

## **“L’Aigle” and HMS “Blonde” The Use of History in the Study of Ethnography**

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My intent in this essay is to stress the importance of historical accuracy for interpretation of ethnographic materials and to point out how “facts” can be bent by interpretations and wishful thinking and how easily historical detail can be lost by the withholding of information. These points will be presented in the context of objects transported on the two ships *L’Aigle* and HMS *Blonde* and associated with Kamehameha II, Kamamalu, and their retinue, as well as the officers and men of these two ships. I have been interested in these two ships and this period of history since 1969 when I brought the Kintore cloak back from Scotland and took part in arranging the exhibition of material from Bishop Museum’s collections from HMS *Blonde* at Hulihee Palace in 1973. Although my research is only partially complete, it seems appropriate to present some preliminary thoughts because of the recent interest in the so-called “lost” painting of Boki and Liliha which has now come to Hawaii.

In this context there are three themes of particular interest. The first and most important strand is the attempt to locate ethnographic objects associated with these two ships because they give us definite dates of collection which can, in turn, tell us about Hawaiian objects of 19th Century use—“use” here being interpreted in a broad sense which includes to “give away.” This is important in the study of evolution and change in Hawaiian material culture and the eventual definition of the style that I have termed “evolved traditional.” The second strand is my insistence on the necessity of historical accuracy rather than guesswork in ethnographic research of all kinds and the necessity of going to original

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sources—because much published work simply repeats the mistakes made in the past yet again, and dignifies guesswork and wishful thinking into historical fact. The third strand is the Hawaiian people's perceptions of themselves and their culture in the 19th Century, Europeans' perception of Hawaiians in the 19th Century, and how these perceptions have influenced each other to evolve the various perceptions of Hawaiians today. Obviously one cannot explicate any of these strands exhaustively here, but I think it is necessary to point out why my research has taken the form that it has.

*L'Aigle* was the English whaling ship, under the command of Captain Starbuck, on which Kamehameha II (Liholiho), Kamamalu, and their retinue traveled to England to gain firsthand experience in European ways. The retinue included Governor Boki and High Chiefess Liliha. Liholiho and Boki took with them visual symbols of their Hawaiian chiefness, which included several feather cloaks and capes. Kamamalu and Liliha took with them fine *kapa* clothing suitable for their rank, and someone took a *lei niho palaoa* neck ornament. Presumably these were objects that Hawaiian dignitaries perceived as distinctive of their Hawaiianness and objects that might be suitable as gifts. Note that Liholiho did not take the golden cloak of Kamehameha I nor the cloak of Kiwala'ō (which Kamehameha I had taken as a battle prize), both of which must surely have been inherited by Liholiho. What he took were expendable feather pieces—perhaps new and/or without historic *mana* that needed to be retained. We will look first at what happened to the feather pieces and for what purposes they were used.

First of all, a beautiful feather cape was given by Liholiho to the Captain of the *L'Aigle*, Valentine Starbuck, and subsequently his descendant, Miss Evangeline Priscilla Starbuck, gave it to Bishop Museum (C 208). A remarkable piece of featherwork, it must surely be post-European and what I have termed the evolved traditional or 19th Century style—which I will come back to later.<sup>2</sup>

A second feather cape, also of the 19th Century style, was presented “by the King of the Sandwich Islands . . . to an officer of the ship which brought him”<sup>3</sup> to England, and is now in the British Museum (+ 5769).

Just as in Cook's time, the use of feather pieces as gifts to captains and officers of ships was continued on *L'Aigle* and, as we will see below, on HMS *Blonde*.

The first major landfall of *L'Aigle* was Rio de Janeiro where the royal party was presented to the Emperor of Brazil. In the National Museum of Brazil there is today a beautiful Hawaiian feather cloak, with the information that it was the mantle of Queen Kamamalu and presented by Kamehameha II to the Emperor of Brazil, Don Pedro I, in 1824.

Although one could easily accept the attribution on this basis alone, the gift was also recorded in the London *Times* of May 25, 1824.

On their way to this country, they touched at Rio de Janeiro, and during their stay their Majesties were presented to the Emperor of Brazil . . . when the Emperor was pleased to present the King with a most elegant sword; and in return the King presented the Emperor with a most curious cloak or mantle, made of the richest materials of his islands, the outside of which is of feathers of rare birds, of the most beautiful colors.

Unlike the Starbuck and British Museum capes which were possibly recently made, the Brazil cloak appears to have been an old one—perhaps undesired by Liholiho because of its style. Liholiho, having grown up with European clothes, must have found that its straight neckline was both uncomfortable and awkward. If any of his cloaks were expendable surely it was this. Indeed, it is probable that Liholiho didn't like wearing cloaks at all for at an entertainment for "Their Sandwich Majesties" on May 31st the Queen was dressed in a combination of European and native attire. His Majesty was dressed after the European fashion, while "the Treasurer alone was dressed in the full costume of his country, with a large staff, etc."<sup>4</sup> It would be instructive to know what the Treasurer (who was named as Joanoa and refers evidently to Kekuanaoa) wore, besides evidently, carrying a *kāhili*. On another occasion, however there is more detail—there was "the King accompanied by three of his subjects, all dressed like him in European costume; and a fourth whose office I did not know, but he wore over his ordinary coat a scarlet and yellow feather cloak and a helmet covered with the same material, on his head."<sup>5</sup>

At least two cloaks now in museums in Britain can be traced to the visit of Liholiho to England. One was given to the Honorable Frederick Byng of the Foreign Office who was assigned to the Hawaiian royal party. Byng gave the cloak to his brother-in-law, the Reverend Colin Campbell, who, in turn, gave it to the Saffron Walden Museum in 1838. The Saffron Walden Museum sold it to the Royal Scottish Museum in Edinburgh in 1948, where it now remains. The Saffron Walden Museum records that it was worn by Liholiho's "favorite medicine man." The other now in the British Museum (1174) was "presented to the late Sir. H. Chamberlayne by the King of the Sandwich Islands."<sup>6</sup> This cloak is with little doubt the one depicted by John Hayter in his portrait of Boki and Liliha. There seems to have been some confusion as to just who was whom, for when this painting was first offered for sale to Bishop Museum in January, 1974 it was thought that the persons

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Fig. 1. Boki and Liliha, Oil painting by John Hayter  
(photo courtesy The Kamehameha Schools).





depicted were the King and Queen, and the cloak may have been a gift from Boki rather than Liholiho.

