wilcox was part-Hawaiian and part-Caucasian, one of the class of men who attempted to find a place for themselves in the kingdom's bi-racial government as full-blooded chiefs disappeared from politics in the 1880s and 1890s. Wilcox stirred the Hawaiian majority with his fiery oratory and abortive efforts to counteract the anti-monarchical revolutions of 1887 and 1893. Yet his only real success came when he played the white man's game, winning a seat in the Hawaiian legislatures of 1880, 1890, and 1892 and earning a seat in the United States Congress in 1900 as territorial delegate.

Elsie Wilcox was a descendant of Congregationalist missionaries, a Caucasian whose social class had coalesced around the Reform Party, overturned

the monarchy, and set the Islands on the road to annexation by the United States. Coming to maturity in the decade after Robert Wilcox's departure from the political scene, Elsie served for a dozen years as Kaua'i's commissioner for education before winning election to the territorial Senate in the 1930s. A Republican Party loyalist, she upheld the reform tradition of her family during two legislative terms and through her concerted social advocacy.

In some ways, these characters could not be more different. Robert Wilcox, who at one time or another advocated republicanism as well as monarchy, largely represented the forces of populist democracy, a force that King Kalākaua had exploited briefly in a coalition with Prime Minister Walter Murray Gibson in the 1880s. In a nation without a strong capitalistic element, either the Kalākaua-Gibson alliance or Robert Wilcox might have prevailed. Instead, annexation of the Islands by the United States bolstered the conservative reform process demanded by the business faction. These reforms led inexorably to liberalization, but the process remained in the hands of the elite. The resulting democracy, when it arrived in the 1950s, was more firmly disciplined by a market economy than any Robert Wilcox envisioned.

The conservative reform movement, begun a generation earlier in the United States, came to Hawai'i in the person of women such as Elsie Wilcox. Hughes demonstrates the manner in which Progressives such as Elsie preserved the power of their class even as they lost the political battle. "[B]ored and isolated" (p. 40) on Kaua'i, Elsie led the effort to Americanize immigrants through educational reform and to professionalize social agencies serving women and children. In this manner, she and other middle-class women managed the potentially disruptive changes wrought by the businesses of their male peers, whose labor requirements had caused the massive influx of foreign workers. Unionized labor on Hawai'i's plantations eventually challenged the early reformers and ended Elsie's political career, but she continued to exert considerable influence in community affairs.

Other contrasts between these two characters abound. Their manner of living belied their economic status. Robert Wilcox, who never seemed to hold a paying position for more than a few months, adopted an extravagant lifestyle that left him and his second wife impecunious and beset by creditors. His biographer does little to answer the question of his economic livelihood, and the absence of an answer may be most telling of all. Elsie meanwhile had excess income, although she lived modestly in the tradition of her ancestors and spent her surplus on philanthropic causes. Again, we are left in doubt as to the exact nature of her income from Grove Farm, but its presence is palpable in her substantial gifts to individuals and charities.

Robert was the product of the kingdom's public schools, the educational system set up by Elsie's ancestors, capped with military training in Italy, neither of which prepared him for the political sophistication of Honolulu or Washington, D.C. Meanwhile, Elsie's education at Punahou and Wellesley supplied her with intellectual tools perfectly adequate for a public life, should she choose it. Her status as a single woman of the middle class left her, like Jane Addams, both burdened and empowered—burdened by the sense of duty that a Congregationalist upbringing engendered and empowered by her social and economic status to pursue reform at the highest levels, undeterred by domestic obligations or financial distractions.

Andrade's objective, as his title indicates, is to add the face of Robert Wilcox to the familiar tapestry of revolutionary politics in the late nineteenth-century Hawaiian kingdom. The political context so concerns Andrade that Wilcox himself disappears from the narrative for pages at a time, but the book has the virtue of pulling the entire career of Wilcox into one volume. Former treatments of the revolution, such as those of Ralph Kuykendall and William Russ, Jr., include Wilcox as a minor figure and portray him as a mere opportunist who vacillated between supporting and opposing the monarchy; Andrade's biography makes the case for Wilcox as a spokesman for the ordinary Hawaiian, as it retells the story of Queen Lili'uokalani's overthrow without substantially amending it. Andrade makes extensive use of the English-language press to ferret out Wilcox's actions and positions as events unfolded but actually confirms that Wilcox's role was modest and largely reactive. The author's most instructive chapter focuses on Wilcox's two-year sojourn in Washington, D.C., as territorial delegate. There, his difficulties with the English language and his failure to join either political party substantially reduced his lobbying ability. Irrepressible as always, Wilcox returned to the Islands for one last campaign before his death. The last chapter provides a complete portrait of the "Lady Dog Legislature," the session of the territorial legislature in which Wilcox's fellow travelers repeated the inanities and extravagance of the 1880s, which goes far toward explaining the short life span of his Home Rule Party.

Andrade does little to fill in Robert's background, whether to clarify the career of his sea captain father or the noble lineage of his mother; indeed, his first wife provided us with greater insight into his personality in *An Italian Baroness in Hawaii: The Travel Diary of Gina Sobrero, Bride of Robert Wilcox, 1887* (1991). Had Andrade used Hawaiian-language sources, he might have created a more well-rounded portrait of his subject or provided more details of the rebel's activities in the years between revolts and campaigns. While this biography thus yields little more than a public profile, Andrade succeeds in giving Wilcox his due by diverting our attention away from the reformers and

toward those standing in opposition. The inadvertent transposition of the photograph of Sanford Dole, president of the Republic of Hawai'i, with that of royalist Paul Neumann dramatically demonstrates this reversal of priorities.

