Queen Lili‘uokalani’s Beloved Kawaiaha‘o Seminary

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DEAR TO THE HEART of the royal family, particularly Queen Lili‘uokalani, was a nineteenth century girls’ boarding school, Kawaiaha‘o Seminary. It stood for a half century where the stately red-bricked Mission Memorial Buildings in downtown Honolulu are today. The Hawaiian Evangelical Association created today’s landmark in 1915 to commemorate the arrival of the American Protestant missionaries in 1820. However, there is no memorial plaque among the tranquil shaded green lawns that point to the historical significance of the school that existed there first. United by the shared conviction that the education of Hawaiian girls was vital, an extraordinary partnership developed between the Hawaiian monarchy and the missionary community relative to Kawaiaha‘o Seminary. The relationship was so significant that when the annual examinations of the school on June 2, 1888 took place, the Hawaiian Legislative Assembly adjourned

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FIGURE 1. By the end of 1888, the Clark house, and the bindery and printing office buildings, had been leveled to make way for the “modernized” Kawaiaha‘o Seminary, circa 1890. Courtesy Hawaiian Mission Children’s Society Library.

specifically so that nobles and representatives could attend the public exhibition of 93 pupils. Observing were The Royal Highnesses Princess Likelike, an alumna, her daughter Princess Ka‘iulani, and the Minister of the Crown.¹

The germ of Kawaiaha‘o Seminary dates back to a small family school in a house vacated by Reverend Ephraim Wesson Clark in 1863. Reverend Clark had pastored, baptized, and married many royal family members during his 15 years service to Kawaiaha‘o Church.² After experiencing much personal sadness in the house, which sat directly across the road from his church, he went back to America, leaving an empty house.

The vacancy was timely for missionary doctor Luther Gulick and his wife Louisa, who had arrived in Honolulu and needed a home. They had been forced to leave the Micronesia mission field due to Louisa’s frail health. The Gulicks must have been very grateful to enjoy the stability of their own home after 13 years of grueling missionary work moving around the many islands in the western Pacific Ocean.

Luther’s brother Orramel was married to Reverend Clark’s daughter Anne, so it was, in some way, keeping the house in the family.

Early in 1864, Louisa Gulick took advantage of her newfound stability to train and educate her children. She soon learned that a Hawaiian missionary couple being sent to the Marquesas Islands desired that their daughters remain in the safe confines of Honolulu.³ Louisa, knowing the harsh conditions firsthand, was more than happy to support her missionary sister by providing a loving and safe haven for her daughters. She viewed the opportunity to teach and house girls-in-need as “service to the people among whom they had come so far to live.”⁴ Thus, her two little boarders, along with her own five children, became a school *of sorts*.

Before long, other girls in unfortunate circumstances were accepted in the Gulick home. The community was impressed by the patience, love, and attention Louisa showered on the children: “month to month the numbers increased, new girls were received and aid in teaching was rendered by kind neighbors.”⁵ Louisa’s diary documents the increasing popularity of her home school, with fluctuating numbers always above capacity for one without any formal teacher training.

By 1867, Louisa’s health and energy began to wane once again, and she couldn’t keep up with the influx of girls and the requisite duties. The Gulick’s need to give up the house presented an opportunity for the Hawaiian Mission Children’s Society to continue with charitable causes. High on their list was attending to the many girls throughout the islands in desperate need of housing. Converting the Clark premises, which included the abandoned mission printing and bindery buildings, into a proper boarding school would solve a great problem.

It was soon apparent that an educated woman was needed to take the school to the next level. “After ten months spent in vain efforts to obtain a teacher among all the eligible young ladies on the Islands,” excitement abounded when the news that Reverend Hiram Bingham’s daughter Lydia had been persuaded to return to the land of her birth to assume control of the new school.⁶ Her parents were among the first group of missionaries sent to Hawai‘i by the American Board in 1820. Her father’s greatest legacy of 21 years of missionary service is seen today in the beautiful Kawaiaha‘o Church,

designed and once pastored by him. Hawaiian lore states that the chiefess Ha'o frequented a fresh water spring that gave the neighborhood and then the church its name, "Kawaiaha'o" or "the water (used) by Ha'o."⁷

Lydia was 33 years old, unmarried, had practical experience as both a teacher and as a principal of a female college, but most importantly, her understanding of mission life would be invaluable. She left from Boston in the beginning of 1867 on a ship under the command of her brother, Hiram Bingham, Jr.

ACORN TO OAK WITH THE BINGHAM SISTERS

Once she arrived, it didn't take Lydia long to discover that there was downright apathy from those that hired her. It seemed they expected her to design, create, and implement the school's infrastructure singlehandedly. On June 12, 1867, she assertively reminded her missionary employers of her sacrifice: "I decided to resign my lucrative and desirable position as Principal of the Ohio Fem. College." And while she would "deeply regret abandoning the enterprise," she might be forced to move elsewhere if she was not "fully supported."⁸ It's unknown what or who may have changed her mind, but Lydia went full steam ahead and the month of July found her entrenched in plans for the "Honolulu Female Academy." A few months later, the name was changed to "Kawaiaha'o Female Academy" also after the district in which it was situated.⁹ Soon, the name changed to "Kawaiaha'o Female Seminary" ultimately shortened to "Kawaiaha'o Seminary." Teaching, learning, and living began in earnest in the old Mission Printing building, where the first completed edition of the Bible in the Hawaiian language had been created.

With a veteran educator in control, the school's enrollment grew exponentially, requiring expansion. In 1868, a building campaign began among the local missionary families, leading to the purchase of the abandoned Clark house, situated on the same lot as the mission printing and bindery buildings.¹⁰ Supplemented by sizable donations from the Hawaiian Government, construction began. The addition of dormers in the attic brought in much needed light for storage, spacious verandas were added, and the basement dining room and kitchen were upgraded. Lydia recalled that the little "acorn planted

FIGURE 2. The coral Mission Printing Building was in use from 1867 to 1888. Photo: 1872. Courtesy UC San Diego Library.

in missionary soil, watered by some trials and tears, nourished by the prayers and gifts of many” soon grew into a “vigorous oak.”¹¹

Lydia Bingham’s main directive was to “fit the girls to be wives and mothers” and she taught advanced lessons on nutrition, hygiene, childcare, housekeeping, and needlework supplemented by a basic education.¹² The Catholic classical arts curriculum integrated with Latin was viewed by some as impractical and soon other girls were transferred to Kawaiaha‘o Seminary—among them, Princess Miriam Likelike, youngest sister of King Kalākaua and Lili‘uokalani.¹³

By early 1869, the school had swollen to 46 pupils, and Lydia, without assistance, “taught sixteen months on the stretch without vacation.”¹⁴ Lydia’s unwed older sister Elizabeth “Lizzie” Bingham, aged 39, was then recruited from Illinois to lend a hand. Lizzie, a Mount Holyoke graduate with teaching experience at Rockford Female Seminary, worked tirelessly side-by-side with her sister for four years. When Lydia left for Hilo in 1873, as the new wife of missionary widower Titus Coan, Lizzie continued as the new principal.

