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"None of Them Came for Me:"
The Kapi'olani Home for Girls, 1885–1938

The story of Kalaupapa, the leprosy isolation settlement established by the Hawaiian kingdom in 1865, has long attracted the attention of historians, writers, and public health practitioners. In recent years, patients, former patients, and their descendants have further expanded the research field by contributing their personal memories and stories of Kalaupapa. Some of these remembrances have alluded to the orphanages established in Honolulu to care for the healthy offspring of Kalaupapa's patients, Kapi'olani Home for Girls (1885–1938) and the Kalihi Boys' Home (1908–1937). These two institutions for children, the first publicly supported orphanages in the kingdom of Hawai'i, are an important, yet little known, part of Kalaupapa's history.

The first of the orphanages established for, in the terminology of their time, the "non-leprous children of leprous parents," was Kapi'olani Home for Girls. While both boys and girls born at the settlement were considered to be in need of rescue from such an environment,

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would be available to rescue the boys.

Kalaupapa. It would be 23 years before the political will and funds

Established through legislative action and maintained with public funds for nearly 53 years, the Kapi'olani Home for Girls opened at its first location in Kaka'ako (near present-day Point Panic Beach Park) in 1885. Officially administered through most of its existence by the Board of Health, its daily management was in the hands of the Catholic Sisters of St. Francis from Syracuse, New York, as part of their Hawaiian Mission. The purpose of this mission to Hawai'i, which began in 1883 under the leadership of Mother Marianne Cope, was to serve those suffering with leprosy. Throughout multiple changes in government, numerous physical relocations, and sporadic attempts to close it down, Kapi'olani Home for Girls persevered, its girls and the sisters who cared for them steadfast in their belief in the Home's right to exist, and the girls firm in their belief that they had a right to the support of Hawai'i's people.

Orphanage histories are more often tales of human inadequacies, rather than strengths, and the story of Kapi'olani Home for Girls is no different. Behind every child "rescued," in the parlance of the day, and institutionalized, was a story of failure—failure of the family unit, and, by extension, a failure of the community. Such stories are painful to recount and to read; in these histories heroes are scarce and the primary actors too often revealed as aloof and parsimonious. That those on the receiving end of this isolation and neglect were children makes the tales pitiful; that the orphaned and institutionalized children were, for the most part, Hawaiian, from a culture that valorized the extended family, makes them inexplicable. This history needs to be excavated, however, the children remembered, and their stories made known.

Evidence of the children's lives and responses to their situation are not easy to find, but remnants do remain in the official record and in oral history. In these sources we find that in the face of negligent treatment and competing emotions, some of the girls chose to focus on their institutional home—Kapiʻolani Home for Girls—as their birthright and bedrock, while others carried with them for a lifetime a keenly felt sense of abandonment by their 'ohana. While Angela Aalona, who entered the home as a toddler in 1905, asserted in 1930 "This is our home and no other," as she tried to rally support to fight her discharge from the Home, Rose Alana Perry Huleia, who entered the home as an infant in 1907, spoke accusingly of her non-Kalaupapa family more than seventy years later asserting "None of them came for me." Troubling, controversial, and conflicted is history, and so is the story of the Kapiʻolani Home for Girls.

When the kingdom of Hawai'i passed the Segregation Act in 1865 and compelled all who had been medically pronounced lepers to submit to exile on Moloka'i, no provision was made for the children inevitably left behind by the banished mothers and fathers. Neither was there a plan in place to address the needs of subsequent children born at the settlement, for while leprosy meant a life sentence on Moloka'i, it did not mean the end of reproductive life. Acting in haste, motivated by fear, and constricted by financial shortfalls, the kingdom's leprosy program developed step by faltering step from its inception, with Hawai'i's government—whether kingdom, republic, or territory—reluctantly feeling its way forward and defensively reacting to each new and costly problem as it appeared. A medical problem, a public health problem, and, with the Segregation Act, a social welfare and child welfare problem, government officials responded to this latter wrinkle in their leprosy program by establishing a publicly financed orphanage.

The Kapi'olani Home for Girls, "for non-leprous daughters of lepers," was the kingdom's laggardly response to the steady cry of protest over the presence of healthy children living at the settlement for leprosy sufferers on Moloka'i. Over the 20-years period since passage of the Segregation Act, settlement patients, Board of Health officials, and Catholic workers had all spoken out over the years against the practice of allowing children born to those exiled at Kalaupapa to remain there. Action was finally taken after Dr. Edward Arning, who had arrived in Hawai'i to conduct research into the transmission of leprosy in 1883, had shared his concerns regarding the healthy children with Mother Marianne Cope, who with six other Franciscan sisters had arrived in Hawai'i the same year as Arning (and on the same ship). Mother Mari-

anne, in turn, had passed these concerns, along with her own, on to then-prime minister and Board of Health president, Walter Murray Gibson. From there, the case was put before the legislature.

Recent concern had been voiced at the Kalaupapa settlement, too. One pivotal moment of protest occurred in July 1884 when Queen Kapi'olani and Princess Lili'uokalani toured the settlement and met with patients to hear their complaints. At this meeting, Ambrose Hutchison spoke from the assembled crowd as both a patient and an employee of the Board of Health. He was the son of Dr. Ferdinand Hutchison, a white physician who had once served as president of the Board of Health, and a Hawaiian mother. Holding a small girl aloft for the queen to see, resident superintendent Hutchison said he wished to call attention to the plight of healthy children born to patients at the settlement. He implored the visiting *ali'i* to find some way to keep such children "aloof from the diseased and properly cared for in a separate asylum" and urged the queen and princess to use their positions and influence to "bring about the realization of so worthy an object." 5

The next year, legislation to establish an institution for girls had been passed, but the kingdom's treasury lacked the funds to build. Queen Kapi'olani, through her organized charity work, made an appeal for subscriptions to a public fund, and the shortfall was overcome. A two-story orphanage designed to house 50 girls and staff was quickly built in the yard of the Leper Receiving Station and Branch Hospital compound in Kaka'ako, where the Franciscan sisters had taken up their work. To honor the queen and in memory of her critical assistance, the home was given Queen Kapi'olani's name. On November 9, 1885 the home opened with the first ten girls selected from the Kalawao settlement.