In contrast, Hughes's subject comes endowed with a wealth of sources, which Hughes deftly plumbs to create a nuanced and detailed portrait. Supplementing the ample public record and extracts from missionary and plantation histories are insights from Wilcox's day book and extensive private correspondence. Moreover, Elsie's biographer approaches her subject from the theoretical framework of feminist scholarship, providing an added layer of texture. Hughes's profile of Wilcox is sympathetic and complements the picture we already have of changes quietly revolutionizing the American territory beneath the placid Republican surface. Passing quickly over the contested arena of the Hawaiian Revolution, Hughes makes her assessment clear. Elsie Wilcox, for her, represents all the benevolent results of the revolution, namely, "capitalism, Christianity, Americanism, and democracy" (p. 160). Hughes leaves unexplored the motives behind the Americanization programs Elsie and other Progressives pursued and how paternalism and elitism might have informed their policy decisions. Ironically, while depending on feminist scholarship to illuminate Elsie's life, Hughes concludes that Congregationalism was more fundamental than gender in explaining her subject's life. Indeed, religion is the primary distinction that would have divided Elsie from Robert, even had they shared a mutual ancestry and economic status. Her values remained consistently those of her missionary grandparents, who emphasized "hard work, high self-expectation, and professionalism" (p. 158). The impulse to self-improvement was easily transformed into a desire for social improvement.

Both Wilcoxes were unique in achieving success in a society dominated by white males. They achieved the coveted status of trailblazers: Robert, the first territorial delegate to the U.S. Congress and Elsie, the first woman elected to the territorial Senate. Yet, their efforts were curtailed by limitations in their backgrounds that had supplied an initial advantage. Robert's military training gave him panache and tactics for defending the monarchy but prepared him poorly to participate in American-style politics. Elsie was held back by her loyalty to the Republican Party when, during the New Deal, the locus of reform had shifted to the Democratic Party. She was vulnerable to the attacks of her opponents on the privileged economic and social status enjoyed by plantation owners, the connection that gave her entree to political power in the first place. In another era, she might have been able to disavow her ties when they became a liability and continue her reform work in the opposing party. Instead, she fell victim to the vote of immigrant children Americanized at her insistence.

Taken together, these biographies instruct us in the nature of Hawai'i's political metamorphosis from kingdom to American state. That development was peopled with interesting characters who deserve our attention as much as the more prominent figures whose names garner greater recognition.

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The Shipmans of East Hawai'i. By Emmett Cahill. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1996. XIII + 272 pp. Shipman family genealogy. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$24.95 paper.

Emmett Cahill's history of the Shipman family opens with a series of current events in 1854, followed by the origins of the name "Shipman." In chapter 3 Cahill finally turns to William Cornelius Shipman, who joined the ABCFM mission family in Hawai'i in 1854.

Five chapters are devoted to Shipman's background and work in Ka'ū. The lengthy inclusion of the family founder is somewhat unexpected since he had little, beyond siring "Willie" Shipman, to do with establishing the family fortune. Shipman succumbed to typhoid fever in 1861, and Jane Shipman, with her three children, transferred to Hilo. Here she met and married William Reed, who became a responsible and affectionate parent to Jane's brood, provided for their education, and launched both William and his brother Oliver into business.

The story progresses through William and Oliver's school days on the mainland, the reign of Lunalilo, and Reed's acquisition of Kapapala Ranch. William married Mary Elizabeth Johnson in 1879 and supported his family in some style, purchasing what became known as the Big House on Reed's Island in 1902. Shipman was also a shrewd and prominent businessman who in 1881, with two partners, purchased the entire Kea'au *ahupua'a* from the William Lunalilo Estate for \$20,000. In 1923, Shipman authorized the formation of W. H. Shipman, Limited, a family corporation. As Shipman approached the end of his life, he entertained soldiers stationed near Kea'au. Cahill presents an endearing portrait of the crusty octogenarian "chatting with young military men on the roomy porch of his home." (p. 214).

In 1943, Herbert Shipman, the last carrier of the family name, took over the company. Cahill lauds Shipman for his taste in art and silver, generosity, horticultural pursuits, and conservation of the nēnē.

Roy Blackshear, Shipman's nephew, became chief executive officer of W. H. Shipman, Limited, in 1976. Cahill's last chapter is called "The Kama'aina Company That Cares," a point that he does not prove. While the company has been a key player in the development of East Hawai'i, few details of its business transactions are provided, and nothing is said about recent altercations between the company and Hawaiian "squatters." Blackshear retired in 1996 and was succeeded by Robert Cooper, the first chief executive without direct ties to the Shipman family.

Taken as a whole, Cahill's history of the Shipmans disappoints. There is far more to the story of the Shipman family, and its interactions with the multi-faceted community of East Hawai'i than Cahill chooses to tell. The author reports that Caroline Shipman unearthed more than three hundred family letters, but they seem little evidenced here. Neither are details of the family business, which could have been gleaned from newspapers and court records, if not from company archives. Perhaps such omissions are because Blackshear authorized this official history, or because the Shipman sisters "shunned publicity." Or maybe Cahill merely wanted to provide some insights, however limited, into a family little known outside its own circles. *The Shipmans of East Hawai'i* provides the first convenient public information about a family and a company that have exercised strong influence in the region; it does not, however, represent the last word on the subject.