Unfortunately, the helmet in the Hayter painting cannot be so easily traced, but there are several pieces of *kapa* that are said to be part of the "native robe of the King who came to England in 1824"<sup>7</sup> now in the British Museum. Another piece, said to be "part of the dresses either of Kamehameha II, King of the Sandwich Islands, or his Queen Kamehamealu, who died in London, July 1824,"<sup>8</sup> was presented by a private collector to the Cuming Museum in London and subsequently it was given to the Saffron Walden Museum, but cannot now be located. It was described, however, as "cloth of turmeric yellow color." Liliha apparently wore some of the *kapa* for her portrait along with a *lei niho palaoa* now also unidentified. The portrait displays in romantic terms the European conception of the noble savage, but in regard to physical likeness, the art historian Alfred Frankenstein feels that they are "polite fictions."<sup>9</sup> Boki evidently commissioned the painting after the death of the royal couple and then had difficulty paying for it at the time of his return to Hawaii. Although it has been said that the British Government purchased it and intended to send it to Boki as a present on HMS *Blossom* in 1826, it may well be that the cloak he wore was used as payment. Why the portrait was not sent and how it got into the collection of Sir Alexander Keith, Knight Marischal of Scotland, is still a mystery. But there it remained until it went into the collection of John Moncrieff Macmillan who sold it to San Francisco book dealer Warren Howell, who in turn sold it to Mr. and Mrs. John Dominis Holt of Hawaii.

To borrow Alfred Frankenstein's phrase "polite fictions," it may not be out of line at this time to speak of the polite fiction which accompanied the triumphant homecoming of this painting in 1976. Although we were excited with newspaper accounts of marvelous search and detective stories, stipulated anonymity as a condition of sale, and suppositions about the possible existence of such a painting—the whole episode was, it seems to me, relatively straight forward. First of all, there was really never a question of the painting's existence because the widely circulated lithograph stated quite clearly that it was "drawn on Stone from the Original Painting by Mr. John Hayter." In January, 1974 it was offered for sale to Bishop Museum. Unfortunately, patrons who might have enabled the Museum to purchase the painting and to place it on public view, were not forthcoming. Apparently, a photograph of the painting somehow got from Bishop Museum to Howell's firm. With photograph in hand, there was no longer any question of its existence and Howell then presumably tried to find it. According to newspaper accounts, Howell wrote to 40 art dealers all over Britain and finally tramped around

the country with the lithograph. Although Howell's trek was unsuccessful, the newspaper further reports that "in December he got a call from a dealer in London who said he walked into a house, saw a portrait on the wall and said to himself, 'There's the picture Howell is looking for.'"<sup>10</sup> However exciting this story appears, one should note that since 1974 the painting had been resting on the floor in the house of one of my friends in London, who disliking the frame had it faced toward the wall. What did happen is that the art dealers, realizing there was money to be made, asked everyone they knew about such a painting. Finally, Macmillan having lunch with a London dealer was asked. By the time the painting got to Honolulu, the price had multiplied, it had acquired a "new history," and the anonymous condition of sale was apparently an effort to hide its real history and the intermediate profits.

Elaborations and interpretations abound in historical research. One might also be amused by an 1860 interpretation of the trip of Liholiho and entourage to London as reported in *The Friend*.

"King Liholiho and his queen, attended by their highest chieftains . . . resolved to leave their beautiful islands and to go abroad and see the world. Arriving in London, they were feted by the king, the court, and the nobles, and introduced into all the practices of the table which only Englishmen are able to achieve or live under. Soon they became grossly intemperate, and died in London of their excesses."

To continue our story, after their death from measles, the British Government dispatched HMS *Blonde* to convey the bodies of Liholiho and Kamamalu back to Hawaii, along with the entourage. The Captain of the *Blonde*, a newly commissioned 46-gun frigate, was Lord Byron (a cousin of the poet), and his officers and supernumeraries were high born and highly literate. Among the lieutenants and midshipmen were the Honorable Mr. William Keith, 3rd son of the seventh Earl of Kintore; Mr. Gambier, nephew of Admiral Gambier; the Honorable Mr. Talbot, son of the Earl of Shrewsbury; the Honorable Mr. White, son of Lord Bantry; and Lord Frederick Beauclerc. Reverend Richard Bloxam, Chaplain, and Andrew Bloxam, Naturalist, were nephews of the artist Sir Thomas Lawrence. Robert Dampier was engaged as artist and draughtsman, Lieutenant Charles Malden as surveyor, Mr. Davis as surgeon, and James Macrae as botanist. At least four accounts of the voyage have been published—the official account attributed to Byron or a ghost writer, Maria Graham, and the individual accounts of Robert Dampier, James Macrae, and Andrew Bloxam.<sup>12</sup>

When the *Blonde* reached Hawaii a series of gift exchanges, barterings, and purchases began. The first ceremonial gift exchange between the British and the Hawaiians was May 7 for the purpose of presenting the

gifts of King George IV. A decorated uniform coat, cocked hat and sword were presented to the young King Kamehameha III. Kalaimoku was presented with a gold watch, Kaahumanu a silver teapot (now in Bishop Museum 6889), and the favorite of the remaining wives of Liholiho was given a wax likeness of the dead King (now in Bishop Museum 8052).