While the orphanage site was far from ideal, and would soon be criticized as an exchange of one at-risk location for the girls for yet another, the home's opening day was a grand occasion filled with celebration and official self-congratulation. At the opening festivities, the Royal Hawaiian Band played the Hawaiian Anthem; the Right Reverend Dr. Hermann Koeckemann, Hawai'i's Roman Catholic bishop, offered a prayer; the prime minister and Board of Health president, Walter Murray Gibson, gave a flowery "discourse;" superintendent of the hospital compound, Mother Marianne was given the keys to the

home by Queen Kapi'olani, and was then honored with decoration by the king with the Order of Kapi'olani.

While festive, the occasion was also poignant; one such moment would have been the singing of "The Hawaiian Lepers' Hymn" by young patients from the adjacent Leper Receiving Station and Branch Hospital, the "leper children," as the program notes termed them. Composed by His Majesty, King Kalākaua, the "Hawaiian Lepers Hymn" memorialized the arrival of the Franciscan mission to Hawai'i to nurse the lepers, and expressed *ali'i* concern for their besieged and suffering people. In the audience that day, sectarian rivalry was absent as Catholic priests and nuns, the Episcopalian bishop and his wife, Congregationalist clergy and their wives, and sundry other notables from the community sat, ate, and together paid homage to the occasion's importance with their presence.<sup>8</sup>

Details of the pomp, ceremony, and festivities of Kapi'olani Home's opening day appeared in the Honolulu newspaper—so did coverage of this historic event's darker side. For despite the clamor for child



The First Kapi'olani Home for Girls Built Adjacent to the Branch Hospital, Kaka'ako, Honolulu. Taken in 1886, the Sisters of St. Francis stand with the first ten girls to enter the home. Mother Marianne is second to from the right and Board of Health President, Walter Murray Gibson, is at far left. The State Archives of Hawai'i.

rescue from many quarters, some of the people most affected by the Board's order to relocate the settlement's healthy daughters were in violent disagreement with the official plan for their removal; with this policy change, not only were ties of affection being sundered, but so was access to tangible wealth. The Board had stopped distributing rations to  $k\bar{o}kua$  (helpers) in 1873, but settlement offspring, as legitimate community members, still received these precious supplies. At the settlement—an environment notorious at the time for its scarcities—orphaned girls were eagerly adopted into foster families. The girls were useful as healthy helpers (servants), as well as being economic assets.

The Board ordered that the first girls selected for Kapi'olani Home be true orphans—those without living parents—taken from foster homes at the settlement, or from Father Damien's orphanage there. The plan was officially announced in late October and was, according to settlement physician, Arthur Mouritz, the "sole topic" of conversation at the settlement, as rumors, emotions, "tension and excitement" reached a peak. On the day of transport, this tension gave way to violence when a disgruntled foster father named Momona, a man who allegedly planned to assassinate resident physician, Mouritz, and resident superintendent, Hutchison, instead attacked three  $k\bar{o}kua$ , fatally wounding two.

Cargo was Honolulu-bound, as well as orphans, that November day in 1885, and as the girls, including Momona's foster daughter, Abigail, boarded the steamer, two *kōkua*, named Kanohoioahu and Mahiki, were at the landing, carrying hides to be shipped. The men crossed paths with Momona, words were exchanged, and a fight broke out. Momona was attacked with a butcher knife. A third *kōkua*, Kaumulau, rushed to his friends' aid, but was stopped by Momona's accomplice, Lohiau, who held Kaumulau while Momona stabbed him in the stomach. Wrenching free, Kaumulau managed to grab the knife from his attacker. Mahiki recovered, but Kanohoiahu died of his wounds, as did the Good Samaritan, Kaumulau. Momona and Lohiau were later convicted of second-degree murder, Momona receiving a tenyear sentence and Lohiau one of five years. 11

The Kapi'olani Home's violent beginning highlights the fact that forcible separation of the children born at Kalaupapa from their parents was, and would remain, a volatile issue. Father Damien, who had established an orphanage at the settlement in the 1870s, had had difficulty countering the strong currents that kept the children among the settlement community at large. To convince parents to send their children off-island to Honolulu and the finality of an institution such as the Kapi'olani Home for Girls, and, later, the Kalihi Boys' Home, was even more difficult. In 1902, settlement superintendent, Jack McVeigh, attested to the reluctance of parents to surrender their children to an orphanage, stating, "the affection that lepers have for their children is, I believe, greater than even well people have for theirs." To overcome this parental reluctance, McVeigh recommended making removal of the well children from the settlement compulsory. 12 A move in this direction was accomplished in 1908, when a nursery was built at Kalaupapa and the Board ordered all settlement children under the age of one to be taken there, as well as all future children at birth.<sup>13</sup> The nursery consisted of a small building divided into two rooms by "hermetically sealed" glass panels. Parents could see, but not touch, their babies, who usually remained in the nursery for one year. At that age, the infants were transferred to either of the two government-funded orphanages.<sup>14</sup>

As for life in the opening years of Kapi'olani Home, transplanting young girls from the unfettered life of the settlement to the ordered domesticity of an orphanage managed by Franciscan nuns proved to be no small feat. Sister M. Leopoldina Burns, who arrived in Hawai'i in the second company of Franciscan nuns in April 1885, and whose journals provide the most extensive view by a contemporary of Kapi'olani Home's early years, once referred to the Home's earliest inmates as the "little wild cats of Molokai." 15 Another contemporary, Walter Murray Gibson, recorded his visits to the Kaka'ako Leper Receiving Station and Hospital compound in his diary, including the problem of disciplining girls who ran away from the orphanage there. In one entry, Gibson noted that seven girls had run away and that when they returned, he personally "flogged" three of them. Gibson blamed the repeated episodes of such mischief on the "lawless atmosphere of Kalawao" from which the girls had come, and thought the girls seemed "untameable." 16 But Gibson recorded tranquil days at Kapi'olani Home, too, and wrote of taking the girls to his "beach house" at Kapi'olani Park, and for a "run on the Diamond Head slopes."17

In his annual report as president of the Board of Health, Gibson compared Kapi'olani Home to a "first class boarding school" and reported that the Board of Education provided schoolroom equipment. Gibson noted that the girls did not attend public school, but emphasized that as they were "not lepers, and may never be so," restrictions placed upon them should not be too "stringent." As for the healthy boys who remained at the settlement, Gibson expressed his hope that a home for them would soon be established. Despite such repeated expressions of hope, along with admonitions by numerous officials, sufficient territorial funds to build a Home for boys were not appropriated until 1907. First housed temporarily at the Quarantine Station at Kalihi Detention Camp in 1908, the boys soon moved into the new boys' home on what would later become McNeill Street. 19