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Shaping History: The Role of Newspapers in Hawai'i. By Helen Geracimos Chapin. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1996. XIII + 386 pp. Bibliography. Index. \$29.95 paper.

Newspapers were once a big deal in Hawai'i. If you wanted to know what was happening around Honolulu, on the Neighbor Islands, or on the other side of the world, you read about it on the printed page. Habits began to change with the introduction of television in the 1950s, and since 1976, when live satellite news arrived from the mainland, newspapers have been fighting to hang on to their readership. Today, given a clear choice, most Hawaii residents would probably choose to stop opening their newspapers before turning off their television sets.

Don't count me among them. I love newspapers, used to write for them and can't stop reading them. Helen Geracimos Chapin estimates that more than a thousand newspapers, in various languages, have been published in Hawaii since *Ka Lama* (The Light), came off the press at Lahaina, Maui, in 1834. In *Shaping History: The Role of Newspapers in Hawai'i*, she chronicles their coverage of significant local events and shows how they've influenced island history.

Ka Lama (1834) was printed on a manual press shipped from Boston to Honolulu in 1820 on the brig *Thaddeus* by the American Protestant missionaries. It was sent to Lahainaluna School in 1831 and three years later, after the students received journalistic training, the first issues were printed and distributed. While *Ka Lama* was printed in Hawaiian, its pro-American slant nudged future Native Hawaiian leaders toward a constitutional government.

Stephen MacIntosh, a young Boston printer, introduced the idea of a free press in Hawai'i with the weekly *Sandwich Island Gazette and Journal of Commerce* (1836–1839). He was able to remain independent from the establishment by carrying advertising from local merchants. MacIntosh took up Hawaiian causes and angered the missionaries by criticizing them for their superior attitude toward the native population. When the Protestants tried to force the deportation of Catholic missionaries, MacIntosh's editorials advocating "the Liberty of Conscience" helped persuade Kamehameha III to let them stay.

James Jackson Jarves arrived in Honolulu in 1937 at the age of nineteen. He started his own newspaper two years later and *The Polynesian* (1840–1841, 1844–1864) became Hawai'i's most influential nineteenth-century newspaper. Jarves, unlike MacIntosh, was chummy with the establishment and continued as editor after his newspaper was bought by Kamehameha III in 1844 and turned into the voice of the government. *The Polynesian*, despite its name, had little sympathy for Hawaiians. Jarves advanced the commercial and agricultural interests of the American community and supported the Great Mahele of 1848, which overturned the old land-tenure system and allowed foreigners to purchase property.

The lesser-known *Honolulu Times* (1849–1851) was the first Island paper to seriously question the Americanization of Hawai'i. Editor Henry L. Sheldon, who married into a native family, realized that the new land conversion laws were hurting the Hawaiian people. Sheldon was highly critical of the Mahele, especially the law that limited the right to vote to property owners. His editorials pressured the government to back down, and in 1850 all males twenty-one years or older were given voting rights. Sheldon was also the first Island journalist to attack legislators for discussing public issues behind

closed doors. After the *Honolulu Times* folded, one of its reporters, Abraham Fornander, founded the *Weekly Argus* (1851–1853). When the smallpox epidemic hit Hawai‘i in 1853, his newspaper stood practically alone in reporting it. Fornander blamed the government’s failure to contain the disease on the health minister, Dr. Gerrit P. Judd, and his stinging editorials forced Judd’s dismissal.

Henry M. Whitney established the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, the ancestor of today’s *Honolulu Advertiser*, in 1856. The first truly successful English-language newspaper in Hawai‘i, it printed one page per issue in Hawaiian. Whitney later spun this page off into a separate newspaper, *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa* (1861–1927). For many years *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa* (The Independent Newspaper) had a larger circulation than the *Advertiser*. Its pages were, and still are, a great source of Hawaiian history and lore.

Although *Na Nupepa Kuokoa* covered the Hawaiian community, it did so from an American viewpoint. The first Hawaiian newspaper solely produced by native Hawaiians was *Ka Hoku o ka Pakipika* (1861–1863), sponsored by future king David Kalākaua. It’s acceptance gave rise to other nationalistic newspaper efforts characterized, Chapin states, by several themes: “one, a conviction that Hawaiians knew what was best for themselves; two, an awareness that the decline of the native population was a serious matter; three, an insistence that Hawai‘i remain an independent nation; four, a deep respect for the monarchy; and five, a great love for their land” (p. 61).

Some newspaper editors believed that the passing of the Reciprocity Treaty of 1875, which allowed for duty-free trade between the United States and Hawai‘i, would keep the Hawaiian kingdom independent. The opposite proved true. With a profitable market for its sugar, Hawaii became more dependent on its main trading partner. The monarchy also became entangled in the American political system when Lunalilo died without naming an heir. Kalākaua won the throne in 1874 after defeating Dowager Queen Emma in a Western-style election. The *Advertiser* and most of the other newspapers threw their weight behind Kalākaua.

The king enjoyed great popularity among native Hawaiians but soon irritated the business and missionary power structure with his free-wheeling spending habits, encouragement of ancient religious beliefs, and vision to lead a confederacy of independent Pacific Island nations. Thomas G. Thrum, editor of the *Saturday Press* (1880–1885), led criticism against the king for wasting government funds on the building of Iolani Palace and his elaborate coronation. Others faulted him for minting new national coins bearing his image and licensing opium.