The school continued to gain stature under the second Bingham sister but financial constraints meant that it remained physically cramped. Studying in a “dreary” basement that was filled with the “tiniest fleas” tormented these pioneering pupils.¹⁵ Seventeen-year-old Margaret “Maggie” Powers, the future legendary educator “Mother Waldron,” described this decade:

When I first came to school at the age of five years, the principal houses were adobe and stone. They were several feet apart, and in rainy weather, it was very inconvenient to go from our dormitories to our schoolrooms. We had old desks and chairs. Our dining room, which was the basement, was used for the recitation-room of the second class. The other three classes recited their lessons on the verandas. We ate with spoons from tin-plates and the tables, which were scrubbed snowy white, had no tablecloths. In the morning, milk and bread served for breakfast. For dinner we had poi and meat or salmon. At 5 o’clock, a bell was rung, and all the girls would run, as fast as their legs could carry them to the kitchen steps and there, in a pan, was our supper consisting of a cracker and a half or bread with molasses. Our food, though plain, was the best to be had as our school was very poor; and sometimes when we were sick and needed better food, a teacher would go without and let us have her share. When the girls were sick, there was no special place to put them, and a teacher would give up her room to be used as a sick room.¹⁶

Clearly, the conditions at Kawaiaha‘o Seminary under the Bingham sisters were austere at best. And yet, virtually an orphan after her father was lost at sea and her mother and sister quarantined with leprosy on Moloka‘i, it’s hard to predict what would have happened to a girl like Maggie without the boarding school. Even though times were lean and food scarce, resourceful teachers found ways to keep growing girls nourished.

RELINQUISHING AUTONOMY TO TRUSTEES

In 1853, fifty-three years after sending 12 different companies of missionaries to Hawai‘i, the American Board communicated its desire to withdraw its missionary support after deciding that the Islands were successfully evangelized. Those who wanted to stay in Hawai‘i real-

ized that some central organization would be needed to carry on the benevolent work while providing financial support for themselves.¹⁷

The missionaries and their descendants who ultimately stayed had a tremendous impact on Hawai'i's economy, politics, and society. Gone were the mild days of farming and fishing that previously dominated Native life and economy. This group of men, native-born in Hawai'i, yet not of Native Hawaiian ancestry, contributed to the development of the plantation economy that radically altered the cultural framework of the Islands forever. Their economic power was later translated into massive political power that would ultimately overthrow the Hawaiian government. But years before that happened, a few of these men leapt into action and took firm control, not only of the finances of Kawaiaha'o Seminary, but of the total operation of the school, including the curriculum and instruction.

In 1876, due to the increasing enrollment, the Hawaiian Board of the Hawaiian Evangelical Association needed help in financing the school and approached King Kalākaua for help. Without hesitation, he stepped in to subsidize Kawaiaha'o Seminary.¹⁸ In 1878, an official yearly grant of \$500 from the Hawaiian government was then instituted.¹⁹ This support now required financial oversight by a board of trustees. Charles M. Hyde's well-timed arrival, to train young Hawaiian pastors, coincided with the Hawaiian Board's need to appoint a president of the new board for Kawaiaha'o Seminary in 1878.²⁰ The other four trustees were Albert F. Judd, William R. Castle, Sereno E. Bishop, and Reverend Moses Kuaea.

When the trustees, mainly second-generation missionary sons, assumed leadership of Kawaiaha'o, they wanted to ensure that graduates would not be a burden on the community. To engender self-sufficient adults, the girls would need to be taught the practical skills that would provide them jobs during and after their school years if they failed to secure husbands.²¹ This necessitated, in the trustees' opinion, the micromanagement of the principals and their teachers, and the sanctioning of stern discipline techniques to make pupils fall in line. Teacher Martha Chamberlain, a Mount Holyoke graduate, recalled that "very naughty girls," were "locked in the dark cellar, and fed on bread and water for a while."²² The free-spirited homeschool that Louisa Gulick began a decade earlier began to look very different governed under a board of trustees.

The first school board initially filled Lizzie Bingham with hopefulness. Overwhelmed by duties, she stated that she was “not so blind as not to see that it might be for the best interests of this institution to have a board of trustees who would assume the whole responsibility.”²³ However, as she privately wrote, her views soon changed, and she increasingly felt that board decisions were not “just;” that she was left “hurt,” made to “feel in opposition,” and “pushed.”²⁴ For Lizzie, who had nurtured the school to its present stature—first with her sister and then completely on her own—it was hard to lose the autonomy she had enjoyed in former days.

In 1880, despite her prayers otherwise, in poor health and feeling defeated, Lizzie Bingham resigned and was replaced by Helen Norton from Mount Holyoke Seminary in Massachusetts. Alumnae were inspired by their founder, Mary Lyon, to “live for others” and spread the gospel.²⁵ Thus motivated, droves of them were hired by the American Board and took off to the Hawaiian Islands as missionary teachers, some placed at Kawaiaha‘o Seminary.

With almost 100 girls crowded into dormitories, conditions became dire. Princess Lili‘uokalani saw the need and stepped in often to provide enjoyments, such as beach picnics on her private property in Waikiki for the pupils and their teachers.²⁶ Regardless, after three and a half years, Helen Norton, in bad health, resigned and was replaced by Mary Alexander. The next teaching staff, including Lilla Appleton, Margaret Brewer, Susan Hopper, and Nancy Malone were not inclined to be undermined by trustees who didn’t have their teaching experience. They constantly clashed over policies and necessary repairs to the buildings. The school was in crisis by the end of the 1880s, and Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop, great-granddaughter of Kamehameha I, contributed \$5,000 to add a new two-story wing, thanks to Helen Norton who had, prior to leaving, visited her to “present the needs of our girls.”²⁷

Despite this royal financial investment, tensions increased between the board and the royal family. The trustees were especially outspoken in their disapproval of King Kalākaua due to differing values toward religion and society. David Kalākaua, reared, educated, and “Christianized” by American Board missionary teachers Amos and Juliette Cooke in the Chiefs’ Children’s School, had begun to revert, in their minds, to spiritual darkness by resurrecting the hula dance, viewed

as both pagan and immodest by the missionary community. The Cookes educated sixteen royal children, five of whom became the last rulers of the Hawaiian Kingdom, namely: Alexander Liholiho, Lot Kamehameha, William Lunailo, David Kalākaua, and Lydia Lili'uokalani. The Chiefs' Children's School disbanded in 1850 and in light of history, it was an unparalleled partnership between the American missionaries and the Hawaiian monarchy.

Amos Cooke left behind twelve leather-bound volumes of intensely private diaries full of self-admonition, frustration, and confessions that spanned his decade raising the kingdom's royal children. The diaries chronicle numerous occurrences of lashings with a leather whip for minor offenses. As an example, one episode involved the opening of a window blind to peer out into the yard by young Moses, the lineal descendant of Kamehameha I, who had been sent to his room for confinement. He was given "15 stripes on the back with a whip" for that small peek outside the window.²⁸ Multiple diary entries indicate an out-of-control cycle between harsh discipline and his feeling poorly: "Yesterday, I was somewhat unwell & being very irritable I punished Lot, for disrespect, severely."²⁹ In another event, referring to Princess Elizabeth Keka'aniau La'anui Pratt, he recorded his remorse: "She spoke angrily & I punished her with a ruler, I was unwell & not on my guard."³⁰ He documented his internal struggle in such a way that it's not surprising to learn that he died in 1871 at an "insane asylum." He was diagnosed with "derangement of the mental faculties" a strong indication that his outbursts with the small royals were precursors to an undiagnosed mental disorder.³¹

TEACHER REBELLION

Tensions between the leadership of the school and the monarch came to a head in November of 1886 when the teachers accepted, on behalf of their excited pupils, a formal invitation to attend a glittering ball at the palace celebrating King Kalākaua's fiftieth birthday.³² The enthusiastic children were dressed up, with lei made expressly throughout the day for the king. But a half-hour before they were to walk up the road, Kawaiaha'o board president Hyde, sent notice to the teachers that the children could not attend their king's Silver Jubilee.³³ As a result, the disappointed children sat out the celebration in their dormitory.³⁴

Some of the girls who were kept from the king's celebration, were even attached to the royal household. Lili'uokalani's hānai daughter, Lydia Ka'onohiponiponiokalani Aholo was one of these.