Political events threatened the continuance of Kapi'olani Home in 1887 when Gibson, the home's most active and powerful supporter, was toppled from power and sent into exile in the "Bloodless Revolution" that June. The newly constituted Board of Health, now headed by Gibson's replacement, Dr. Nathaniel Emerson, made plans to close the hospital at Kaka'ako and use the site exclusively for a receiving station until a new station could be built. The Board of Health was anxious to remove the compound; the buildings had long been criticized as an eyesore, and the hospital's presence so near the harbor was an unwelcome advertisement of Hawai'i's discouraging public health problem. Further, the Board had decided to support only one hospital for leprosy treatment—and that was to be at the settlement.<sup>20</sup>

Mother Marianne left Oʻahu to take up her work on Molokaʻi in November 1888. At Kakaʻako, she left the girls of Kapiʻolani Home in the care of three Franciscan sisters under the leadership of Sister M. Benedicta Rodenmacher, who had arrived in the second company of Franciscan sisters. In 1889, the Franciscan nuns and the girls of Kapiʻolani Home watched as the Kakaʻako hospital was closed and its buildings dismantled. The new Leprosy Receiving Station was built three miles away at Puʻuhale, Kalihi, on eight ocean-front acres, and was minimally staffed by patients—not Franciscans—under the direction of a Board of Health physician. Later, an Anglican lay sister, Amy Fowler, known as "Sister Rose Gertrude," would briefly have charge.

Funding the leprosy program had been a budgeting problem for Hawai'i's government from the beginning and discussions on ways to economize were a constant. In 1890, the Board of Health pondered what to do with the sole survivor of the Kaka'ako compound—the Kapi'olani Girls' Home. Some members argued closing the home was the best thing to do, but its relocation to the settlement or to the Kalihi Receiving Station was also discussed.<sup>22</sup> The Board also worried about what would become of the girls once they reached the age of "womanhood." One idea was to contact the Girls' Industrial School for permission to admit some of the girls there.<sup>23</sup>

Board president, Dr. John Kimball, resigned in September 1890, and the next president's actions gave those at the Girls' Home fresh cause for concern. First, the new Board president, David Dayton—a



The Sisters of St. Francis at the Branch Hospital for Lepers, Kakaʻako in 1886. Top left to right: Mother Marianne Cope, Sr. M. Leopoldina Burns, Sr. M. Crescentia Eilers. Bottom left to right: Sr. M. Charles Hoffman, Sr. M. Rosalia McLaughlin, Sr. M. Martha Kaiser. The State Archives of Hawaiʻi.

businessmen, not a physician—asked the Board's Kapi'olani Home committee to find "suitable persons" to take charge of the home. In September, he agreed to look into changing the title of the Kapi'olani Home legislative appropriations to give the Board freedom to use these public monies to care for the healthy children of leprosy patients wherever the Board saw fit. Next, in December 1890, the Board moved to ask "at what price" the Catholic School could take the girls. After Father Leonor Fouesnel, the influential priest serving in the diocesan bishop's office in Honolulu, replied that he doubted the "feasibility" of such a plan, the Board discussed, in January 1891, whether all of the girls could be discharged to relatives or friends.<sup>24</sup> Throughout what appeared to be a determined effort to close the Girls' Home, Sister Benedicta lobbied the home's case through the Catholic hierarchy, which still had influence with the king and queen, and let it be known that it was Mother Marianne's own wish "to keep the poor unfortunate girls of leper parents who were more to be pitied than orphans" together at Kapi'olani Home.<sup>25</sup>

While the wishes of Mother Marianne undoubtedly carried some weight with the Board when they decided to keep the home intact, the Board had also passed through a very rocky year of chaos and complaint regarding affairs at the new Receiving Station. The situation there had become so problematic that a legislative investigative hearing was held during the 1890 session. By March 1891, the Board had placed moving Kapi'olani Home to the Kalihi Receiving Station at Pu'uhale on the agenda, and bids were solicited for moving and painting the Girls' Home. In April 1891, the Board formally asked the Franciscan sisters to, once again, take charge of the Leprosy Receiving Station. <sup>26</sup>

Sister Benedicta agreed to this duty, with the provision that the girls would be physically protected from contact with patients at the Receiving Station. While such accommodations were built, Sister Benedicta traveled each day between the two sites, tending to her charges at both ends. By May, the new Kapi'olani Home was ready for occupancy. While smaller than their Kaka'ako home, the Kalihi site did have a large yard and playground. A high "close" board fence was built around the Girls' Home to separate the girls from the station's patients.<sup>27</sup>

A mere eight girls made the move to these new quarters in 1891; the youngest was four and the oldest was 19. All eight were recent arrivals to Kapi'olani Home, for in the Board's 1892 report, it was stated that of the 39 girls who had passed through the home up to this time, those numbered one through 26 in the records had been discharged to friends; numbers 27 and 28 had died of tuberculosis when they were 16 and six, respectively; and the girls numbered 29, 30, and 31 had presented leprous symptoms and been returned to Moloka'i. Only those girls with admission numbers 32 through 39, girls who ranged in age from four to19, were presently living at Kapi'olani Home.<sup>28</sup>

By the time of the Board's next report in 1894, Hawai'i's queen, Lili'uokalani, had been deposed, and a tenuous Provisional Government was in power. The new government's Board of Health announced they would follow a policy of strict enforcement of the Segregation Act. In his report to the Board, Rudolph W. Meyer, the Board of Health agent for the settlement, directed the Board's attention to the growing population of healthy children at the settlement, as well, reminding the Board that the law did not mean only to separate "the sick from the healthy," but the "clean" from the "unclean," too.<sup>29</sup> Of 103 healthy children who were living at or had been born at the settlement between March 1894 and December 1895, 20 died, 17 were taken away "clean," 7 left without official knowledge, and 59 remained at the settlement.<sup>30</sup>

Apart from knowing that exposing vulnerable children to disease was poor public health practice, the Board members were also well aware that each additional case of leprosy meant the spending of yet more government funds. Health agent Meyer also expressed concern with the possible danger posed by healthy children—especially the boys—who were growing up in an environment totally isolated from the concerns and mores of the mainstream culture.<sup>31</sup> Meyer, the German-born rancher whose cliff-top home overlooked the settlement and who had been involved in the settlement's details since its creation, invoked the specter of the "dangerous classes," a term current in American and European child rescue circles of the time, when he warned that these children could well become a "a lawless and dangerous element." Growing up without work, without sound education, and with daily exposure to "idleness, drinking and gambling,"

these children, Meyer feared, were "hoodlums and tramps" in the making.<sup>33</sup>

As an institutional home for boys had still not been built, Meyer suggested a separate ward for the settlement-born boys could be built at Hawai'i's only other publicly supported institution for dependent children, the government reformatory at Keone'ula, Kapālama. Such a ward, Meyer believed, could exist "without injury or prejudice to the other inmates of the Reformatory school." Three years later, in 1897, when the Board of Education made plans to abandon the Kapalama Reformatory, Board of Health president, William O. Smith, proposed the reformatory premises be made available for a boys' home. This idea came to nothing, however, and when the boys' reformatory relocated in 1903, the Kapālama site became a reform school for girls.