During the summer of 1887, the *Daily Bulletin* (1882–1895) called for a curb on the king’s ruling powers. Kalākaua, the paper bluntly stated, was

“not king by right of inheritance, but by the vote of the Legislature, secured by the white man’s management.” Other newspapers, such as the *Hawaiian Gazette* (1865–1918) and the once-friendly *Friend* (1843–1954) joined the attack. After the Honolulu Rifles, a quasi-military group managed to rally “200 angry citizens” against the king, he capitulated to their demands on July 6 and accepted the Bayonet Constitution of 1887. Kalākaua, who died four years later, finished his reign as a ceremonial figurehead.

Hawaiian activist Robert Wilcox, after failing in two armed rebellions supporting the monarchy, continued to push for native rights by publishing three influential bilingual newspapers between 1892 and his death in 1903. After the toppling of Lili’uokalani in 1893 and American annexation in 1898, he became head of the Home Rule Party and was elected the territory of Hawai’i’s first delegate to the U.S. Congress. He helped sow the seeds of the modern Hawaiian rights movement.

Hawai’i’s newspapers staked out their political territory after the monarchy was overthrown. The top three opposition papers, hoping to restore independence, had a combined circulation of twelve thousand, but it was the *Advertiser*, heavy with advertising from major businesses, that prevailed. When I wrote for the *Advertiser* I knew only a smattering of local newspaper history. Chapin’s well-researched book fills in the pieces with chapters on the Japanese-language press’s campaign to raise the wages of imported laborers, efforts by the mainstream press to wipe out German influence in Hawai’i after the United States entered World War I, and the lopsided coverage of the Kaua’i plantation strike that resulted in the Hanapepe Massacre of 1924 in which sixteen Filipino workers and four policemen died.

When the territory tried to abolish Japanese language schools in the 1920s, editor Frederick Makino’s *Hawai’i Hochi* led a fight that went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, which declared Hawai’i’s anti-Japanese school laws unconstitutional. The *Hawai’i Hochi* also claimed victory in reforming labor laws and winning citizenship for Japanese soldiers who had fought for the United States in World War I.

By the end of the 1920s, Honolulu’s two major dailies, the morning *Advertiser* and the afternoon *Star-Bulletin*, had become Hawai’i’s most powerful opinion-makers. They promoted the economic rewards of Island tourism, sparked public outrage during the Massie case, and kept residents informed during World War II despite the strains of military government censorship.

The *Star-Bulletin* also led the long crusade for Hawai’i statehood that began soon after annexation and culminated in 1959. During these five decades the paper advanced the cause of statehood through a steady stream of editorials, news stories, and cartoons. The *Advertiser*, on the other hand, was openly opposed to statehood until after World War II, fearing any change

in territorial status would allow the mainland to impose its will on the Islands.

The *Advertiser*, at the time of statehood, was facing serious financial problems aggravated by a continuing drop in daily circulation. It was saved through a joint operating agreement with the *Star-Bulletin* that centralized the business functions of the two newspapers under the jointly owned Hawaii Newspaper Agency. This was set up under laws that exempted newspapers from the antitrust laws in order to encourage the varied editorial viewpoints for a free press. Today, in a complete turnabout, the *Advertiser* is the stronger of our two major newspapers.

The late Philip Graham, publisher of the *Washington Post*, once said that “journalists write the first rough draft of history.” Chapin’s fascinating and important book gives us a glimpse of how, and why, some of these rough drafts came to be written in Hawai‘i.

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Waikiki 100 B.C. to 1900 A.D.: An Untold Story. By George S. Kanahele. Honolulu: Queen Emma Foundation, 1996; distributed by University of Hawai‘i Press. xiv + 185 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$30.00.

When I was growing up, it was so easy to fall in love with Waikiki. It was the 1950s and often my father would come home from work and take us for a swim at Kūhiō Beach. He’d parallel park our car on Kalākaua Avenue, and we’d cross the street to the beach just before sunset. There might be another family or two, and a few surfers beyond the wall.

I remember being hoisted on to his shoulders at the Aloha Week *ho‘olaule‘a* so I could see above the crowds. I have vague memories of the open-air stages and the hula girls shaking *‘uli‘uli*, their green hula skirts swirling to fast-paced hapa-haole music.

Kids today would probably think this nostalgia was misplaced. The Waikiki they know is where they cruise at night, but it isn’t anything to get sentimental about.

So it is a validation of sorts to read George Kanahele’s *Waikiki: 100 B.C. to 1900 A.D.: An Untold Story* and discover that from the earliest times commoners and *ali‘i* fell in love with O‘ahu’s southeast shore. Kanahele introduces us to Waikiki as a place of history rather than as a destination, as it is known today. “This book, then, is about the evolution or history, if you will,

of Waikiki's Hawaiianness: its origins, development and diminution over a span of 2,000 years," he writes in his preface.

In his acknowledgments, Kanahele credits kama'aina businessman and philanthropist Kenneth Brown with "nudging" him to write about Waikiki long before 1900. It was an opportunity for Kanahele to express his own deep feelings about the area's historical significance, cultural legacy, and its *mana*. "Traditionally, for Hawaiians the mo'olelo (story) sought to do more than explain: it sought to re-enchant both the mind and spirit," writes Kanahele. "Think of this book as a mo'olelo dedicated to the re-enchantment of Waikiki."