The first bartering reported by Andrew Bloxam was on Maui, where he "procured a straw hat neatly made, two pieces of tapa, or native cloth, and some shell ornaments."<sup>13</sup> On O-Wahu on May 21, 1825 Andrew bought for a dollar "two very old and curious carved idols, or native gods, one of which I presented to Lord Byron, the other is now in the Oxford Museum."<sup>14</sup> Later, on the island of Hawaii, Bloxam procured a large calabash for holding specimens to be collected on his trip to the volcano.<sup>15</sup> On their way back to O-Wahu 2,000 pieces of bark cloth belonging to Kaahumanu were taken on board,<sup>16</sup> perhaps some of which were traded to individuals on the *Blonde*. Andrew Bloxam received a piece of bark cloth from Liliha and a mat from Mr. Ruggles on July 12.<sup>17</sup> But the most important event for ethnographic collecting was on July 15 when Lord Byron and several of the gunroom officers visited Hale-o-Keawe and were permitted to take anything they wished, no foreigner ever having entered there before. Andrew Bloxam not only described the scene but made a drawing as well.<sup>18</sup> The description is as follows:

We entered the building itself by a small wooden door about two feet high arches over at the top, the only light the interior received was from this, and a few holes in the delapidated roof. Before us were placed two large and curious carved wooden idols, four or five feet high, between which was the altar where the fires were made for consuming the flesh of the victims. On our left were ranged ten or twelve bundles of tapa each surmounted by a feather or wooden idol, and one with a Chinese mask, these contained the bones of a long succession of kings and chiefs whose names were mentioned there. The floor was strewn with litter, dirt, pieces of tapa, and offerings of every description. In one corner were placed a quantity of human leg and arm bones covered over with tapa. In two other corners were wooden stages, on which were placed quantities of bowls, calabashes, etc., containing shells, fishhooks, and a variety of other articles; leaning against the wall were several spears, fifteen or sixteen feet in length, a small model of a canoe, two native drums and an English drum in good preservation. This, one of the chiefs took with him. In the sides of the building were stuck several small idols with a calabash generally attached to them, one of these we opened and found the skeleton of a small fish, it was probably the offering of a fisherman.<sup>19</sup>

Andrew concludes his description by saying, "we each of us took away some memorial of the place."<sup>20</sup> Byron describing the same occasion reports that "the *Blonde* soon received on board almost all that remained of the ancient deities of the Islands,"<sup>21</sup> and Macrae visiting the place the following day reports that Byron and his party "had taken away any memorials of the morai that could be taken, so we asked the old priest



to be allowed to take some of the ancient weather beaten carved figures outside.”<sup>22</sup> Macrae’s description implies that there were various kinds of “idols” as Bloxam calls them. For although almost all of the “deities,” as Byron tells us, were taken away, and Macrae remarks that “all that could be taken” were taken, he also tells us that, “in the middle were several effigies of the deceased chiefs, tied to a bundle of tapa cloth containing the bones of each person whom the effigies represented. Most of the effigies were made of wood, but the one representing the late Tamahamaah was substituted by a mask of European manufacture and was more finely dressed than the others.”<sup>23</sup> In other words images of gods were a separate category and could be taken away while “effigies” or images of chiefs could not be taken. The national gods had been overthrown, but ancestral images were still sacred.

One wonders why Bloxam only listed a few bartering episodes in his reworked final diary because he refers to others in the preliminary notes for his diary and seldom refers at all to things that went to his brother. He tells us, for example that by July 8th he and Malden “were the only two in the gunroom who had not a feather cloke or tippet given them—tho’ Boki had promised me one”<sup>24</sup> and that “Lord B. received as presents, a great quantity of tapa, about 30 mats, with one or two feather cloaks, idols and calabashes.”<sup>25</sup> Lord Byron tells us that in addition, from “all the petty traffickers in curiosities . . . feather tippets and cloaks, war-helmets, weapons, mother-of-pearl fishhooks and even gods are brought to market,”<sup>26</sup> but unfortunately he does not tell us specifically what he received. According to Dampier, “Ere we parted, about 12 cloaks, and twice as many tippets, had been thus given or purchased.”<sup>27</sup> Indeed, it appears that the demand was so great that some of the objects were made for sale. Ruschenberger, for example, reports on an episode on Oahu. “The officers of H.B.M. ship *Blonde*, when here, were anxious to procure some of the ancient idols, to carry home as curios. The demand soon exhausted the stock on hand: to supply the deficiency the Hawaiians made idols, and smoked them, to impart to them an appearance of antiquity, and actually succeeded in the deception.”<sup>28</sup>