The teachers knew how involved the royal family was with Kawai-aha'o, and they felt that Hyde had gone *too far*. They quickly spread word of the incident and incited indignation among the school's stakeholders. The teachers, empowered by community support, publicly insisted that either Reverend Hyde would have to quit or *they would*.

In his view, Hyde had acted as a protector of the pupils' souls, driven by a firm belief that King Kalākaua was "seeking the overthrow of Christian institutions and the utter demoralization of society."³⁵ Unsettled by the tide of public sentiment against him, Hyde defended himself brazenly and sarcastically at fellow missionaries who dared to align themselves with the king merely based on his royal status:

The lines must be drawn, and they all divide not on the color line, not on church lines, but on the lines of social purity and fundamental righteousness. White folk and good folks will be on the side in favor of heathenism and indecency, because forsooth! It is the King's side and we must honor the King. . . . I expect to be blamed and misrepresented for the stand I have taken but no duty ever seemed to me clearer or more unpleasant.³⁶

Ultimately, the king's birthday gala was Hyde's undoing, and he wrote an unapologetic, emotionally-charged five-page resignation letter on January 11, 1887, which signified victory for the "affronted" teachers: "I give up the Presidency of the Board of Trustees, or they (teachers) will resign."³⁷

The Hyde episode was an outrage not only to the teachers and their pupils, but one could imagine, also to the entire royal family—and not merely because of Reverend Hyde's attack on the king's morals. Many pupils in Kawaiaha'o Seminary were fully supported by the Lili'uokalani Education Society, organized in 1886 and named for its founder. Lili'uokalani had declared that she created the society to help "in the proper training of young girls of their own race whose parents would be unable to give them advantages by which they would be prepared for the duties of life."³⁸ She sought out affluent donors among the "female membership of Kawaiaha'o Church" and

FIGURE 3. "Feisty" Missionary Teachers—Top: Susan V. Hopper, Nancy J. Malone; Middle: Lilla E. Appleton, Mary E. Alexander, Fannie G. Morley; Bottom: Margaret Brewer, circa 1888. Fannie died on May 13, 1888 soon after this photo was taken. Courtesy of Mid-Pacific Institute.

was successful in creating scholarships for “those of our sex who were just beginning life.”³⁹ One can only imagine the royal family’s fury and sadness at being publicly rebuffed by Reverend Hyde when he detained pupils who were not only Hawaiian subjects, but were financially supported by the government, the Lili‘uokalani Education Society, and from both the king and queen’s personal accounts.

It’s unknown if the Hyde episode was the cause, but soon after, Nancy J. Malone tendered her resignation along with those of her teachers. Principal Malone described the reality of the position to Oberlin graduate Lilla Estelle Appleton, whom she hoped to recruit for the school’s 93 pupils, aged 4 to 20:

The work of this school is to . . . make true home-keepers of Hawaiian girls. These girls come to school with little idea of dress, no habits of industry. All the work of the school is done by the girls; cooking, washing, cleaning, etc. The oversight of this is what makes the teacher’s work in Kawaiahao hard . . . Should the teachers be efficient, disciplined workers, able to carry their departments and assume the responsibilities of extras, the hard part of this work would be greatly lessened.⁴⁰

To downplay the overwhelming responsibilities, she then appealed to her with the intrinsic benefits of the job in a postscript: “Do I write discouragingly? . . . You would love these girls, they are kind hearted, loveable. We are very happy in our work for them. . . . Now Miss Appleton could you be our matron?”⁴¹

Lilla Appleton ultimately accepted the job offer but found the conditions at Kawaiaha‘o more taxing than anticipated. When Lilla left the post, she wrote to the new trustees that only a superhuman could survive in a school where now 130 girls “work from sunrise to sunset” on a punishing schedule. In her “sketch of the work” on a typical day, it is easy to see the roots of exhaustion for both pupil and teacher:

The rising bell rings at six o’clock. At half past six the girls come from the dormitories and the day’s work begins, two or three girls excused to build fires, and make bread.

Breakfast over, the work has renewed. By nine o’clock everyone in school from the principal and her associates to our four-year old Bella has been at work. The back and front yards have been swept, bed trunks and closets put in order in three dormitories and every room in

the house swept and dusted. One circle of about twenty five girls have washed or ironed as the case may be, while 15 others have washed or ironed table-cloths, napkins and towels. The seven o’clock breakfast has been prepared and eaten, vegetables, meat and dessert for the most part made ready for dinner, baking done, and floor and verandahs swept and scrubbed. At noon the children again assembled for prayer and lunch, followed by another two hours of kitchen and dining work.

After lunch, more than a hundred pairs of hands are as busy as two teachers can keep them. Sewing class is followed by two half-hour singing classes. It is now half past four, time for the girls to prepare the five o’clock supper. The hour following is the freest time of the day and teachers and neighbors are usually entertained by some very uproarious singing and game-playing in the back yard. At half past six the little children retire and the older ones gather in the school-room for an hour and a half of silent study at the end of which time they go to their dormitories accompanied by three teachers. The retire bell rings at eight o’clock and, except for the dormitory teachers, the busy day’s work is done.⁴²

Prior to leaving, Lilla recruited her Oberlin classmate, an experienced educator, Ida May Pope, to replace her.

HARSH CULTURAL TRANSITION

Ida Pope found that the transition from traditional Hawaiian to Western school culture was a harsh and abrupt one. Rebellion, often resulting from the dramatic clash of cultures, began the moment girls crossed the school threshold. This culture clash is clearly seen in the papers of many American teachers. Some registered their disapproval at the way Hawaiian children were allowed to run and play with few noticeable limits. Ida Pope’s correspondence reveals that she was shocked and saddened by the narrow-mindedness of her fellow teachers. Her teaching colleagues wrote home sourly about the perceived downcast and sulky looks of pupils that required reprimands. But, as Hawaiian historian Mary Pukui noted, Hawaiian children were often misunderstood by the young American teachers who required them to look directly at their accusers, when they had been taught to avert their eyes out of respect.⁴³

Some teachers embraced the Victorian “seen but not heard” policy with regard to training children. But this was a belief foreign to

FIGURE 4. Carrie Winter, at the back of her classroom, included this photo in correspondence: "Do you see little Annie Wong (Chinese Dress), a little saint, deformed but bright and quick? Beside her is pretty Violet Lima (*holding book in front row*) and behind her Malia Kapali who can't keep still two minutes, has something to say on every subject and is amusing for all she is so trying," 1891. Courtesy UC San Diego Library.