To reach so far back into Hawai'i's past is a great challenge for a historian since much of the history is not written or documented. Kanahele turned to oral tradition, to chants and legends, as much as written sources such as Kamakau, Fornander, and Malo in his research on Waikiki. As a result, he has written a history that he describes as drawn from hypothetical (geological, biological, botanical, or mythological data), legendary, and historical sources.

Kanahele knows that people bring history to life. Throughout the book we meet the legendary *ali'i* and members of the Hawaiian monarchy who chose to live in Waikiki. And many of the chapters—for me the most memorable ones—are devoted to life in Waikiki under their stewardship.

Among these chapters is one titled "The Reign of Ma'ilikukahi," an exemplary leader who moved his court from 'Ewa to Waikiki around 1400. This marked the beginning of four hundred years of enlightened leadership, and relative peace and prosperity for Waikiki, which served during that time as the capital of the kingdom of O'ahu.

I enjoyed especially reading of the female chiefesses and other strong women who thrived in Waikiki, including Kalanimanuiā, who followed Ma'ilikukahi. She ruled with her husband and both were known for their wisdom and benevolent leadership. Earlier in the book, there is a wonderful passage subtitled "Surfing with Kelea" that relates the role surfing played in Waikiki. It tells of Kelea, a chiefess from Maui, who dazzles the commoners and a great Waikiki chief as she rides the waves off shore.

Following this four hundred years of peace, we meet more familiar historical figures, such as Kahekili, ruler of Maui who invaded Waikiki and occupied O'ahu. His reign would be ended by Kamehameha, who like so many *ali'i* before him chose to reside in Waikiki, near today's Moana and Royal Hawaiian hotels. Kanahele suggests that for practical reasons rather than those of the heart, Kamehameha eventually moved the capital of the Hawaiian kingdom to Honolulu to better oversee the bustling trade developing near the harbor.

Throughout the text, Kanahele sprinkles photographs and prints of

Waikiki to give us faces to place with names. Since genealogy is so important in Hawaiian culture, and to assist the reader in keeping the connections straight, it would have been helpful to have had some kind of genealogical chart or "tree."

But that is a minor shortcoming in a book that left me with such a deep appreciation for a place beloved to commoners and chiefs and that succeeds so well in establishing Waikiki's significance in the long history of Hawai'i.

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Surveying the Mahele: Mapping the Hawaiian Land Revolution. By Riley M. Moffat and Gary L. Fitzpatrick. Honolulu: Editions Limited, 1995. 120 pp. Illustrated. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$65.00.

This handsome book tells a fascinating story of the Mahele, the mid-nineteenth century distribution of lands that spelled the end of traditional Hawai'i and ushered in the current era of private land ownership. The book is titled *Surveying the Mahele* and not *Surveying the Great Mahele*, as it might have been, because many people today don't think the results of the Mahele were particularly great. This crowd runs the gamut from individuals who struggle to pay exorbitant mortgages in a state where less than 10 percent of the land is held in small private holdings to sovereignty advocates who agree with Kame'eleihiwa that the Mahele spelled the end of Hawaiian sovereignty just as surely as did the overthrow of Lili'uokalani.

The events that collectively make up the Mahele began in December 1845 with the creation of the Board of Commissioners to Quiet Land Titles, commonly known as the Land Commission, whose five members appointed by Kamehameha III first met in February 1846. Lands were distributed to chiefs and *konohiki* in early 1848, fee-simple sales to resident aliens were authorized in July 1850, and finally, *kuleana* awards to native tenants were authorized in August 1850. The Land Commission was dissolved in March 1855. In less than a decade the fundamental social institutions related to land tenure were transformed to fit the model provided by Western culture.

The Mahele was driven by resident aliens, many of whom were owed considerable sums by chiefs and wished to be paid in land, though not all of the motivation was financial. It was popular in those times to see in traditional

Hawaiian land tenure a reflection of medieval Europe's despotic feudal system and to liken the impoverished lot of the commoner *maka'āinana* to the condition of degraded serfs. Even the missionary John Emerson, a good and altruistic man, wrote that the Hawaiian people "must own their lands and feel at liberty to sell them for gain to themselves, or the Hawaiian race will never rise to the habits of industry." But, as Moffatt and Kirkpatrick point out, whatever their motives, the resident aliens were poorly equipped to carry out the needed changes, with little practical experience in the Western land-tenure system that they espoused so strongly.

The Mahele identified about nine thousand parcels of land that required a boundary survey, covering over 1,500,000 acres. Some of these were small parcels, easily accessible and clear of wild vegetation. But many others were large, far from the cities, and had boundaries that ran through nearly impenetrable forests, along knife-edged ridges, or high into the mountains. The dedication, skill, and effort needed to survey these parcels were all considerable, but at the time of the Mahele there were perhaps three men in the Islands with professional surveying experience, and the magnitude of the task was clearly beyond their capabilities.

Many others with less training took up compass and chain, some undoubtedly for the surveyor's salary, others from a sense of social responsibility and duty. The quality of their work varied widely, although it all falls short of modern standards. The missionaries William Alexander on Maui and John Emerson on O'ahu both surveyed over the objections of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. Emerson, who was the government land agent for Waialua, dismissed the criticism, pointing proudly to the fact that his surveying and land-agent work "secured to a large number of poor people lands that they could not have obtained otherwise." Alexander, who Moffat and Kirkpatrick believe introduced land surveying in Hawai'i, also taught the craft to scholars at the Lahainaluna Seminary, many of whom were active surveyors in the Mahele. Especially interesting for the historian are two missionary sons, both of whom left accounts of their surveying work. Curtis Lyons was seventeen and Henry Lyman just sixteen when they were recruited out of what is now Punahou School to survey property for the Land Commission. Their accounts make it clear that the work of surveying was not confined to measuring angles and distances. Instead, the surveyor found himself in the position of adjudicating disputes between *maka'āinana* and *konohiki* and of settling as best they could competing claims to land. Although both Lyons and Lyman were conscientious workers fluent in Hawaiian, it is sobering to contemplate these children on the front lines of translation between the old land-tenure system and the new.