It is likely that the *Blonde* carried to England a cargo of “artificial curiosities” second only to the collections taken back by Captain Cook. But, as with Cook’s voyages, it is difficult to find these objects and to trace them to specific trading transactions. And there is the additional difficulty of trying to separate which objects might have been specifically made for trade—which no one would like to admit if he owned one of them. At the present time only a limited number of objects can be identified by specific transaction or area. A rather large number of objects have, however, been attributed to the *Blonde* and often to the

specific occasion of the removal of objects from Hale-o-Keawe. All of the wooden images attributed to the *Blonde* are also attributed to Hale-o-Keawe. In my view the only ones which have any claim to Hale-o-Keawe origin are the two images that at one time flanked the altar, now in Bishop Museum and the Field Museum. In Andrew Bloxam's drawing and description, the placement of the images is indicated and they are described as being four or five feet high. That one of these objects went to Richard Bloxam is confirmed by another Bloxam brother, Matthew, who evidently became the keeper of these objects at the family home in Rugby, England. In a speech published in *The Meteor* in 1885 Matthew explains that, "These two great wooden images were allowed to be taken away, Christianity having become the settled religion of the Islands, but the remains of the kings were left undisturbed in this sepulchral fane. One of these images fell to the lot of my eldest brother, the Chaplain to the *Blonde* and for the last 50 years it has been in my possession."<sup>29</sup> In addition, a copy of *The Mirror*, a newsheet "of Literature, Amusement and Instruction" of October 7 1826 has been pasted in Andrew Bloxam's diary (now in Bishop Museum Library) with a note in Andrew's handwriting that the image is in the possession of his brother at Rugby.<sup>30</sup> The article in *The Meteor* must not have been known to Peter Buck, for he states that *Andrew* took one of the images.<sup>31</sup> In 1924 the image was presented by the Bloxam family to Bishop Museum. Although there is little doubt that the image now in the Field Museum is the mate that flanked the altar in Hale-o-Keawe, its history is not so clear. At the moment we will conjecture that if one of the images fell to the lot of Richard Bloxam, it is likely that the other went to Lord Byron and we will leave it until we come to other objects attributable to Byron.

To deal first with the other wooden images, they are (or were) without exception attributed to Hale-o-Keawe, but we know from Andrew Bloxam's diary that he bought two in O-Wahu—one of which he gave to Lord Byron and one he gave to Oxford University (where, incidently he had studied and become a fellow of Worcester College). The image in Oxford, although not originally attributed to Hale-o-Keawe, but later so noted, has some of the same characteristics as the image at one time in the Cuming Museum, London, and has a note that it was taken from the only remaining "morai" in the Sandwich Islands in 1825.<sup>32</sup> Its donor is not recorded, but circumstantial evidence would allow that it, too, came from Byron and that it is the second O-Wahu image purchased by Andrew for one dollar along with the Oxford image. In the mid-20th Century most of the ethnographic specimens of the Cuming Museum were dispersed (including the feather cloak mentioned earlier from

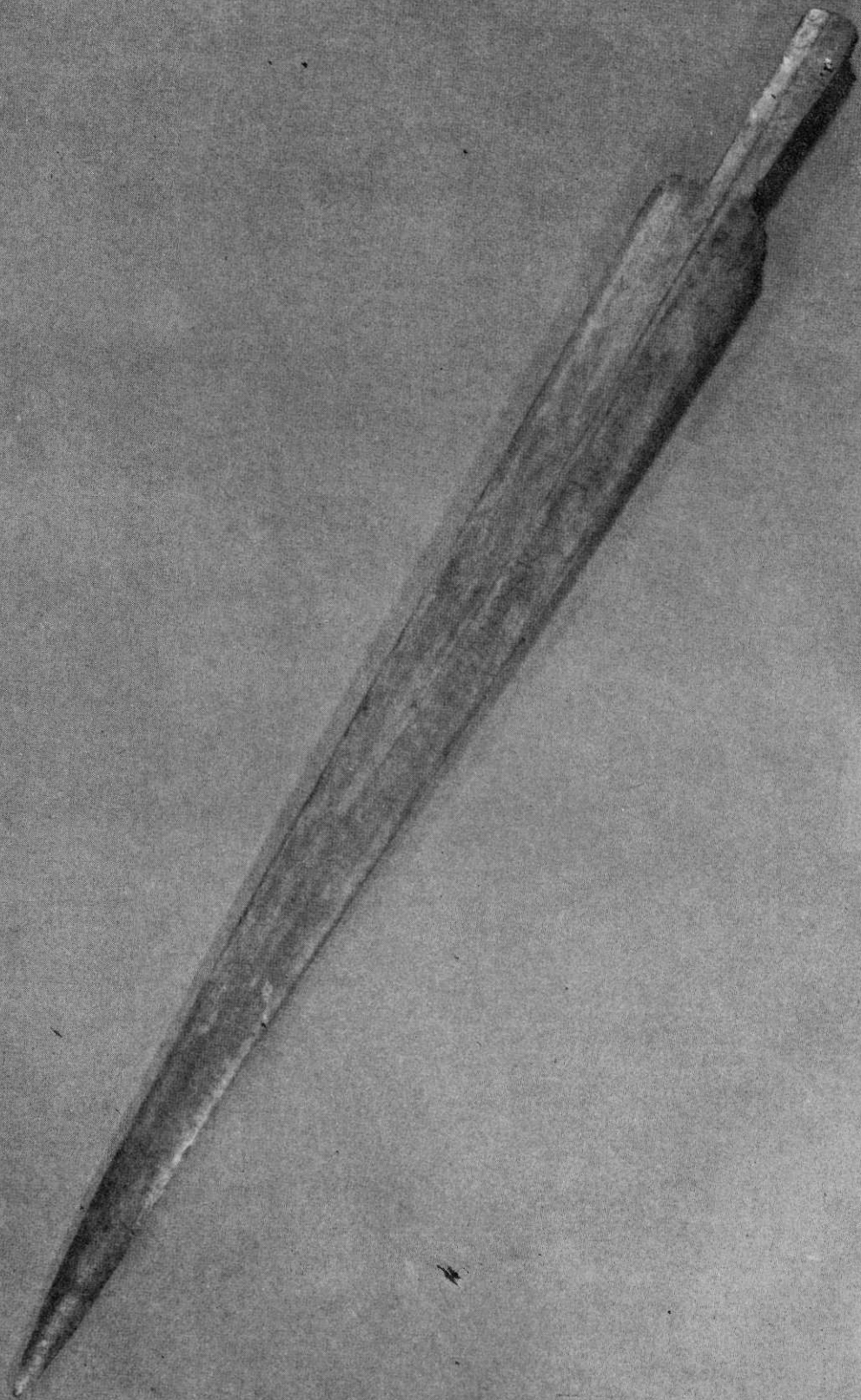
*L'Aigle*, now in Edinburgh) and this image went to the dealer Webster who, in 1948, sold it to or exchanged it with James Hooper. The Hooper collection was sold in 1977 and it is now in another private collection. One is tempted to conclude that not only are these two images the ones purchased by Andrew on Oahu but may also be the images to which Ruschenberger (also on Oahu) refers as having been recently made and smoked "to impart to them an appearance of antiquity."