Hawaiian indigenous cultures, who valued childlike behavior, and had no expectation that their children would act like little adults. Children were allowed to frolic and explore their ocean environment and in general, had a great deal of physical freedom.⁴⁴ Conforming to a newly restricted, regimented, physical environment was just the beginning of abrupt change.

One recorded incident by teacher Carrie Winter in 1891, highlights the role mission schools played in the desecration of the Hawaiian language: "I have a long list of girls to give extra work to. They have been talking native and that is against the rules."⁴⁵ Pupils were also forced to give up many other traditions that made up the core of their native culture, like dancing the hula. The early missionaries to Hawai'i viewed the movements of the body during hula as immoral and did their best to stop it where they could. And where they could was in a private mission school like Kawaiaha'o Seminary. One of Carrie's letters prudishly revealed to her fiancé that she was worried

about losing some of her “genteelness” by association after harshly disciplining girls including those she caught dancing the hula:

I don’t think you will ever know till you have worked among a people so few years removed from barbarism as these are. You will be anxious for the effect of this upon my own character and I sincerely hope that I have not lost genteelness.⁴⁶

It may be hard to know to what extent harsh punishments were known or sanctioned by the parents, but teachers were encouraged to whip pupils, whether they did so or not, and numerous diaries document those events. After Amos’ death, Juliette Cooke, who lived directly across the road from Kawaiaha‘o Seminary, became “advisor” and trainer of inculcating American teachers on the nuances of teaching native children.⁴⁷ It’s uncertain if Mrs. Cooke advocated the harsh punishments described by teachers, but many of the disciplinary methods employed for seemingly petty infractions are reminiscent of what was used at the Chiefs’ Children’s School. Pupils merely identified as being overly noisy could be kept: “all day long in a dark closet, with nothing to eat but bread and water.”⁴⁸ Sometimes punishment was administered to the point of submission as described by Carrie, who along with other teachers, regularly mentions “Mother Cooke.” Carrie wrote of herself:

At noon I went up and applied a pretty good bamboo rod to her feet. She struck out at me and I applied it to her big, fat body. She subsided but would not promise to keep her feet still so I switched them some more. Then she gave in and since then has been quiet and peaceable.⁴⁹

Carrie revealed that she didn’t show preferential treatment to girls attached to the queen’s household. The toll on her patience is revealed when she whipped Mary, the daughter of Milania Ahia, one of the queen’s closest friends, and royal retainer:

I told her to go to my room and I got the strap and went to her. She seemed to be all right, stood out in the room, held up her skirts and I laid on two good strokes. Then she seemed to go wild and just flew at me with both of her hands into my hair. . . . I used every bit of strength I had in that whipping. Mary was just crazy. When I stopped she just raged up and down the room screaming at the top of her voice and

tearing at her clothes. It was really awful. When she was some calmed down I took her to the closet and she was locked in all day.⁵⁰

It is not surprising that many of the girls rebelled against their American teachers. The weight of bridging this cultural distance lay on the girls themselves, and in many cases it was more than they were willing or able to do. Girls expressed their frustration in a variety of forms of rebellion. Some fought back by trying to set fire to the school. One incident, among many, was posted in *The Hawaiian Gazette* about pupil, Julia Jacobs, who was arrested for attempting to set the school on fire. Julia first said she was smoking but ultimately admitted arson to the police after it was noted she “took the precaution to pack her own trunk previous” to the fire.⁵¹

PROTECTING GIRLS FROM PREDATORS

Strange intruders, break-ins and attempted break-ins, frequently occurred on the school grounds, situated on the main thoroughfare in downtown Honolulu. The school was also near saloons, as well as the harbor, and easily accessible to strange men who would wander onto the property. Carrie described her shock at seeing the girls’ panic spread like wildfire when a stranger was sighted one evening. She noted her repugnance at their collective lack of nerve:

We noticed a man in the yard evidently listening to the closing exercises of the girls. As we stood looking at him, he stepped a little nearer into the light that came through the open doors. The girls saw him and instantly there was the most unearthly weird scream of absolute terror from the 100 girls and they began to rush from the chapel into other parts of the house. . . . We all rushed in at once and met the girls as they were tearing out of chapel. I put myself in the way of one of the biggest girls who was perfectly wild with terror and struck at me in her efforts to get away. I caught a glimpse of my pupil teacher rushing down the back piazza with her dress half torn off her.⁵²

Not only did the teachers have to protect their girls, and deal with mass panic on the one hand, they faced dangerous ignorance on the other. Despite the terror triggered by a single stranger on school grounds, many of the girls still didn’t understand the risks of bringing young men onto the school grounds, and they courted danger by secretly

entertaining them on campus. Worse yet, curious girls would sneak away from the school grounds to meet up with them. Even though teachers were vigilant, keeping them apart remained a challenging task, and incidents of boys and girls caught together were regularly documented as well as their resultant pregnancies.

In Lili'uokalani's memoirs, she recorded an event that revealed her personal fears for the future of wayward girls as she prepared to leave for the Queen of England's Golden Jubilee,

I could not think of leaving without saying farewell to . . . Kawaiahao seminary. So on the day of departure, around eleven o'clock I stopped at the schoolhouse. At my coming all the pupils were gathered together into the large room, where I made them an impromptu address . . . encouraging them to be faithful to their duty to their teachers, and warning them that it would distress me more than could be expressed should I ever hear that any of them had done other than right during my absence. After these few farewell words I left the institution. I must confess with some fears in my heart, some misgivings as to the future of some of the girls whom I had addressed. But these doubts were set at rest by their letters, and it made me very happy while I was abroad to hear accounts of their progress and continued good behavior.⁵³

Ida Pope used an effective means of addressing the severe behavior problems. Why resort to corporal punishment when she had Her Royal Highness to support the management of the school? As one of Carrie Winter's letters revealed, all of the girls respected their queen, whether or not they felt warmly toward the school's rules and restrictions:

The Queen told Miss Pope to tell all the girls that if a student or any other of her girls ran away from here she would have them arrested and put in the station house. I had Bible class last night and Miss Pope came in and gave the girls a talking to. And when she gave them the Queen's command you should have seen the change in those girls' faces. All through the school now you can feel the change and the readiness to obey . . . We are delighted to have the support of the Queen.⁵⁴

A *Chicago Tribune* reporter, while doing a comprehensive study in 1893 on "Women in Hawaii," examined the educational objectives of Kawaiaha'o Seminary. The findings were published across the front-

page of the *Tribune* and gave high praise to the teaching and learning observed and substantiated the queen's disciplinary support:

Occasionally there is a refractory case for the teachers to attend to, and then it is said that Liliuokalani's influence has a good effect. She lectures stubborn pupils in a motherly fashion and generally manages to change ill-temper and insubordination to repentance and submission.⁵⁵

THE TOLL ON TEACHERS

As stressful as the school environment could be for the students, it was at least equally so for the young American teachers who, like their pupils, had to adapt to an environment for which nothing in their experience had prepared them. Novice teachers quickly discovered that rebellious or unruly girls were not the only miseries they would have to endure.