The heart of the book is the long chapter "Surveys from the Mahele,"

which provides the historical background for sixteen surveys ranging from individual parcels through multi-*ahupua'a* regions to a survey of the entire island of Ni'ihau made by George Wilcox, whose 14,000-acre error that swelled the southern portion of the island wasn't corrected until this century. Many of the hand-drawn maps reproduced in the book are beautiful documents, elegant and spare, yellowed and creased with age. They convey an attention to detail that emphasizes the difficulty with which it was won and a connection to the human mind and spirit that is absent in modern, computer-generated maps. The labels for the traditional Hawaiian land use zones of Samuel Kalama's map of Waikane *ahupua'a* on the windward side of O'ahu island—*Aina Kalo*, *Aina Kula*, *Kaolo Kuahiwi*, and *Pali Kuahiwi*—angle and curve across the valley, indicating their boundaries as if by a sweep of the hand. Many of the maps in the book are annotated in Hawaiian this way; it was the practice of the day to use the language of the awardee when making a survey map of the parcel.

Moffat and Kirkpatrick generally steer clear of interpreting the Mahele and take pains not to weigh in on one side or the other of modern debates over Hawaiian lands. They do, however, cast some doubt on the established wisdom that the *maka'ainana* were poorly served by the Mahele. This wisdom is often supported by the astounding fact that only 1 percent of the lands awarded during the Mahele went to *maka'ainana*. Moffat and Kirkpatrick point out that the sale of lands to individual Hawaiians was a "principal mechanism for providing land to the *maka'ainana*" (p. 112) and that until these land sales are analyzed in more detail it will be impossible to draw conclusions about the fairness of the Mahele.

This book follows Kirkpatrick's *The Early Mapping of Hawai'i* as the second in the ambitious and fascinating series *Palapala'aina*. The book is clearly written in an easy style that is a pleasure to read. As with the first book, the larger maps have been reduced to fit, and although the book is oversized, it is sometimes the case that interesting detail was lost in the reproduction. The color of some plates looks off, and a few of the black-and-white photographs are printed so dark as to be useless. Several small errors slipped past the editor, and it was puzzling to this reviewer that a book that relies so heavily on maps and images does not have a clear system of textual reference for figures. These quibbles aside, *Surveying the Mahele* successfully shares the wonder of its subject and rewards with pleasure many hours of reading and study.

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The Filipino Piecemeal Sugar Strike of 1924-1925. By John E. Reinecke. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1996. 188 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$23.00.

During the final years of his life, John Reinecke worked at the Social Science Research Institute as editor of *The Carrier Pidgin*, a linguistics journal for scholars of pidgin and creole languages. After his 1982 death, an unfinished manuscript was discovered in his office. Made available fourteen years later, *The Filipino Piecemeal Sugar Strike of 1924-1925* reflects the commitment of historian Edward Beechert to bringing the manuscript to publication. Though the text was primarily published in its original form, it has been supplemented by a postscript written by Beechert based on information gleaned from the University of Hawai'i's Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association (HSPA) Plantation Archives.

Philippine immigrant Pablo Manlapit is the central figure in the text, actively representing the Filipino labor community and ultimately leading a series of strikes against the HSPA. As he would discover, organizing the Filipino community in Hawai'i was no easy task. High turnover rates, internal linguistic differences, illiteracy, and physical isolation complicated his efforts.

Manlapit was himself among the first Filipinos recruited for work by the HSPA in 1910. Soon fired for openly protesting the lowering of contract rates, Manlapit wandered Hawai'i, finding employment in various odd jobs, eventually earning a law degree and becoming the first licensed Filipino lawyer in the territory.

Appointed the Philippine government's resident labor commissioner to Hawai'i was Cayetano Ligot, a man who would rise to become Pablo Manlapit's nemesis. The two would clash as each sought to undermine the other's credibility and organizing efforts. This was a strange twist of irony since it was Manlapit himself who initially agitated for the creation of the commissioner post. Little did he know that Cayetano Ligot would better serve the paternalistic plantation elite than the Filipino working class.

Pablo Manlapit's own commitment to bettering the status of Filipino plantation laborers led him to American Federation of Labor leader George Wright, with whom he launched the High Wages Movement. The movement made seven demands of the HSPA, including better wages, an eight-hour day instead of the current ten, overtime pay, and the right to collective bargaining. In making such demands, the movement attempted to alter the fundamental structure of the plantation economy.

Working in tandem with a hand-picked advisory group, Ligot offered the HSPA a counterproposal that contrasted greatly with the demands of the High Wages Movement. The HSPA studied the ten resolutions and agreed to

the seven that represented the smallest changes. Manlapit threatened action if Ligot was unable to gain concessions from the HSPA. Once negotiations broke down, Manlapit redoubled the efforts of the movement. Letters mailed to all of the plantations reiterated the High Wages Movement's seven demands. Not surprisingly, all went unanswered.