Three other wooden images said to have been collected by Midshipman Knowles are also attributed to Hale-o-Keawe although it is not even known whether Knowles was one of the official party that went to Honaunau on that occasion. This Hale-o-Keawe attribution of the superb image now in the British Museum, London, can be traced to the wishful thinking of Harry Beasley who owned it in 1932.<sup>34</sup> The image bears a striking resemblance to two images from Forbes Cave, Hawaii, and indeed may have been found in some such cave by Knowles, for it is unlikely that a young midshipman would have willingly been given one of the major images of the voyage. According to Macrae, members of the ship's company went to the caves specifically to look for curiosities.<sup>34a</sup> The other two images attributed to Knowles are now in the Honolulu Academy of Arts and the Museum of Primitive Art in New York, by way of the New York dealer Klejman, also from Beasley who apparently also attributed them to Hale-o-Keawe. Again, there is nothing to support this supposition. There is a possibility that these were some of the deities that Bloxam notes were stuck into the thatch at the back of the altar at Hale-o-Keawe, along with a stick image similar in body form that belonged to one of the Bloxams, probably Richard, now in Bishop Museum (although it, too, cannot be attributed to Hale-o-Keawe).

It is imperative for our purposes to separate the objects that belonged to Andrew Bloxam from those that belonged to his brother Richard. Apparently it was Richard's objects that went to their brother Matthew in Rugby, for on two issues of *The Mirror* pasted in his diary Andrew notes that objects are in the possession of his brother in Rugby. These include (besides the large image mentioned above) three pieces that came to Bishop Museum—the stick image, the *lei niho palaoa*, and the carved wooden object probably from Mauke in the Cook Islands, where they touched on the voyage back to England. The fate of the other three depicted pieces, a small bowl said to have been taken from Hale-o-Keawe by an officer of the *Blonde*, the *kapa* covered head, and an adz blade is not known, although the last mentioned may be the one Hooper purchased from Rugby School in 1938 and now in Bishop Museum.

Also attributed to Rugby School by Hooper are a hafted adz, a gourd container with *koko*, a fishhook, two bark cloth *kapa moe*, a swordfish

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dagger, and a feather cape. It is unlikely, however, that the feather cape is a Bloxam piece.<sup>35</sup> Matthew talks of only two feather pieces brought back by his brothers. One belonging to Richard and depicted by Andrew in his diary was exhibited by Matthew for his 1885 lecture, where he states, "On one occasion, Kaahumanu, the old Queen Regent, widow of Kamehameha the first, and Grandmother to the then young King who succeeded his brother, Riho Riho, being pleased at something my eldest brother had done, sent for and presented him with the valuable feather war cloak, I now exhibit."<sup>36</sup> This cloak is now in Bishop Museum.

Matthew in his lecture continues: "This feather war cloak was not the only royal gift my eldest brother received whilst at the Sandwich Islands. The Princess Naheinaheina, sister of the young king Kiankianli presented him, I forget on what occasion, with a magnificent feather tippet; this my brother, on his arrival in England, presented to Miss Croker, daughter of Mr. John Wilson Croker, at that time Secretary to the Admiralty, through whose influence both my brothers obtained their appointments."<sup>37</sup> The whereabouts of this cape is unknown to me.

Thus, the two feather pieces of Richard Bloxam can be accounted for—and it is unlikely that the cape attributed to the *Blonde* formerly in the Hooper collection is indeed from that voyage, because Andrew or Matthew would certainly have mentioned it, and, in any case, Andrew's objects did not go to Rugby School from whence the Hooper objects came. Furthermore, when James Hooper showed me the feather cape in 1970, he did not say it was associated with the Bloxams, in whom he knew I had a special interest.

One other object obtained by Richard at Hale-o-Keawe, a swordfish dagger, is of interest because it may have been used in Cook's death. This dagger appears to have lost its association with Cook during the time it was in Matthew's possession in Rugby. Besides the swordfish dagger, Matthew also had another object which he considered a dagger—a beautifully carved wooden piece—which he apparently did not realize was not obtained in Hawaii, but in Mauke (Cook Islands). Richard, the ship's chaplain and thus the ranking religious personage, was said to have received from the Priest at Hale-o-Keawe the dagger that killed Captain Cook. Hale-o-Keawe would be a logical place for such a weapon to be. Indeed some of Cook's bones may have been kept there as well, and the English drum, noted by Andrew, may have also been from Cook's voyage. Matthew must have simply associated the story with the

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Fig. 2. Swordfish dagger, probably used in Cook's death  
(photo courtesy Bishop Museum).

wrong object and at the time he gave his lecture in 1885, the dagger that killed Cook was said to be the wooden object from Mauke.