Serious illness was a fact of life and caused great distress in the school. Equally distressing were hopeless situations when death was an absolute certainty. Tuberculosis and smallpox claimed many boarding school lives, due to their highly contagious natures. If teachers had been privy to the statistics reported by the Office of the Board of Health, they may have never accepted their positions out of fear for their well-being. In the Official Report on Schools in 1884, Kawaiaha'o Seminary was singled out as a major health threat from leprosy.⁵⁶ Comparing it to other schools, the Board of Health found Kawaiaha'o as "the most unhealthy" with a startling loss of 13% of its student population to leprosy.⁵⁷ The teachers experienced the horrifying disease from every side—from the point of view of its victims, their grieving families, and as school authorities who had to wrestle with handing the girls over to health officials.

The teachers rarely had a break as long as school was open, sharing the responsibility of providing for the girls' every need around the clock. Exhausted teachers were often called to dormitory duty at night, despite their long workdays. And when they came on duty, they needed to be ready for anything, as described by Lilla Appleton:

Every teacher is expected to know how to do everything, from giving the school an extemporaneous half-hour discourse upon the Sabbath school lesson to pulling teeth. We live, too, in a constant state of expect-

tation not knowing just what may happen next, but fires and panics, robberies and run-a-ways as well as various other ‘pilikias’ of past years, have taught us to be on the alert for any emergency at any time.⁵⁸

Rebellion, illness, tragedies, violence, and betrayal were all circumstances a young and inexperienced teacher had to learn to manage. The ongoing stress of corralling and shepherding lively girls led Carrie to question her worth:

... I have been “going on four months” and I seem to be almost a failure in the way of discipline. Perhaps that seems a little thing, but it means real suffering to me. I have about resolved that if things don’t straighten out before the year is over I shall give up and go home. Sometimes I think it grows out of an entirely weary system of governing these native girls—to have them in complete subjection and punish every slight deviation.⁵⁹

Among themselves, weary and homesick teachers even fought with each other. They arrived with differing values, opposing interests, and most with personal financial problems. Several teachers wrote despondently about girls who broke into their trunks, stole their personal belongings, and most importantly, their hard earned money. Helen Norton anguished in her diary, “the very ground seems sinking under my feet” after discovering “\$83 of my money is taken.”⁶⁰

THE NEW QUEEN FINDS SOLACE IN KAWAIAHA‘O SEMINARY

In the fall of 1890, the school received news that the king, in poor health, needed to leave for San Francisco to seek medical treatment. He left his sister, Lili‘uokalani, in charge of the government. In describing the princess’s appearance at a school event, Carrie wrote, “you may judge how puffed up we feel,” and made a special point of noting that the students all rose upon Lili‘uokalani’s entrance without being told and “remained standing till she was seated.”⁶¹ Staff and students realized that Kawaiaha‘o Seminary was in every way Lili‘uokalani’s school, and their pride in her sponsorship was evident.

But when her brother died on January 20, 1891 from Bright’s disease of the kidneys, it turned her temporary regency into a permanent seat on the throne. School preparations for a royal homecoming

quickly transformed into arrangements for the schoolgirls to pay their respects to the king lying in state at the 'Iolani Palace. In a letter of February 2, 1891, principal Ida Pope wrote,

At half past eleven our school paid their respects to their dead monarch. I wish you could have seen them. The girls were dressed in white with black ribbon belts and black ribbon in their hair. They marched two by two—one hundred and twenty of them—the little ones in front. They went with uncovered heads. The line was straight as an arrow— . . . the royal Band played a march—and the Chamberlain ushered us into the throne room . . . Queen Kapiolani stood at the head of the coffin sobbing.⁶²

With its long history in relationship to the monarchy, the school was fully represented at the funeral. Reverend Hyde—the man who kept a school full of girls away from the king's birthday party three years earlier—walked in the funeral procession at the head of the Protestant clergy.⁶³ The entire seminary of grief-stricken girls, who, no doubt, remembered their missed opportunity to honor the king for his birthday, walked behind Miss Pope on that somber day.

After they had returned to their school routine, Lili'uokalani, desolate, needing personal comfort, sent word that she wanted the girls to return to the palace and sing hymns directly to her, placing Kawaiaha'o Seminary pupils from the very beginning at the center of her reign, as Ida Pope recorded:

At three in the afternoon the Queen sent for our girls to come and sing for her—The girls sang "Nearer My God to Thee" in native—and sang in English "Abide with Me" "Lead Kindly Light"—"Rock of Ages" and "Safe in the Arms of Jesus"—They sang like seraphs. It was indeed an impressive sight. The natives stopped their wailing and listened with the most rapt attention. I think it must have been quite a relief to the Queen—the wailing is kept up almost incessantly.⁶⁴

Between 1891 and 1893, the newly crowned queen was interested in many schools across the Islands, but as Charles Reed Bishop indicated to Princess Ka'iulani, none more than Kawaiaha'o.⁶⁵ As the new ruling monarch, despite numerous criticisms and concerns over risking her personal health, she asserted that she was going to Moloka'i to personally investigate the welfare of her afflicted subjects.⁶⁶ Furthermore, she took along principal Ida Pope, whom she had come to

respect as an educational leader, to visit two former seminary pupils, Ella Bridges and Emma Powers, who had been diagnosed with leprosy and were quarantined on the island. During the visit, Ida Pope curiously wondered why “all” the children “showed marked evidence of the disease” except Ella. Ida would have her answer in 1901 when Ella’s misdiagnosis was made public and she was discharged, after a decade of isolation.⁶⁷

Once Lili‘uokalani returned to reign and rule the kingdom, her collaboration and participation at school fund-raising exhibitions during this time was frequent. Many of those community events sold student handiwork, such as clothing and baked goods, which brought in necessary revenue. And the queen herself set an example by ordering bread from the Kawaiaha‘o kitchen for the palace.⁶⁸ Many in the close-knit community were influenced by the queen’s practical support of the seminary and followed suit. Her planned visits were often reported by the *Hawaiian Gazette*, such as: “The Queen visited Kawaiaha-o Seminary Tuesday morning being present at the opening exercises. She made an address to the young ladies which was duly appreciated.”⁶⁹ But there were unplanned visits as well. All of a sudden, one never knew when, she would drop in, as Carrie noted: “The Queen visited us one morning this week. It was an entirely unexpected visit but we understand she was pleased with all she saw. She was present at devotions in the chapel and spoke to the girls and afterward spent some time in the school-rooms.”⁷⁰

The school, which boarded not only girls attached to her court, but many who were orphaned or destitute by circumstances, became her passion. The queen may well have found the innocence of girls to be a respite from her increasing sadness. Seven months after losing her brother, her husband, John Owen Dominis, died, leaving her alone to face mounting political challenges. In 1887, her brother had been coerced to sign a new constitution that lessened the power of Hawaiians. As queen, one of her first actions was to devise a way to reverse this constitution.

ELEVATING THE CURRICULUM

While the queen was looking for ways to restore power to the monarchy, the new staff of teachers, now predominantly from Oberlin

College, frenetically began devising ways to improve the curriculum, or the lack of it. Kawaiaha'o Seminary at that moment stood poised between educational imperatives. Its focus had already shifted, in the late 1880s, away from the initial purpose of preparing pupils to become suitable wives toward a manual training program. That change was justified not only on the grounds that it would help the girls find employment out on their own, but also that the school might be able to fund itself through the proceeds from selling the goods that were made as part of the manual training. For the pupils, this meant learning all aspects of cooking and sewing, much needed by affluent women in the growing community. But in the last decade of the nineteenth century, the new cohort of teachers wanted more for their pupils.