The fragile nature of Kapi'olani Home's continued existence became apparent, once again, in the summer of 1900 when typhoid fever struck 14 of the 50 girls then living at the home. When typhoid was diagnosed, the Board of Health ordered Sister Benedicta to move the sick girls to the Kalihi Detention Camp, a former bubonic plague camp located at "Waiakamilo," a beach location about one half mile from the receiving station. Sister Benedicta and her assistants took all of the Kapi'olani girls to Kalihi Detention Camp, the sick and the well, where they remained for the next 12 years.

The history of this third location for the Girls' Home is worth recounting. When bubonic plague had erupted in Honolulu's Chinatown the previous winter, December 1899, camps had been hastily constructed to contain and control the thousands of displaced Chinese, Japanese, and Hawaiian residents. Kalihi Detention Camp at Waiakamilo was one of the largest, covering roughly nine acres of Bishop Estate land and soon housing over 5,000 people.<sup>37</sup> Refugees had been released from the camp as early as February 1900, but many returned, having no place to go and no means of support.<sup>38</sup> Many such refugees were still living in the camp in the summer of 1900 when Sister Benedicta arrived with the girls of Kapi'olani Home.

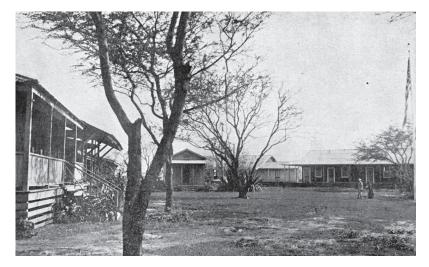
In Sister Leopoldina Burns's journals are remembrances of this site, recorded 20 years after the events she described. In her journals, she surmises that the Waiakamilo beach location had been used as a burial ground for victims of an earlier epidemic and, to illustrate, she

recorded one particularly macabre and memorable scene in which the orphanage girls, seeking to improve the camp structures, accidentally disinterred victims of an earlier public health crisis and catastrophe:

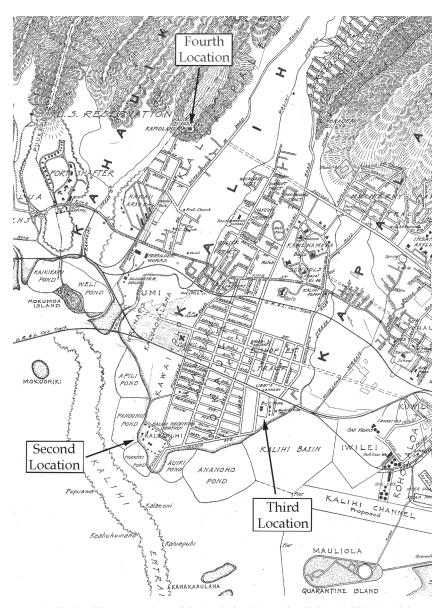
... they were digging and wheeling dirt to fill in the many holes around the veranda, the dirt was soft and the young strong arms of the girls diving their shovels deep they dug up many human bones, arms, legs, and skulls, and they even dug in to coffins. Sister had them cover the coffins quickly. It made me shiver, but the young lighthearted girls made nothing of it, but moved on nearer to the beach and continued their work.<sup>39</sup>

In her notebooks, Sister Leopoldina described the gloominess of the camp with its rough, unpainted, and poorly lit structures, but also remarked that the cabins all faced the ocean and offered a supply of "healthy sea air." <sup>40</sup>

Along with sheltering the Girls' Home at the site, the Board soon found other uses for the Kalihi Detention Camp, using it as a multipurpose, ready-at-hand public health resource. In 1901 a Quarantine



Kapi'olani Home for Girls Third Location at Kalihi Detention Camp, 1900–1912. The camp originally sheltered about 5,000 people displaced by the bubonic plague outbreak and the Chinatown fire of 1899–1900. Photograph is from the 1907 Board of Health report on the home.



Map Indicating Three Locations of the Kapi'olani Home for Girls in Kalihi, Honolulu. Second location is Kalihi Hospital and Receiving Station (1891–1900); third site is the Kalihi Detention Camp ("Boys' Home" or "Quarantine Station," 1900–1912; and the fourth site is Meyers Street, Kalihi Uka (1912–1938). The map is "Honolulu" compiled by M.D. Monsarrat in 1920, Territory of Hawaii, Land Survey Division, Department of Accounting and General Services, State of Hawaii'i.

Hospital and morgue were built at the site to handle sporadic plague suspect cases; that same year, a "colony of South Sea Islanders" diagnosed with tuberculosis were quarantined there. In 1908, the Kalihi Boys' Home was built there, and over time, the camp became a residential neighborhood, largely populated by working-class Native Hawaiians. Attesting to this, a 1902 petition signed by over 50 Native Hawaiian men was presented to a U.S. Congressional subcommittee, requesting that the Waiakamilo location, "Kalihi Detention Camp," be made into "a government reservation, to be given as homesteads to your petitioners." The homestead request was not acted upon and in 1911, the last year the girls of Kapi'olani Home were in residence there, the camp's residents continued to pay rent, as did the Board of Health, to the Bishop Estate. In the side of the source of the side of the Bishop Estate.