On 13 March 1924, Manlapit issued a formal proclamation announcing a strike to begin on the first of April. Strike plans were sketchy, details were unclear to the strikers themselves, and serious communication problems existed between plantations and the various islands.

Participation in the strike and overall success varied widely between the islands. On O'ahu, with the exception of Kahuku, Filipino participation was poor. The expected fifteen thousand strikers failed to materialize, and at its height, participation was limited to two thousand. Similar scenarios existed for Maui and Hawai'i strikers. Strike activity on Kaua'i again followed the same patterns of poor organization and suffered from lackluster support, though the final outcome was markedly different. Kaua'i would witness the strike's most violent clash at Hanapepe.

The public could see no special issue to make these strikes newsworthy. The opinion was widely held that Filipinos had no real grievances and that the strike had been concocted by outside agitators. The Philippine government and press did not support the strike, nor did the majority of local newspapers. What little support there was for the strikers was fleeting and disorganized. Manlapit's own press statements reveal a clear lack of planning and no concrete vision for the future.

Reinecke's work then dedicates several chapters to a series of court cases revolving around Pablo Manlapit. Found guilty of numerous crimes over a period of ten years, Manlapit was imprisoned, eventually ousted from the Hawai'i Labor Federation, which he helped establish, and permanently exiled to the Philippines. Manlapit died in 1969.

Edward Beechert's postscript, arguably the most insightful chapter in the book, documents the planters' perspective on the events surrounding the strike. Interestingly, strike activity actually led the HSPA to conduct a thorough and critical self-assessment. Among the issues raised in 1924-1925 HSPA meetings were the undertraining of *luna* plantation supervisors, a proposal to extend long-term contracts to Filipinos for the first time, and the provision of medical benefits to all employees earning less than one hundred dollars a month.

Beechert asserts that although the strike failed in its basic demands for better wages and an eight-hour day, labor-management relations were fundamentally altered as a result of the strike. The postscript also reevaluates

Filipino laborers in a cultural context and provides revised estimates for the actual number of striking workers.

The Filipino Piecemeal Sugar Strike of 1924–1925 is an imperfect and unpolished yet rich chronicle of Filipino plantation labor history. And despite the book's title, the strike is not the text's central theme. Rather, it documents Pablo Manlapit's proletarian struggle against a paternalistic plantation system supported by powerful planters, lawyers, law-enforcement officials, and the HSPA itself. Despite its flaws, this work stands out as an important and invaluable contribution to the largely underdocumented experience of Filipinos in Hawai'i.

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Sugar Water: Hawaii's Plantation Ditches. By Carol Wilcox. A Kolowalu Book. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1996. XII + 191 pp. Tables. Maps. Photographs. Bibliography. Appendices. Glossary. Notes. Index. \$32.00.

Sugar Water is a disarming title for a book, suggesting as it does a sweet but insubstantial refresher, a short-lived rush. In this case, it's a title whose lightness contrasts strongly with the very materiality and long-term consequences of the system of "plantation ditches," the construction of which Carol Wilcox meticulously details. This work is an outgrowth of the author's inventory, commissioned by the Department of Land and Natural Resources, of historic sites of the "water development" system constructed by sugar planters in the latter part of the nineteenth century. She has had access to a rich lode of plantation/factor records and photos and has produced a well-documented narrative of the island-by-island construction of the system, largely accomplished between 1876 and 1920.

To call it a construction project is to make it sound too effortless, given today's technology. For it was largely human muscles that built the 'auwai, or ditches, tunnels, and siphons, muscles applied to picks, shovels, sledgehammers, and axes. They were augmented by mules for transport and primitive versions of blasting tools and heavy machinery. The story, in many ways, is a splendid Boys' Own Adventure Tale for in the beginning, the ditches were

hostages to the terrain, depending on gravity to move the water. The engineers who surveyed and laid out the courses were the heroes of the story since the aqueducts often had to cross difficult terrain, run along precipitous cliffs, and be accurately bored long distances through mountains beginning from the ends and joining in the middle. Water tapped into was not always water delivered; the ditches were prone to leakage. The struggle was continual. Ditch construction encountered, perhaps triggered, punishing mud and rock slides and had to cross deep gulches with steep, nearly vertical sides. It called for cutting rock lining for the ditches and necessitated the building of lengths of narrow-gauge rail lines and wharves to carry in supplies. This early industrial campaign, like military counterparts, had to be provisioned and victualled; it consumed vast quantities of candles, cement, timbers, food, corrugated iron sheeting for housing the workers, water, pipe, dynamite, land, valves, and ground troops. Numerous photos richly illustrate many of these operations.

No figure is given for the total distance constituting the system of irrigation ditches; the far more important datum is millions of gallons a day (mgd). For sugar is a thirsty crop; the production of a single pound required five hundred gallons of water, a ton a million gallons. Cox reports that by 1920, 800 mgd of surface waters were being diverted long distances from their natural origins and channels into the ditches. By then, the surface water supply had been extensively augmented by drilling into groundwater sources and pumping it where needed. Since irrigated lands greatly increased production, the industry's construction costs quickly paid for themselves—many times over during the following decades of the intensive, corporate agriculture.