When Oberlin graduates from a coeducational institution replaced teachers from Mount Holyoke, an all-female college, they brought a new independence. The Oberlin ladies were products of cultural and social changes that had overtaken America by the end of the nineteenth century. With a broader intellectual perspective, they were driven to elevate the girls' education as their own had been. They believed that manual training should be secondary to a solid general education and supplemented by subjects from the humanities. Therefore, overhaul of the curriculum after 1890 switched the order of importance and devoted mornings to academic instruction in all core areas, integrating some of the classical arts, and designating the sluggish afternoons to manual training.

In 1891, Ida Pope convinced the trustees that adding teacher training for the older girls would actually bring money back to the perpetually cash-strapped school.⁷¹ Girls trained as teacher assistants could actually learn a noble vocation, be hired out to other schools in the afternoons, thereby earning a bit of money to defray expenses for their tuition. Since many of the girls were on scholarships, this money directly benefited the seminary's account books. But the teacher assistants themselves needed someone to train them—ideally an educator with firsthand knowledge of life in Kawaiaha'o. For this Ida turned to a familiar figure—Lilla Appleton.

When Lilla returned to Honolulu, she was joyous over the "pleasant" and "great many changes".⁷² An immediately visible change was that all the girls now wore crisp navy blue uniforms, which they had

FIGURE 5. Girls in their handmade blue and white “sailor-style” uniforms, 1891. Courtesy UC San Diego Library.

made themselves on their new sewing machines. Principal Pope’s organization was everywhere, from “little racks on the back verandah for the girls’ hats,” to “expanded classrooms,” to “new shelves,” fresh paint in the “kitchen and poi room,” and “remodeled bathrooms and more bath tubs.”⁷³ Other changes included new protocols, including the morning ritual of the pupils marching in with music and taking their seats.

The changes Lilla observed may seem minor, but they served a crucial function in the school in terms of giving the girls a standard set of expectations, a fair and neutral environment, and a new sense of pride in their education. This was a marker of the larger changes that had occurred since her first experience as a teacher at Kawaiaha‘o Seminary.

Lilla, who had since advanced her own normal training, trained the older pupils in teaching methodologies in the morning, and

then immediately had them put theory to practice with younger girls under the supervision of their teachers. She wrote her mother Fanny, in Vermont,

Every morning I have given the (older) girls instructions in matter and method of teaching and at half past eleven all the girls came into my room and (are) divided up into little classes. Then for half an hour they put into practice the instructions they had received in the morning. The plan has seemed to work admirably.⁷⁴

Her pride is evident as she closed the letter: “I do not think I ever have done a year’s work that I have felt so satisfied with as the past year’s.”⁷⁵

THE QUEEN’S ALLEGIANCE

The new trustees were well aware of the school’s increasing reputation with the queen and the community, but, to Miss Pope’s frustration, they still managed the money too tightly, limiting her options. She complained to her staff that she wasn’t happy that the trustees weren’t allowing her “insight into the money matters of the school.”⁷⁶ So she took matters into her own hands and went around them.

The problem of books was ever-present at Kawaiaha’o—how to get enough of them and how to make them accessible to the girls. After obtaining textbooks from various places, Ida was then intent on broadening the girls’ minds by including a wide selection of books, poems, and literature for general reading. Having unsuccessfully beseeched the trustees for a school library, and determined to expose the girls to great literature, Ida decided to host a concert fundraiser in April of 1891. She banked the success of this end-run around the trustees upon support from a different, equally powerful quarter—the queen.

Ida and the queen planned the fundraising concert at Kawaiaha’o Church. Significantly, it was to be the queen’s first public appearance since the death of her brother. The queen, who was an accomplished horticulturist, oversaw the selection of a big “load of flowers” from her private garden for decoration. She also sent her royal chamberlain to prepare for her grand entrance in the evening by taking up some pews and replacing them with her rug and royal chairs.⁷⁷

The girls, in their freshly laundered white dresses, included songs

FIGURE 6. Benefit concert program planned by Ida Pope and supported by Queen Lili'uokalani. Note the inclusion of the royal family's musical compositions, "Maikai Waipio" (Beautiful Waipio), "Liko Pua Lehua" (Tender leaves of the Lehua flower) and "Hawaii Pono" (Hawaiian Kingdom's national anthem), 1891. Courtesy UC San Diego Library.

at the concert composed by the queen and sung in Hawaiian. The concert was a huge success, as were all of the evening galas that mixed the royals and high society with the school. Still, the trustees must have been surprised when the fundraising event yielded between \$400 and \$500, which was more than they expected and more than enough for a library.⁷⁸

Not long after the concert, Ida confidentially stated to Carrie that Kawaiaha'o was not "in a very good condition financially" and hoped that Charles Reed Bishop would come to the rescue.⁷⁹ The teachers learned early that no other non-Hawaiian name outside royalty evoked more respect in the community than that of Mr. Bishop. His name was associated with the Bishop Bank, Bishop Estate, Bishop Hall, Bishop Museum, Bishop Street, and Bishop Trust, but romantically, he was the tragic widower of Princess Bernice Pauahi Pāki Bishop. Mr. Bishop had established the Kamehameha School for Boys in 1887 and by this time, there were many reports going around that he was finally fulfilling his late wife's wish by creating the Kamehameha School for Girls.

The trustees petitioned Mr. Bishop to transition Kawaiaha'o Seminary into the new Kamehameha School for Girls.⁸⁰ This would be an easy way out of financial trouble for the seminary. William Castle, board president, reasoned that an already existing structure, with an established history in the community, would make perfect sense. This would also relieve the families and churches that were benevolently contributing to the school.

However, Charles Bishop had a vision for the new school, and was not interested in adopting or adapting the Congregational-run Kawaiaha'o Seminary to his wife's master plan. He never identified himself with the missionary party, having always made it known that he was a "liberal Protestant, and [that] the differences which divide Christians into denominations and sects seem to me to be nonessential, petty and weakening."⁸¹

It's doubtful, however, that Kawaiaha'o's near-insolvency was public information at this point. To the outside world, the school enjoyed both the queen's support and the appearance of a successful, prosperous institute, as described in a newspaper article of June 8, 1892:

The annual public examination of Kawaiahao Seminary took place . . . this morning at 9 o'clock. Her Majesty the Queen attended . . . and

a large number of visitors and parents of the scholars. The exercises opened with a chorus sung by the whole school. Bible recitations were then had, after which Mr. W. R. Castle conducted the school through scriptural quotations. Miss Pope, principal, occupied a position on the platform near the Queen and superintended the different examinations. . . . Miss Pope then escorted Her Majesty the Queen and ladies to the dining room where were laid out and for sale on tables cookery of every description and fancy articles, pictures, ribbons, etc. . . . The fancy lace work and underwear were very pretty and reflected credit on the efficient staff of Kawaiahao Seminary.⁸²

The published event demonstrates all the forces at play in the school—the religious element, the education and manual instruction, but the most important force, in the teachers’ minds, was the allegiance with the queen.