That the "temporary" residence at the Kalihi Detention Camp stretched into a 12-year period can be explained by inadequate public funds for a new location and the refusal of the Franciscan sisters to return the girls to the Leprosy Receiving Station compound. Sister Leopoldina recorded in her journals that when Kapi'olani Home's superintendent, Sister Benedicta, was asked by a Board of Health member when the girls would return to their home adjacent to the Receiving Station, Sister Benedicta had adamantly declared, "We will never go back. It is not right to expose those well children to leprosy. We will remain here until a proper place and a proper home is provided for the children." In the Board's report for 1901, the president concurred with Sister Benedicta's view, stating, "I do not think it is proper to take them back to the surroundings where the subject [of leprosy] is ever before them . . ." \*45

In 1905, territorial legislators and Board of Health members paid a visit to the Kalihi Detention Camp. When they toured the Girls' Home, the Board members were surprised to find that the Sisters had built a large dormitory and other "accessories" out of scrap materials and with the labor of the girls. The legislators promised an additional appropriation of \$500 dollars to be used for plumbing and other sanitary arrangements, and "visibly affected," the men also promised to see that funds were provided for a boys' home. At the next legislative session, \$6,000 dollars was appropriated to get such a home for boys up and running, and \$3,000 dollars per year appropriated for its

maintenance. The funds were not equal to the costs, however, and the project was delayed. 46

In the 1909 report, the Board described Kapi'olani Home, which was still at Kalihi Camp, as "well conducted and managed" with 54 "cheerful and happy inmates." But Mother Marianne, who had begun the home in 1885, and continued oversight from Moloka'i in her role as Head of the Franciscan Mission in Hawai'i, reported matters differently. Describing the situation at Kapi'olani Home in a letter to the Mother Superior in Syracuse during this same period, Mother Marianne wrote that the three sisters at Kapi'olani Home were "worn out and more than half sick" as they cared for 56 children, including infants who required care around the clock, 24 hours a day. 47

How the girls living at Kapi'olani Home saw things offers yet another perspective on this period of Kapi'olani Home's history, a view captured in a remarkable group journal kept by the girls from 1909 to 1912. In the "Kapiolani Home Spiritual Record," the girls wrote informally about their daily lives. They wrote of outings, such as a visit to a private home "around Diamond Head" where they played on the beach and watched the waves, much as their predecessors had in the 1880s. They wrote, too, about picnics, train rides, electric car rides, excursions to Pearl City, and weddings at the home. He girls also made note of historical occasions, such as an "exhibition of an arioplane (sic) out in Moanalua," the opening of an orphanage in Kalihi—St. Anthony's Home for Children—and a surprise visit with the deposed Queen Lili'uokalani at the Diamond Head home of a "Mrs. Bowler." As the diarist recounts, "We all went in and paid our respects to Her Majesty. Then we sang for her." 49

Runaway girls—the thorn in Gibson's side in the home's earliest days—continued to be an occasional problem, according to entries in the "Record," and the diary also makes clear that family ties of love and kinship remained strong on both sides. One unsigned entry noted the arrival from Moloka'i of "about fifty" settlement residents, some with children at Kapi'olani Home, who had been "discharged as either non-lepers or having it so slightly that they could not give the disease to others." The diarist added, "I was wishing that some of my relatives were coming to see me. We have not seen our Mothers or Fathers since we came here." <sup>50</sup> Entries also tell of girls being discharged to private homes, sometimes to relatives, sometimes not. But

the sheer fact of leaving did not guarantee a happy ending; one diarist recounted word had come back to the home that Maliana, who had gone to Wailuku to live with her father, was reportedly going to school "ragged and dirty," and other sources note that girls returned to the home following unsuccessful placements.<sup>51</sup>

In 1911, as plans for the new Kapi'olani Home in Kalihi Uka were well underway and its opening happily anticipated, life for the Kapi'olani girls continued at Kalihi Detention Camp amidst a rich mixture of groups and individuals from the margins of Honolulu life: Catholic priests and nuns in a still largely Protestant society; jailed prisoners serving time on labor gangs for Board of Health projects; and sick patients confined at the neighboring Quarantine Hospital were all part of the warp and woof of the girls' daily life. So were the dead; a February 1911 entry noted an epidemic of cholera and matter-offactly recorded how casualties were removed to the "dead house" and then taken away in the "dead wagon." In April, cholera struck again, and even if there were only "a few cases," it was enough to make the neighboring Quarantine Hospital overflow with contact cases that spilled into tents, which also quickly filled to capacity. Not surprisingly, the "Spiritual Record's" May 1 entry recorded "On the feast of St. Joseph we prayed to have our new home built in another place."52

After nearly 27 years in what Sister Leopoldina called "unbecoming places," in April 1912, the fourth and final Kapi'olani Home for Girls was ready for occupancy. A total of 38 girls, ranging in age from three to 23, along with Superintendent Benedicta, and her assistants, Sisters Bonaventura, Albina, and Valeria, bid farewell to the former plague camp and moved into their new quarters on Meyers Street. This two-story Girls' Home sat high on a hill and commanded a panoramic view of Honolulu's working harbor. At this location (in the vicinity of today's Hauiki public housing project), Kapi'olani Home reached a plateau of stability and provided a sturdy home for the settlement's daughters for more than a quarter of a century. 4

But even while life at Kapi'olani Home seemed settled and secure for the sisters and girls in their care, by the late 1920s, radical change was afoot in the larger world of child welfare as the theories and practices for the care of dependent children underwent fundamental change. Philosophically, social welfare professionals had long disparaged institutional care for children, charging that institutions fostered dependency, stifled individuality, and failed to adequately prepare children for lives as self-reliant adults. With time, this view became more than rhetorical, as policies and mechanisms were created to keep children out of institutions.<sup>55</sup>

The first concrete step in this direction was the policy of providing relief payments to impoverished mothers who had lost the family breadwinner to death or disease, or had been abandoned. Such "mothers' pensions" or "widows' pensions" meant that women who had once been driven by economic hardship to place their children in orphanages could now keep their families together. Hawai'i passed its own "Mothers' Pension" law in 1919.<sup>56</sup>

While at first glance, the passage of a mothers' pension program would seem to have little bearing on the lives of the girls of Kapi'olani Home, in actual fact, and in consequence, too, of its impact on official thinking, it did. Individually, those children who had fathers at the settlement and indigent mothers living elsewhere were now, with the help of pensions, able to stay in their mother's care. In 1925, according to the Board of Child Welfare report, four families with



The Fourth and Final Kapi'olani Home for Girls Location on Meyers Street, Kalihi Uka. Note that the residents, the older girls in white and the younger in black, are standing in two separate rows in the yard. The chapel is to the left. Archives of the Shrine and Museum of Blessed Marianne Cope, Sisters of St. Francis Syracuse, New York.

fathers suffering from leprosy had been granted pensions. In 1926, R. A Cooke, the chairman of the Child Welfare Board, reported, pensions were granted to nine families in which the father had leprosy.<sup>57</sup>

As indigent families, in general, decreased their dependency on orphanages, so did social welfare professionals who now searched for ways to expand foster care options. The children of Kapi'olani Home and Kalihi Boys' Home were also affected by this sea change in child welfare practice, as official surveys conducted in Hawai'i also began pushing for foster care.