It was at Karakakua Bay that Captain Cook met with his untimely and lamented death. Forty-seven years had elapsed, but two of the old chiefs, who had witnessed that sad transaction, were still alive. An old priest, the guardian of the morai, told my eldest brother that the wooden dagger, or "Pohoa," I now produce and which was taken from the morai, was one of those with which Captain Cook was stabbed.<sup>38</sup>

If we look next for objects that belonged to Andrew at least some can easily be traced. In the Glasgow Art Gallery and Museum in Glasgow, Scotland, there are 16 small pieces of *kapa* given to Dr. Lemann by Andrew Bloxam, and in Nottingham Castle Museum in England are similar *kapa* pieces attributed to Andrew. They are probably all bits of the same pieces that Andrew pasted in his diary, now in Bishop Museum. But the main part of Andrew's collection is in the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford, England, transferred there from the Ashmolean Museum, where Andrew had placed it in 1826. Included are two boar's tusk bracelets, four *kapa* stamps, a gourd water bottle, a *lauhala* pillow, an adz blade, a large fishhook, an *ulu maika* stone, and a neck rest which probably came from the Cook Islands. Andrew apparently did not obtain a feather cape, nor did his friend Malden.

Interestingly enough, an exhibit sponsored by the Derby Museum in 1843 included a number of objects borrowed from Andrew Bloxam, including a Sandwich Island Idol, net, pillow, and Calabash with net.<sup>39</sup> Which objects these are, however, cannot be determined, unless they are some of those collected by Richard then in the possession of Matthew in Rugby or some that Andrew borrowed back from Oxford.

There are many so-far unsolved problems. If Andrew's notes and Dampier's summary are correct, there were at least 12 feather pieces in the possession of the officers of the *Blonde*. Besides the two belonging to Richard Bloxam, the only other so far traceable is the Kintore cloak, now in the Bishop Museum, that was collected by William Keith and given to Bishop Museum in 1969.<sup>40</sup> A feather image collected by Byron is now in the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford, after having been transferred there from the Ashmolean Museum, to which Byron gave it in 1827. It appears to be the one depicted in *The Mirror* of 1826 where it is attributed to Hale-o-Kewae by Matthew, based perhaps on Andrew's drawing of the interior. And on this issue of *The Mirror* Andrew does not state that it is in the possession of his brother in Rugby.

Another object in the Pitt Rivers Museum attributed to Lord Byron which may have come from Hale-o-Keawe is a *pahu hula* (drum) also noted in Andrew's drawing and description. It was given to the Pitt Rivers Museum by Mrs. Beasley in 1954. Harry Beasley obtained it at

the breakup of the collection of the Royal United Services Institute where it had been deposited by Lord Byron about 1850. In addition there are *kapa* pieces attributed to Lord Byron in the Bishop Museum that were included in the Fuller Library, and a fly whisk handle is now in New Zealand in the Oldman collection with an attribution to Byron. Thus, it appears that Byron had a large collection which he presented at various times to various people, most of whom were private individuals, and the items have gone through many hands since—some having not yet surfaced, for surely Byron had feather cloaks.

The only other pieces that I have so far been able to find out about are some *kapa* pieces belonging to a descendant of Malden the surveyor—who also notes that they at one time had a pillow, which has now “gone missing” (letter dated 20 September 1970), perhaps similar to the one depicted by Andrew in his diary from Mauke.<sup>41</sup>

Finally, a Honolulu collector/dealer sold two objects to another local collector in 1970 which were attributed to Andrew Bloxam. One of these, a gourd drum, was resold to a third local collector and I have not seen it. But the one retained by the second collector and brought to me for identification was a gourd water container from New Caledonia. The *Blonde* did not go anywhere near New Caledonia and it would appear that these two objects belong to the “wishful thinking” list.

Now, is it not the seller's responsibility to state the basis on which such attributions are made? Is it only the responsibility of societies and institutions to deal with the touchy subjects of historic and ethnographic accuracy? How should one deal with deliberate withholding of historical data, falsification of information, and the moral and ethical responsibilities of research? Without such ethics how can we hope to produce accurate scientific and humanistic research? These are problems which institutions must contend with and one reason why research takes so long—one simply cannot believe attributions and every source of every object must be checked. Often the important thing to collectors and even to some museums is *owning* something, and the prestige thereby acquired. In my view, and I think this is shared by most museum people, the important thing is the integrity of the object itself—its preservation, the accuracy of its historical attribution, its availability to the largest number of people, and its safety for future generations.

I am often asked why such minute details are important. Is it not enough to have objects back in Hawaii? Is it not enough to know that the objects were from the 18th or 19th Century? Indeed, is it not enough to know that the objects are Hawaiian? The answer to these questions, to an anthropologist, is an emphatic “no.” It is necessary to have accurate, detailed information about specific provenances within the Hawaiian



Islands, about dates of fabrication and use, and about historic ownership of ethnographic objects. Falsification of such information not only makes us work harder, but can easily lead to invalid conclusions. Without such detailed information we can only make general statements, such as "Hawaiians made feather objects, wooden images or musical instruments." Perhaps that is enough for some, perhaps it is enough for ethnic identity in the 20th Century—but I hope not. Is it not important how objects differed at the time of first European contact from objects only a few short decades later? What caused the changes that brought about local evolution in Hawaiian craftsmanship? I have found that the best way to find answers to such questions is to find objects traceable to historic voyages that were then taken away and preserved. They were not worn out or changed by subsequent owners in Hawaii. They fossilized the style of the time, if you will. I have been trying to define styles of various types of material culture at specific points in time, and to explicate what led to the various changes, and have now evolved a preliminary framework for analyzing Hawaiian material culture. Although such definitions may be of more anthropological than historical interest, I want to summarize some of my findings—which could only have been made on the basis of accurate historical attributions.<sup>42</sup>

Hawaiian objects are often treated as timeless manifestations of an unchanging society or analyzed with over simplified concepts of "indigenous" and "acculturated." Schemes of local evolution often culminate in a "classic" phase which was supposed to have existed at the time of European contact. The classic phase is usually followed by a "degenerate acculturated" phase ushered in with European tools and values. In my view, however, it is a mistake to consider Hawaiian objects acculturated simply because of changes brought about by the use of metal tools or the introduction of European things, because these changes may be only irrelevant ones in nonessential aspects of the object. One might consider Hawaiian objects to be traditional as long as they have evolved along traditional lines and the structure and sentiment have not changed.