THE BEGINNING OF THE END

In the beginning of 1893, Queen Lili‘uokalani was ready to present a new constitution to proclaim and reclaim her sovereignty and the rights of her native subjects.⁸³ All the teachers of the school were in attendance for the historic proclamation on Saturday, January 14, 1893 and when this day was over, the Kawaiaha‘o Seminary girls’ lives would be irrevocably changed.

Lili‘uokalani’s intentions in making her proclamation—and the turmoil that followed it—have been well covered by historians. The detailed accounting as told by Lilla Appleton’s personal diary, “Revolutionary,” of the political turmoil from the perspective of the children and teachers has been recently published.⁸⁴

When a proclamation was made that the Hawaiian monarchical system was officially over, and that a Provisional Government would exist until terms with the United States could be agreed upon, the school’s future was uncertain. The queen, deserted by her cabinet ministers, was held in the police station during the proclamation.⁸⁵ That evening, with her head held high, Queen Lili‘uokalani, in order to prevent loss of life, officially surrendered her authority under protest.

The days following her dethronement must have given Lili‘uokalani time to pause and wonder how she could, practically and morally, support girls in a school led by board president William R. Castle, who

played a key role in her dethronement. At this time, four boarders were attached to the royal household, including her hānai daughter and namesake, Lydia. The queen also contemplated how others might retain their royal scholarships, since her funds were seized. Her first action was to send a message to Miss Pope that “her” four girls should pack their belongings and return to her side at Washington Place. They were Lydia Aholo and the three daughters of two of the queen’s retainers, namely, Myra Heleluhe and Nancy and Mary Ahia. On January 19, Lilla noted that Ida fearfully opened the letter:

“The Queen gave notice that she should take out her four girls on Monday and would consider in regard to the twenty-seven paid for by the Liliuokalani Educational Society—it will be a heady blow to the school.”⁸⁶

Something or someone changed Lili‘uokalani’s mind, because the four girls were told over the weekend they could remain at the school until the end of the school year. And then Mrs. Ahia was personally sent by the queen to report to the school that the 27 students would also continue with their education.⁸⁷

Even though the queen found a way to pay, despite her political predicament, William Castle publicly condemned her. Representing himself as the school’s authority, he told readers in the *Boston Transcript* that despite the queen’s good intentions for native girls, her “evil” nature cost her the throne:

Until her overthrow, the queen paid one thousand dollars a year of the expenses of twenty native girls in Kawaiahao Seminary. They were known as the queen’s girls: but she herself referred to them as supported by an educational society. My belief is, and has been, that she was herself the life of the society. She was desirous that the natives should get the best that education could give them. She has many good traits of character, curiously mingled with evil. Had she been content to reign as a constitutional monarch, she would have been queen today. But she determined to tread under her feet all constitutional principals and to regain the lost despotic powers of her heathen ancestors, and she dashed against the rock of nineteenth-century progress and fell.⁸⁸

A week after Lili‘uokalani was ordered to remove the Hawaiian flag that waved over her private residence, she prepared to leave Honolulu for a few days. In a gesture that demonstrated no resentment

toward the American teachers, she sent word to them to “call on her when she returns.”⁸⁹ But many of those teachers were packing their trunks to leave, as had many of their pupils. Many families loyal to the queen had pulled their daughters from the school in political protest, resulting in a steep decline in enrollment. In the month of the coup d’état, there were 142 girls, the largest attendance in the school’s history. By August that number was down to 83, and 20 of them were only there because they were orphans.⁹⁰

Soon, the *Hawaiian Gazette* noted Ida Pope’s movements around town as she sought donations from the missionary societies in order to maintain enrollment for girls in need.⁹¹ To make matters worse, the revolution had destabilized the economy, and former patrons weren’t inclined to continue their benevolence. Anyone loyal to the queen would not have been persuaded to donate a cent after reading the article in the *Hawaii Holomua*, a newspaper whose readers sympathized with the queen:

Just think of it, here on one side, are the authorities of the school trying to induce the Queen to send back to Kawaiahao those children who have hitherto been supported by her . . . while on the other hand, on the last page of *The Friend* for September, the bigoted editor of that paper states that Kawaiahao will now prosper because the vile Queen has ceased to have any influence or association with the seminary.⁹²

To make the situation even worse for the school, *The Friend*’s September edition ran an article stating; “Kawaiahao Seminary would now be much improved due to the removal of the corrupting influences of the Monarchy.”⁹³ Ida Pope was outraged enough to write to the editor and demand her statement be printed in the *Daily Bulletin* on September 6, 1893:

Her late Majesty has always taken a deep interest in Kawaiahao Seminary both by her good advice and material aid, and I deeply regret the publication of any article that will influence the natives against the school.⁹⁴

But it was not enough, as Ida wrote to Carrie Winter, who had since returned to Connecticut. After a visit to assure the queen her views were not aligned with *The Friend*, Ida reported a cool reception by the queen and stated, “Her late Majesty was incensed.”⁹⁵

FIGURE 7. Principal Ida May Pope (1862–1914) collaborated with the queen on many occasions in running the school. She took many Kawaiaha'o pupils with her when she opened the Kamehameha School for Girls in 1894, circa 1886. Author's Collection.

It's easy enough to believe Lili'uokalani's fury when Sereno Bishop, former school trustee and editor of *The Friend*, was the one who called her influences "corrupting." He had personally witnessed her dedication over the years. At fundraisers, he watched the queen arrive in grand style to spend liberally above and over her scholarship endowments. He was in attendance at school musicals, where she offered

her own compositions after personally coaching the school’s music teacher and pupils. And when Kawaiaha‘o Church was being readied for any school event, she sent beautiful flowers and vines from her private garden to enhance the decoration. He was well aware that her royal attendance at the yearly academic recitals made the events significant in the minds of the pupils, and was always published in the newspapers. It’s easy to imagine Lili‘uokalani’s conflicted feelings when she reluctantly withdrew her patronage.⁹⁶

It was then up to the teachers to carefully disseminate the information to the household of anxious girls that the queen’s practical and personal support was all but gone due to politics out of their control. To make matters worse, the calm and steadying influence of Ida Pope had also come to an end. She had been recruited by Charles Bishop, undoubtedly with the queen’s endorsement, to open the fully endowed Kamehameha School for Girls for those of Hawaiian descent and she was preparing to leave.