The first of three Hawai'i-based surveys and reports to take an antiinstitution stance regarding the children of leprosy patients was a 1929 public health survey conducted by Ira V. Hiscock of the American Public Health Association and financed by the United Welfare Fund (the Community Chest forerunner of today's Aloha United Way). After visiting the Kapi'olani Home for Girls, then home to 70 girls, Hiscock reported the girls' institutional lives as being "unnatural," and he recommended the girls be placed in private homes.<sup>58</sup>

The same year the Hiscock survey was published, newly appointed territorial governor, Lawrence Judd, began his administration (1929–1934) by requesting social welfare investigations by three advisory committees: one on leprosy, a second on education, and a third on crime.<sup>59</sup> All three committees touched upon the issue of institutional care for children, an issue Judd had experience with as a charter member of the board (1927) of the Episcopalian orphanage in Moʻiliʻili, St. Mary's Children's Home.<sup>60</sup>

Judd's leprosy committee's report, released in October 1930, included a report on the families of leprosy patients written by national child welfare advocate, J. Prentice Murphy, of the Child Welfare League of America. Hurphy's special interest was foster family care for dependent children, and he counseled Hawai'i's government to "seek every opportunity" to find non-institutional placements for the children then living at the Kapi'olani Home for Girls and Kalihi Boys' Home. Murphy acknowledged that institutions were currently part of the child welfare package in most communities, but advised that such care be used only as a short-term solution. Home for Girls and Kalihi Boys' Home.

Murphy also expressed concern with the stigma the children living at the two government homes were forced to labor under and he forcefully suggested these children not be housed in institutions that linked them to a disease that was feared and misunderstood by the larger community. <sup>63</sup> The recollections of a Franciscan, Sister M. Celine Wagner, who served at Kalaupapa from 1939 to 1964, corroborate this point. In later years, Sister Celine recalled how children with Kalaupapa birth certificates were "shunned in schools, business places and anywhere a birth certificate was required" and reported that employers treated such offspring with prejudice, sometimes terminating employment if their birth link to the settlement became known. <sup>64</sup> Murphy urged the territorial government to find a better way to fulfill its "solemn obligation" to protect these children and to stop endangering them by publicizing their familial ties to leprosy. <sup>65</sup>

A third report, in 1935, by Child Welfare League president and executive director, Carl (C.C.) Carstens, repeated the anti-institution views of Hiscock and Murphy. Invited by the Honolulu Council of Social Agencies and the United Welfare Fund to conduct a survey of Honolulu's children's homes, Carstens became the third outside expert to recommend family or foster—not institutional—care for the settlement's offspring.<sup>66</sup>

But while professional opinion and official policies moved toward institutional closure, it was not a view that would be implemented without resistance from the population being served. Just as institutionalizing the settlement patients' children met with resistance throughout Kapi'olani Home's early history, so did official plans, a generation later, for de-institutionalization.

In the summer of 1930, controversy erupted over the discharge from Kapi'olani Home of some of the older girls and their placement in homes as live-in domestic help. Patients at Kalaupapa sent a petition of protest to Governor Judd requesting he investigate reports that the young women were being discharged into the homes of people of "unknown moral character and conduct, for their own support and living." The petitioners appealed on personal terms to Judd, referring to him as "the scion of one of the Hawaiian Race and friend." <sup>67</sup>

The petitioners were reacting to complaints from a discharged inmate, 26-year-old Angela Aalona, (called Mary Aalona in the petition) who had lived at Kapi'olani Home since infancy, and rumors about the treatment of another young woman, Mary Lapilio. In the summer of 1930, Angela wrote to a friend's foster mother, a "Mrs.

Luhia" at the settlement, and asserted that Sister Benedicta had assigned work once done by the girls of the Home to the Franciscan sisters, instead. A distraught Angela wrote, "We are all without work" and pleaded with Mrs. Luhia at Kalaupapa to "Get the people up there to send a petition in to Governor as to not let the girls be sent out and for sisters to take our jobs. This is our home and no other," she declared in closing, "Please help us-please." As for the case of Mary Lapilio, rumors had reached the settlement during the summer of 1930 that Mary had been carelessly placed into domestic service, had been discharged without pay, and, ultimately, been left to shift for herself in the "cold merciless world" where she became the "prey" of Honolulu's "underworld."

Petitions from settlement patients were not unusual; they were the historic mode of communication between those at the settlement and the government that controlled all aspects of their lives. Judd investigated the petition's charges and those of Angela's letter, too, in correspondence with Board of Health President, Dr. F.E. Trotter. In reply, Trotter informed Judd of Angela Aalona's age and of the Home's decision to terminate Angela's services as a night nurse to the Home's infants at the close of her present leave of absence.<sup>70</sup>

Trotter also forwarded documents to Judd regarding 18-year-old Mary Lapilio, who had been discharged from Kapi'olani Home, and had, indeed, encountered problems in adapting to the requirements of live-in domestic work. After her third unhappy placement, Mary had run away and moved in with a male acquaintance. From there came a stint at the Salvation Army Home and discharge into her father's custody, from which she, again, ran away. Trotter wrote Judd that he felt "all that possibly could be done was accomplished and that Mary was given every opportunity to adjust herself in the homes in which she was placed." He forwarded documents that revealed the situation from Sister Benedicta's point of view: the previous year, a then 75 year old Sister Benedicta was struggling to supervise an institution sheltering infants, children, and adult women. Seeking professional counsel, Benedicta had taken Mary, along with two of the other older girls, to the University of Hawai'i's Psychological Clinic. The clinic's postexamination report stated that Sister Benedicta did not want these particular young women to remain at the Home because they had all been "behavior problems" and she found it "impossible" to have them remain at the Home because of their possible "bad influence on the other children." <sup>71</sup>

In these problems at Kapi'olani Home, there are echoes of the "Molokai wildcat" tales told by Sister Leopoldina about the first years of the home, circa 1885–1886. However, Honolulu had undergone vast change in the past few decades, and while young girls fresh from unstructured Moloka'i tested the Franciscan sisters' patience with their troublesome running away in 1886, the antics of sexually mature girls in the automobile age of the 1930s were far more serious; they also posed a potential embarrassment to the government. What was apparent in this current crop of problems at Kapi'olani Home was that the little orphan girls were aging; they were women who were reaching adulthood with few employable skills and with ingrained habits of institutional dependency. What opponents of orphanages had charged for the past 20 years—that children raised in institutions lacked training for independent lives—seemed to be true.