Adumbrated in this very interesting construction account is a history of the formation of the sugar industry, characterized here as “the prime force in transforming Hawaii from a traditional, insular, agrarian, and debt-ridden society into a multicultural, cosmopolitan, and prosperous one.” This is a familiar and legitimating mantra that circulates widely. Because of its contestable and increasingly contested nature, the author's reliance on it is a disappointment. Researchers working in such areas as labor history, post- and neocolonialism analysis, political economy, ethnic politics, and social movements could hope for more for, in a way, this book deals with a topic more important than it wants to admit. As an example, the photos show clear race and class distinctions among the men who developed the water system. But aside from the photos, these social cleavages are otherwise little noted in the text. The men whose physical labor was itself the “prime force” in constructing the ditches worked in dangerous and cramped spaces when tunneling.

They stood up to their waists in achingly cold water to bore through the mountains. They trampled the floors of ditches to make them less permeable. Accidents occurred, often rationalized by overseers as the carelessness of the victims themselves. How many accidents? What was the size of the workforce? How and where were the men recruited? What were they paid? What were they fed? What were the working conditions of the men who built the waterways? Data such as these are sorely needed. The lack of such information goes a long way to reaffirming the mantra. We must assume that the omission of such data was not an authorial oversight but that such information about a labor-intensive project was either never collected or not preserved. Its absence underscores the selective memory at work in the narrative of the corporate production of sugar.

Another example is the author's bland portrayal of plantation life and her easy segue of it into the "contemporary society, noted for its homogeneity." There are already a number of critiques of the plantation system that emphasize what Ronald Takaki has termed the "contested terrain" of plantation life and labor and that show how the structural strife of the past continues in the present, but in new forms. Considering such social movements and conditions as the vitality and growth of the Hawaiian sovereignty movement, the local resistances to the economic imperialism of international capital, and the enormous disparities between wealth and poverty in Hawai'i, it is difficult to recognize it as a society noted for its homogeneity.

Finally, the commodification of the land and water of Hawai'i, both essential to the construction of "The Sugar-Coated Fortress," were and remain far more contested than acknowledged here. The author recognizes that the transformation of the entire archipelago into a sugar-production machine was achieved politically. But she recites rather than presses the usual political accounts even while acknowledging that important voices—Hawaiian ones—are missing from this narrative. Some of those already exist, such as *Native Land and Foreign Desires* by Lilikalā Kame'eleihiwa. More are on the way. This good book opens more terrain for all scholars.

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Who Runs the University? The Politics of Higher Education in Hawaii, 1985–1992. By David Yount. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1996. xii + 403 pp. Notes. Index. \$30.00 cloth, \$21.95 paper.

Who Runs the University? caused a minor sensation when it was published. Advertised as an exposé of rampant political interference in the operations of the University of Hawai'i, *Who Runs the University?* corroborated the view held by most university faculty and administrators that neither regent nor legislator could possibly understand the important work done in Mānoa Valley—but that they sure could meddle.

Professor David Yount, the university's vice-president for research and graduate education from 1986 to 1992, offered an insider's view of academic administration during the tenure of the university's tenth president, Albert J. Simone.

Loyalty is not Yount's cardinal virtue. After an introductory chapter on the history of the university, Yount uses his second chapter to trash Simone—the man who appointed him to his post—as an “Innocent Abroad,” unsophisticated, indecisive, seen by the Board of Regents as a patsy they could control, and a man with an overdeveloped need “to be the center of attention.”

No one escapes Yount's knife—or his exalted conception of himself. He attempts, for example, to cheapen Joyce Tsunoda, the chancellor of the community colleges, by implying that her “personal frustration in not obtaining a faculty position at Manoa” provided the motivation for championing the community colleges' cause vis-à-vis Mānoa.

Yount always stands tall, however. Two years into Simone's presidency, with the departure of Anthony Marsella as vice-president, Yount finds himself “the liberal extremist anchoring the academic end [of the University Executive Council]. . . . Not only did I have to defend research and graduate education, which is challenging enough in an egalitarian society, I also became the chief advocate of excellence in any form.” No, no one else was concerned about “excellence.” Just David.

Yount never abandons his elitist claptrap. “Academia,” he writes, “is primarily a merit-based system that rewards talent, hardwork, and high intellectual achievement. Hawaii, on the other hand, is more of a patronage-based system that honors family ties, life-long friendships, personal commitments, and common heritages and goals. In academia, it's what you know; in Hawaii, it's who you know and who your relatives are. In academia, success is an achievement earned by a select few; in Hawaii, it's an entitlement shared by many.”

How can he stand to live amongst us, this meretricious, knowledgeable achiever, among the “select few”?

With all of the insult Yount heaps on all but grant- and contract-winning university researchers, the reader should expect a good read from *Who Runs the University?* It is in fact a dull, dull book. Yount writes miserable prose, and he can't sustain reader interest in arcane discussions of university administration.

In the book's preface, Yount writes: “In sharp contrast with the preceding administration and the one that followed, the eight-year period from 1985 to 1992 was characterized by rapid growth and innovation. It was an exciting period in which the University broke free of the doldrums and began sailing before the wind.”

What Yount really means is that there was money to burn: Bigger buildings went up, position counts increased, travel money was everywhere, and new academic empires sprouted throughout verdant Mānoa Valley—and beyond. In fact, the student enrollment at the university didn't grow much in those years, and it grew least at Mānoa. Life just got a lot plusher for professors, and like crass plumbers, that constitutes “sailing before the wind.”

The great conceit of academics, and author Yount certainly harbors it, is that professors—particularly research professors—pursue a higher calling, that their search for the “truth” and its dissemination *should* be done unbesmirched by the politics of lesser beings.

Not at a state university where taxpayers, “lesser beings” though they may be, pay the freight and must endure the elitism of the likes of Yount. They have a perfect right to intervene.

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