I find it useful to analyze Hawaiian objects within a framework of four potential categories—traditional, evolved traditional, folk, and airport art varieties.

*Traditional* in this scheme refers to objects as they were produced at the time of first European contact. Statements about traditional objects must be based on pieces that have precise documentation which can trace them to collection during the sojourn of Cook's ships in Hawaii on his third Pacific voyage.<sup>43</sup> If objects from later voyages to the area are used they must be assessed in terms of possible influence from earlier

voyages—*i.e.*, objects collected on Vancouver's voyage must be assessed in terms of possible influence from Cook's voyage. Detailed ethno-historic research on Cook's voyages was necessary for this aspect of the overall framework of analysis.

*Evolved traditional* in this scheme refers to objects which are a continuation of traditional styles, or styles that have evolved along indigenous lines retaining traditional basic structure and sentiment. Such objects may be made with metal tools, which often made possible more intricate designs; they may be made of similar but introduced raw material—for example, the substitution of walrus ivory for whale ivory.

*Folk* in this scheme refers to the living art of the community. Folk art may incorporate profound structural changes, objects may be made of dissimilar materials, and/or the object may incorporate new concepts and methods which were not part of the traditional culture. Folk art does not imply denigration of the product, but rather a creative combination of traditional and nontraditional concepts and values.

*Airport art* or tourist art in this scheme refers to art which is produced primarily for non-Hawaiians and which can be appreciated or used by someone who has little or no knowledge or understanding of Hawaiian culture. The reasons for making airport art are not aesthetic, or religious, or for use by oneself, or for any traditional reason, but specifically for sale.

As an illustration of this analytic framework, let us look at Hawaiian bark cloth. With the influx of European tools and ideas starting in 1778 on the third voyage of Captain Cook, a number of rapid changes took place in Hawaiian objects. Since that time, many of the results of these changes have become an accepted part of Hawaiian tradition.

The making of Hawaiian *kapa* can be shown to have traditional and evolved traditional forms, and also a present-day folk dimension. Numerous pieces of Hawaiian bark cloth can be traced to Cook's voyage, most of them cut into small "samples" and many of them part of books. Hawaiian *kapa* collected on Cook's voyage is significantly different from the 19th-Century variety, which can be exemplified by *kapa* collected on the *Blonde* trip. Cook voyage *kapa* is relatively thick, often has impressed ribbing, and has bold designs, while 19th Century *kapa* is thinner, has smaller designs, and most importantly has elaboration of the impressed design, known in Hawaii as a watermark. Watermarks from intricately carved *kapa* beaters are traditionally thought to be the most important distinctive feature of Hawaiian *kapa*. In my view, such watermarks signify evolved traditional workmanship and separate 10th Century *kapa* from 18th Century *kapa*. It is unfortunate that only one Hawaiian *kapa* beater can so far be traced to Cook's voyage, so we have only the *kapa*

itself to work from. Although my study of Hawaiian *kapa* is not yet completed, it appears that introduction of metal tools stimulated the Hawaiian carver of *kapa* beaters to even greater heights, and these intricately incised beaters became almost an end in themselves. The *kapa* made with these beaters is extraordinarily fine, in fact so fine that it may have become a prestige object rather than a useful one—introduced European textiles and blankets having replaced the traditional functions of *kapa*. The second kind of decoration that changed was the printed design. Cook voyage *kapa* often has bold heavy designs, while the 19th Century “classic” *kapa* has small regular designs in more limited design fields that were printed with bamboo stamps and liners often intricately carved. None of these stamps and liners can be traced to Cook’s voyage, but they abound in 19th-Century collections, including four from Andrew Bloxam in the Pitt Rivers Museum. Thus, it appears that *kapa* in evolved traditional style features watermarks and printed designs that became more feasible after the introduction of European tools, which Hawaiians quickly recognized as useful for refinement of traditional techniques and elaboration of their own aesthetic traditions.

The introduction of European materials and ideas also stimulated a folk art variety of *kapa* in the form of Hawaiian quilts, which is still popular today, although the making of bark-cloth *kapa* as a continuing tradition has ceased. (There are, however, recent efforts to revive it.) Missionary wives introduced the art of making quilts and Hawaiian women were quick to take it up. In my view they readily accepted this new art form because they saw in it an almost exact correspondence with bark-cloth bed covers. The similarity lies particularly in the two layers of design. Whereas bark-cloth *kapa* has an overall impressed watermark design which permeates the whole sheet, and a second design printed on the upper surface, a *kapa* quilt has a quilted design which is sewn through the entire quilt and another design appliqued on the upper surface. Thereby, elements of bark-cloth *kapa* fabrication were carried into the folk art quilt tradition and are still part of the living art of the community.

Profound changes in materials, structure, and method of manufacture are apparent, but the two-layer design conceptualization, or as I would have it, the sentiment expressed, is a direct continuation of an evolved traditional art form.

Perhaps an airport art version of Hawaiian *kapa* would be a *kapa* print version of a *mu’umu’u* of 20th Century style, or sheets printed with *kapa* designs.

The use of such frameworks is only possible if one has objects having detailed historic attributions to work with. More such dated objects may

help to generate a more realistic understanding of both indigenous aesthetic systems and the artistic and social changes that have made Hawaiian art what it was yesterday and is today.

#### NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Based on a lecture given at the fall membership meeting of the Hawaiian Historical Society, October 28, 1976. If readers know of other objects associated with these voyages, I would be interested in hearing about them.
- <sup>2</sup> Also given to Capt. Starbuck, inherited by his daughter, and given to Bishop Museum are two pieces of Hawaiian barkcloth (C209, C210). They too are of the 19th Century, evolved traditional style (see below). The numbers in parentheses are museum catalog numbers.
- <sup>3</sup> British Museum accession slip.
- <sup>4</sup> Alfred Frankenstein, "The Royal Visitors," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, vol. 44, no. 1 (1963), p. 10.
- <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.
- <sup>6</sup> British Museum accession slip. Also in the British Museum are a number of feather pieces from Windsor Castle in a Royal Loan, some of which were said to have been given by the King and Queen of Hawaii in 1824. They may have been given to George IV when Boki and others of the Hawaiian party had an interview at Windsor Castle. In addition, a feather cape now in the Fuller collection in the Field Museum, Chicago, was said to have been given by Kamamalu to King George IV; see Roland W. Force and Maryanne Force, *The Fuller Collection of Pacific Artifacts* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971), p. 94.
- <sup>7</sup> British Museum accession slip.
- <sup>8</sup> Cuming Museum, London, manuscript catalog.
- <sup>9</sup> Frankenstein, "The Royal Visitors," p. 20.
- <sup>10</sup> *Star-Bulletin*, April 20, 1976.
- <sup>11</sup> Anon., "Warning to the Japanese Entertainers," *The Friend*, (August, 1860), p. 64.
- <sup>12</sup> Captain George Anson, Lord Byron (Maria Graham), *Voyage of HMS Blonde to the Sandwich Islands in the Years 1824-1825* (London: Murray, 1826); Robert Dampier, *To the Sandwich Islands on HMS Blonde* (Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii (for the Friends of the Library), 1971); James Macrae, *With Lord Byron at the Sandwich Islands in 1825* (Honolulu: Petroglyph Press, 1972); Andrew Bloxam, *Diary of Andrew Bloxam, Naturalist of the Blonde* (Honolulu: B. P. Bishop Museum, Special Publication 10, 1925).
- <sup>13</sup> A. Bloxam, *Diary*, p. 27.
- <sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47.
- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 56.
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.
- <sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 72.
- <sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 75.
- <sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 74-76.
- <sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76.
- <sup>21</sup> Byron, *Voyage of HMS Blonde*, p. 202.
- <sup>22</sup> Macrae, *With Lord Byron*, p. 84.
- <sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

- <sup>34</sup> Andrew Bloxam, Preliminary Diary Notes (MSS, n.d., Bishop Museum Library), p. 69. Apparently he never received a cloak or cape or he surely would have mentioned it.
- <sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>36</sup> Byron, *Voyage of HMS Blonde*, p. 37.
- <sup>37</sup> Dampier, *To the Sandwich Islands*, p. 64.
- <sup>38</sup> W. S. W. Ruschenberger, *A Voyage Round the World including an Embassy to Muscat and Siam in 1835, 1836 and 1837* (Philadelphia: Carey, Lea and Blanchard, 1838), p. 455. I am indebted to Catherine Stauder for drawing my attention to this reference.
- <sup>39</sup> Matthew Bloxam, Natural History Society Meeting held May 16, *The Meteor* (1885), p. 67.
- <sup>40</sup> Andrew Bloxam, Diary of A. R. Bloxam on HMS *Blonde* 1824 (MSS, n.d., Bishop Museum Library).
- <sup>41</sup> Peter H. Buck, *Arts and Crafts of Hawaii* (Honolulu: Bishop Museum Special Publication 45, 1957), p. 493.
- <sup>42</sup> Cuming Museum, manuscript catalog.
- <sup>43</sup> For illustrations see J. Halley Cox and William H. Davenport, *Hawaiian Sculpture* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1974), catalog numbers K44 and Azo.
- <sup>44</sup> H. G. Beasley, "Hawaii: Technology. A Carved Wooden Figure from Hawaii," *Man*, vol. 32 (1932), pp. 43-76.
- <sup>45</sup> Macrae, *With Lord Byron*, p. 82,
- <sup>46</sup> Steven Phelps, *Art and Artefacts of the Pacific, Africa, and the Americas. The James Hooper Collection* (London: Hutchinson, 1975), Plate III, top.
- <sup>47</sup> M. Bloxam, Natural History Society Meeting, p. 66.
- <sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 67.
- <sup>50</sup> Anon., *Catalog of the Articles Comprised in the Exhibition . . .* (Derby: W. Bemrose, 1843).
- <sup>51</sup> Adrienne L. Kaepler, "Feather Cloaks, Ship Captains, and Lords," *Bishop Museum Occasional Papers*, vol. 24, no. 6 (1970), pp. 91-114.
- <sup>52</sup> A. Bloxam, *Diary*, p. 83; personal communication.
- <sup>53</sup> The following section is based on Adrienne L. Kaepler, "A Survey of Polynesian Art with Selected Reinterpretations," in S. Mead, ed., *Exploring the Art of Oceania* (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, in press). See also Kaepler, *The Fabrics of Hawaii (Bark Cloth)* (Leigh-on-Sea, England: F. Lewis, Publishers, Limited, 1975).
- <sup>54</sup> For an inventory of these objects, see Kaepler, "*Artificial Curiosities*" being an exposition of native manufactures collected on the three Pacific voyages of Captain James Cook, R. N. (Honolulu: Bishop Museum Special Publication 65, 1978).