But we need to understand the reasoning of the girls, themselves, on this subject. Twenty-eight years earlier, in testimony before a United States Congressional sub-committee, settlement superintendent, Jack McVeigh, had answered questions regarding the circumstances in which girls were discharged from Kapi'olani Home. McVeigh explained to the visiting congressmen in 1902 that while some girls did leave the Home and enter the general community, such a choice was not always an option and, if it were not, the girls grew into adulthood and remained at the Home, providing services as caregivers to the infants and children. This history of girls remaining at the home in perpetuity, if need be, was known to the girls living at Kapi'olani Home a generation later; it is not surprising they would view it as an option they could exercise as well.

But the world had changed, and despite complaints from those at the settlement and from some of the girls, the tide of opinion and public policy had decidedly turned against institutional care for the patients' children; not only was it uneconomical, its outcomes were increasingly problematic. When the territorial legislature met in February 1931, the mechanisms to phase out institutional care for Hawai'i's wards began to be put into place. A new board was created, the Board of Leper Hospitals and Settlement, and in 1933, the act was amended and administration of Kapi'olani Girls' Home and Kalihi Boys' Home placed under the authority of this new board as of July 1. Along with the new governing board, came a new plan for the care of the 98 children in the two homes at the beginning of 1934, wards of the territory until the age of 20: Reduce, consolidate, and close. First, all children who could be placed out were placed out. The girls' and boys' homes were then consolidated by closing Kalihi Boys' Home June 30, 1937, its remaining small boys placed at Kapi'olani Home.<sup>73</sup> While Kapi'olani Home was not originally slated for closure and improvements of a "permanent" nature were made at the Home as late as 1936, momentum seems to have taken over.<sup>74</sup> In 1938, the Board's General Superintendent, Harry Kluegel, reported that Kapi'olani Home was expected to close "not later" than October 1st, 1938.<sup>75</sup>

Very close to schedule, the last child left Kapi'olani Home on October 5, and the Franciscan sisters departed on October 10. Harry Kluegel, who had spearheaded the closure in the name of both humanitarian and economic concerns, stopped by Kapi'olani Home on the morning it closed. Ethel Paris, the Board of Hospitals and Settlement social worker responsible for placing the children into foster homes was also there, and both of these official representatives thanked the sisters for their "cooperation and goodwill." <sup>76</sup>

For nearly 53 years, the Kapi'olani Home for Girls embodied in institutional form Hawai'i's obligation to the healthy offspring of those with leprosy and its debt to those at Kalaupapa who had submitted to Hawai'i's Segregation Act. Its name invoked the girls' benefactress—Hawaiian, as the majority of the girls were—each time the home's name was spoken, and the daily service of the Catholic sisters was mute testimony to the girls' claim on humanity as orphans. When Kapi'olani Home closed, the material manifestation and reminder of societal obligation and ali'i concern was erased; dispersed into foster care, the girls' identity as a group, society's obligations to them, and their historic relationship to Hawai'i's government were rendered invisible.<sup>77</sup> But what also became invisible was the girls' clear connection to a disease the public still feared. While some may have felt the closure as one more loss in a long chain of losses, for others—those who could successfully navigate the larger world—the closure may have felt like welcome liberation.<sup>78</sup>

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> "Hansen's Disease" is now the preferred term for this disease because of the strong stigma associated with this term "leprosy." Despite this consideration, the term "leprosy" is retained in this article because it more accurately reflects the historical context of the issues and time period (1885 to 1938) being examined and thus helps illustrates the origins of this stigma.
- Mother Marianne was beatified, declared Blessed Marianne Cope, by the Roman Catholic Church in 2005.
- <sup>3</sup> Angela Aalona, letter to Mrs. Luhia, n.d., Gov. 7-7, AH. Rose Alana Perry Huleia quoted in Mary Adamski, "Ka Ohana O Kalaupapa, Forgotten Exiles, Restored Memories," *HSB*, 4 September 2007, A<sub>5</sub>. For girls' birth and admission dates see BH (Hawai'i Board of Health), Box 260, HD-Ca, AH.
- <sup>4</sup> John Tayman, *The Colony* (New York: Scribner, 2006) 119.
- A. A. St. M. Mouritz, The Path of the Destroyer: A History of Leprosy in the Hawaiian Islands and Thirty Years Research into the Means by Which it Has Been Spread (Honolulu: Honolulu Star-Bulletin, 1916) 300–301.
- <sup>6</sup> Colette Higgins emphasized the extent of Queen Kapi'olani's organized charitable work in her April 26, 2008 conference presentation, "Queen Kapi'olani," 2nd Annual Distinctive Women in Hawaiian History, Mission Memorial Auditorium, Honolulu.
- Dedication of the Kapiolani Home (Honolulu: Advertiser Steam Print, 1885); BH Report for 1890, 15.
- <sup>8</sup> Dedication of the Kapiolani Home.
- <sup>9</sup> Mouritz, Path of the Destroyer, 78.
- Ambrose Hutchison, "In Memory of Reverend Father Damien J. De Veuster and Other Priests Who Have Labored in the Leper Settlement of Kalawao, Moloka'i" (1931), transcription by Father Paul Macken, 48–52, 63–64. For variant version of events, see Mouritz, Path of the Destroyer 80.
- $^{11}$  Mouritz, Path of the Destroyer 76–82; PCA, 4 November 1885, 1.
- 12 BH, Report for 1902, 285.
- <sup>13</sup> BHM (Board of Health Minutes), 18 August 1908, BHM
- <sup>14</sup> BH, Report for 1909, 196-197.
- Sister Mary Laurence Hanley and O.A. Bushnell, A Song of Pilgrimage and Exile: The Life and Spirit of Mother Marianne of Molokai (Chicago: Franciscan Herald P., 1980) 223.
- Walter Murray Gibson, The Diaries of Walter Murray Gibson: 1886, 1887 eds. Jacob Adler and Gwynn Barrett (Honolulu: U of Hawaii P, 1973) 64–65.
- 17 Gibson, *Diaries*, 20, 90.
- <sup>18</sup> BH, Report for 1886, 13.
- <sup>19</sup> BH, Report for 1886, 13; BHM, 9 July 1908, 20 Dec. 1908.
- <sup>20</sup> Hanley and Bushnell, *Pilgrimage*, 275.
- <sup>21</sup> Hanley and Bushnell, Pilgrimage, 334.
- <sup>22</sup> BHM, 29 Jan. 1890.