KAWAIAHA‘O SEMINARY’S DESTINY

Trudging on with a new principal in the fall of 1894, a newly formed Board of Managers for the seminary was put together after all the former trustees resigned during the summer. Financially, the school was barely getting by. Hiram Bingham Jr, as manager-in-chief, was called in to provide an “inspection of the general conduct of the school; its receipts and expenditures, the course of study being pursued in it, the developments of the Industrial Department by the teachers and the general moral and physical training of the pupils.”⁹⁷

Mr. Bingham couldn’t retain the academic direction in which the Oberlin graduates had taken the school, and moved quickly to undo the advances in curriculum and instruction. Revenue was critically needed to keep the school afloat. The Board informed the new principal, Florence Perrot, that the Bible would now be returning as the primary textbook. Disregarding the library established by Ida Pope and supported by the queen, Mr. Bingham stated; “we do not recommend the study of algebra, geometry, trigonometry, botany, geology, French and English literature as these would take too much time from Industrial work.”⁹⁸ The new Board’s bylaws, which they quickly put into the hands of Miss Perrot, clearly stated that books were pointless

because “the educational work of the Seminary must be clearly auxiliary to the preaching and teaching of the gospel.”⁹⁹

Staff and students were soon informed that they would be laboring hard with a “view to increase the revenue of the school by the sale of articles made.”¹⁰⁰ It appears that Mr. Bingham was making sure every pupil, regardless of age, would be earning her keep, as he proudly noted that two new arrivals at the school, children aged four and five, “were found knowing on which finger to put their thimble, how to thread a needle, [and how] to knot their thread.”¹⁰¹

Other rules informed Miss Perott that she would be micromanaged and inspections would occur on a regular basis. Not surprisingly, her first year would be her last. It was clear the light that many teachers had sparked over the years, and fanned into a flame by the queen, had dimmed and flickered out with her dethronement.

THE ENDING

When a provision in the new Constitution of 1894 eliminated all appropriations to religious or private schools like Kawaiaha‘o Seminary after the end of 1895, the school’s future was uncertain.¹⁰² Once the word of its likely closure spread among the Hawaiians, the pleas to retain the school was published in *Hawai‘i Holomua*:

The prospect of the Kawaiahao Seminary being obliged to close its doors for lack of funds is a little short of a national calamity. The school has for years been instrumental in preserving and building up the Hawaiian race. . . . Private schools like Kawaiahao Seminary are more than schools, they are homes. It is a great pity if the government cannot see its way to assist the Seminary. . . . If the school is forced to close, the seventy or more girls now there will be thrown on their own resources and brought under the often pernicious influence of their homes. . . . It may be an unpleasant fact, but it is true that when it was under the Monarchy and special under the patronage of Queen Liliuokalani the Seminary flourished; under the republican government this school for the daughters of the People is threatened with ruin.¹⁰³

But it was not to be and the once proud Kawaiaha‘o Seminary, a representation of the old alliance between the monarchy and missionaries to promote the education of Hawai‘i’s daughters, began its

slow decline in its present location. The school, exceptionally loved throughout the decades by Queen Lili'uokalani, could not survive without her.

Even though Charles Bishop and many others donated sums in an attempt to keep the school running, its endowment income never equaled its operating expenditures. At the end, Kawaiaha'o was obliged to raise even more funds through concerts, fairs, and the work of its industrial departments than it had in years past. Those fundraising events are scattered throughout many teachers' correspondence as exhausting affairs.

Principal Christina W. Paulding, who followed Florence Perrot, fought the trustees over the fundraising issue, claiming that the activities diverted both staff and students from the educational program. Principal Katheryn McLeod led the students and teachers through another hard period when repairs to the buildings were neglected. She wrote to the Board of Managers that the high attrition of her "faithful and hardworking faculty" supported the school's "established reputation as a woman-killer."¹⁰⁴

By 1901, Ida Pope, in charge of the Kamehameha School for Girls, burdened by her former school's deterioration and the uncertain future of many girls, again asked Charles Bishop if he would "consider taking over the Kawaiaha'o Seminary" as a preparatory for Kamehameha."¹⁰⁵ Mr. Bishop responded while he was "sorry to see it fail," it should move to a better place. Four years later, it did just that. The Hawaiian Board decided in 1905 to solve two overcrowding problems by merging Kawaiaha'o Seminary with the Mills Institute for Chinese Boys, with the intention to unite the schools into a single comprehensive educational organization.

In 1908, the first girls moved into their new home and classrooms. At the same time they were settling into their beautiful "new" Kawaiaha'o, the "old" Kawaiaha'o school buildings were torn down, the lumber sold for profit, and the land transferred to the Castle Estate.¹⁰⁶ While theoretically and logistically united under the name Mid-Pacific Institute, the reality was that Mills and Kawaiaha'o retained their respective names and operated quite independently for many years. In 1923, the names Kawaiaha'o and Mills were dropped when it became an integrated institution. The stately lava rock building is forever memorialized as Kawaiaha'o Hall and

remains today a prominent feature on the Mid-Pacific campus in the Mānoa Valley.

To those who know the early history and account of the years Kawaiaha'o Seminary was under the tutelage of Lili'uokalani, it is an important story about resilience. The young women and their queen went through the greatest political turmoil the Hawaiians had ever experienced, yet emerged stronger.

Even as the life of old Hawai'i slipped away, Lili'uokalani remained as loyal to her culture and as "royal" as she always had been. She became the most high profile personality in Honolulu, beloved by all. Both residents and strangers, not with sympathy, but with reverence, gave her more respect and ceremonial courtesy than she had received as sitting queen. And as the girls became women and moved into the twentieth century under a new flag, they met the effects of industrialization and the growing concentration of outside economic power head on to find their rightful place in society. History reveals that education was a strong theme in the lives of Kawaiaha'o alumnae and many went on to become teachers and principals throughout the Islands. They directly carried the queen's legacy and stated passion for the acquisition of knowledge into the lives of their communities. Lydia Aholo, who lived to be 101, was asked in 1969, "What did the queen leave you?" She quickly replied, "The best legacy—*Education*."¹⁰⁷

NOTES

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² "Rev. Luther Halsey Gulick, M.D.," *The Chinese Recorder*, 22, 1891, 327.

³ Coan, Lydia Bingham. "Early Days at Kawaiaha'o," *F*, July 1907, 9.

⁴ Midpac Publication (self-published booklet to introduce the history of its institution, undated, unnumbered).

⁵ *F*, Dec. 1914, 273.

⁶ Chamberlain, Martha A. "Memories of the Past, Linked to Scenes of the Present, in the History of Kawaiaha'o Seminary," Jan. 24, 1889, 13, typescript, HMCS

⁷ Pukui, Mary Kawena; Elbert, Samuel H.; Mookini, Esther T. *Place Names of Hawaii*. (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1974) 97.

⁸ Lydia Bingham, letter to Trustees of Oahu College, June 12, 1867, in folder: Schools—Kawaiaha'o Seminary, Hawaiian Evangelical Association Archives, HMCS.

⁹ *PCA*, April 13, 1867, 3.

- ¹⁰ Coan. “Early Days at Kawaiahao,” 9.
- ¹¹ Coan, “Early Days at Kawaiahao,” 9.
- ¹² “The Education of Hawaiian Girls.” *Saturday Press*, Sept. 07, 1884, 1.
- ¹³ “Kawaiahao Seminary Celebrates Fiftieth Anniversary,” *F*, Dec. 1914, 275.
- ¹⁴ “Kawaiahao Seminary Celebrates Fiftieth Anniversary,” *F*, Dec. 1914, 275.
- ¹⁵ Chamberlain, “Memories of the Past,” 15, HMCS.
- ¹⁶ “Changes at the Kawaiahao Seminary,” *HG* June 16, 1891, 2.
- ¹⁷ Erdman, John, “The Hawaiian Board of Missions,” *F*, April 1937, 63.
- ¹⁸ Report “To the Hawaiian Board, Honolulu, June 26, 1876,” by a committee of the Hawaiian Board, handwritten, in folder: Schools—Kawaiahao Seminary, Hawaiian Evangelical Association Archives, HMCS.
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