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<sup>23</sup> BH, Report for 1890, 16; BHM, 3 Sept. 1890.
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- <sup>24</sup> BHM, 10 Sept. 1890, 17 Sept. 1890, 17 Dec. 1890, 26 Dec. 1890, 28 Jan. 1891.
- <sup>25</sup> Hanley and Bushnell, *Pilgrimage*, 335.
- <sup>26</sup> BHM, 22 Apr. 1891.
- <sup>27</sup> Hanley and Bushnell, *Pilgrimage*, 336.
- $^{28}\,$  BH, Report for 1892, 72–74
- <sup>29</sup> BH, Report for 1894, 34.
- 30 BH, Report for 1895, 17.
- 31 BH, Report for 1894, 34.
- <sup>32</sup> For Meyer, see Tayman, *Colony*, 35–36. "Dangerous element" is from BH, *Report* of 1894, 34.
- <sup>33</sup> BH, Report for 1894, 34.
- $^{34}$  BH, Report for 1894, 34–35
- 35 BH, Report for 1897 10.
- <sup>36</sup> BH, Report for 1901 15.
- <sup>37</sup> Lana Iwamoto, "The Plague and Fire of 1899–1900 in Honolulu," Hawaii Historical Review, vol. 2, no. 8 (July 1967) 391. For Bishop Estate, see James C. Mohr, Plague and Fire: Battling Black Death and the 1900 Burning of Chinatown (New York: Oxford UP, 2005) 147.
- 38 Mohr, *Plague*, 168
- <sup>39</sup> Sister M. Leopoldina Burns, "Journal, Book Thirteen" 21. Mother Marianne Archives and Museum, Syracuse, New York. Hereafter MMAM.
- $^{\rm 40}\,$  Burns, "Journal, Book Twelve,"  $8.\,$
- 41 BH, Report for 1902, 4, 10.
- <sup>42</sup> United States. Congress. Senate. Committee on Pacific Islands and Porto Rico, Hawaiian Investigation: Report of Subcommittee on Pacific Islands and Porto Rico on General Conditions in Hawaii, 3 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1902–03), Part III, 170.
- <sup>43</sup> BHM 2 March 1911.
- 44 Burns, "Journal, Book Twelve," 11.
- 45 BH, Report for 1901, 15.
- <sup>46</sup> BH, Report for 1905, 7–8.
- <sup>47</sup> Hanley and Bushnell, *Pilgrimage*, 376
- <sup>48</sup> "Kapiolani Home Spiritual Record," 16 Oct. 1909, 27 Oct. 1909, 5 Feb. 1910, 15 June 1910, 30 Jan. 1911, MMAM.
- 49 "Spiritual Record," 30 Jan. 1911; 29 Sept. 1909; 30 Jan. 1911; Jan. 1913.
- <sup>50</sup> "Spiritual Record," 05 Feb. 1910; 27 Nov. 1909.
- <sup>51</sup> "Spiritual Record," 30 Jan. 1911.
- $^{52}\,$  "Spiritual Record, " Feb. through May 1911.
- <sup>53</sup> Burns, "Journal, Book 13," 22.
- <sup>54</sup> BH, Report for 1912, 167.
- 55 Anti-institutional bias among professional social workers was put on record at the White House Conference on the Care of Dependent Children in 1909.

- June Kenison, Walter Masuno, Rita Price, and Thomas Yoshimura, "The Development of Public Care for Children in Hawai'i 1778–1935," Masters thesis, U of Hawai'i, 1958, 49–50.
- $^{57}\,$  R.A. Cooke, Board of Child Welfare, Report for 1926, AH.
- <sup>58</sup> Ira V. Hiscock, A Survey of Health and Welfare Activities in Honolulu, Hawai'i Including Official and Voluntary Agencies (New Haven: American Public Health Association, 1929) 6, 75.
- <sup>59</sup> Lawrence M. Judd and Hugh W. Lytle, Lawrence M. Judd and Hawaii: An Autobiography (Rutland: Tuttle, 1971) 141.
- <sup>60</sup> Susan Fountain, *The Episcopate of the Right Reverend John Dominique La Mothe,* Fourth Bishop of Honolulu, 1921–1928 (Honolulu: New Freedom, 1937) 15–16.
- <sup>61</sup> J. Prentice Murphy, "A Paper on Social Welfare in its Relation to the Care of Leprous Patients and their Families in the Territory of Hawaii." Appendix. Governor's Advisory Committee on Leprosy in Hawaii, *Report* 1930. Hawaiian Collection, Hamilton Library, University of Hawai'i Mānoa.
- 62 Murphy, "Social Welfare," 69.
- 63 Murphy, "Social Welfare," 69.
- <sup>64</sup> Sister Marie Celine Wagner, "Writings in Old Age of Sr. Marie Celine Wagner, OSF," n.d. MMAM.
- 65 Murphy, "Social Welfare," 70.
- <sup>66</sup> Child Welfare League of America, "A Brief Study of the Children's Organizations of the City and County of Honolulu with Recommendations, January and February, 1935 by C. C. Carstens," Hawaiian Collection, Hamilton Library, University of Hawaii Mānoa.
- <sup>67</sup> Petition to Judd, 30 July 1930, Gov. 7-7, AH.
- <sup>68</sup> Angela Aalona, letter to Mrs. Luhia, n.d., Gov. 7-7, AH.
- <sup>69</sup> Settlement Committee to Judd, 12 Aug. 1930, Gov. 7-7, AH.
- $^{70}$  Judd to Kalaupapa petitioners, 5 Aug. 1930, Gov. 7-7, AH.
- <sup>71</sup> Trotter, letter to Judd, 17 Oct. 1930; Lapilio documents, Gov. 7-7, AH.
- <sup>72</sup> Hawaiian Investigation Part II 304.
- Page 1938 III.
  Page 1938 III.
  Page 2938 III.
  Page 2938 III.
- <sup>74</sup> Board of Hospitals, Report of 1936, 14.
- <sup>75</sup> Board of Hospitals, Report of 1938, II.
- Mother M. Sebastian, Report on Closure of Kapiolani Home to the Syracuse Order of St. Francis, December 1938, MMAM.
- <sup>77</sup> In this idea I follow architectural historian, Marta Gutman's, assertion. See Marta Gutman, "Adopted Homes for Yesterday's Children: Intention and Experience in an Oakland Orphanage," *Pacific Historical Review*, vol. 73, no. 4 (November 2004) 581–618, 610–615.
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