

Hawai'i at Home During the American Civil War

ANITA MANNING

JUSTIN W. VANCE

DURING THE AMERICAN Civil War, the Hawaiian Kingdom lay nearly 6,000 miles away from most of the battlefields, but the war had significant diplomatic, political, economic, and even military effects on Hawai'i. At least 116 people born in Hawai'i are documented as serving in the armies and navies of the Union and Confederacy.¹ At home in Hawai'i, America's Civil War affected the lives of residents and they responded. In some ways their experiences match those of U.S. residents and yet the Hawai'i "homefront" was unique. The war forced Americans in the Islands to make personal, political, and economic choices and to consider their children's futures. The war caused the entire community to celebrate and mourn together.

NEWS FROM THE FRONT

Hawai'i experienced the American Civil War in short bursts of drama created by the arrival of a vessel bearing the latest news. In Novem-

Anita Manning retired from Bishop Museum after 26 years service. She is a life member of the Hawaiian Historical Society. This is her fourth article for The Hawaiian Journal of History. Her research interests include the lives of everyday Hawai'i residents coping with change. Her series on the history of Honolulu's Elks Lodge is at <http://elkslodge616.com/extra/history/>.

Dr. Justin W. Vance is associate professor of history and interim dean for Hawai'i Pacific University's Military Campus Programs. He is the author of several publications on the effects of the American Civil War on Hawai'i, and the Second World War in the Pacific. Dr. Vance is currently serving as president of the Hawaii Civil War Round Table.

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ber 1861, completion of the transcontinental telegraph line placed San Francisco “in instant communication with the East.”² Now news reached Hawai‘i in about two weeks instead of the month it had taken to reach the Islands at war’s commencement. The information Hawai‘i residents received helped determine the opinions they formed. Newspapers were a major source of information, but letters from family and friends in America contained detail and emotion missing from news coverage. *The Friend*, *Maile Wreath*, and *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* irregularly reprinted letters from Hawai‘i correspondents serving in the war or observing nearby, giving the information greater exposure. Union officer Samuel Chapman Armstrong’s letters from the front describing meeting Hawaiians in the U.S. infantry³ and the unit’s November 1864 camp Thanksgiving,⁴ and letters from David Lyman detailing his U.S. Sanitary Commission work,⁵ clearly targeted a wide audience. The same event might be related differently for different audiences. Joseph P. Cooke volunteered with the Christian Commission at Hanover Junction to care for Gettysburg wounded from both sides and followed them to hospital. In a letter suitable for sharing in mixed company, Cooke writes of the volunteers’ compassionate care, charity, and hard work.⁶ In a second letter, he relates the brutal, dirty, horrid, stinking reality of war in a way clearly not meant for a diverse audience.⁷

Also widely read, especially by Hawai‘i Mission families, was abolitionist popular literature, thought to reflect reality, such as *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*⁸ and *Among the Pines*.⁹ F. L. Olmsted’s *Cotton Kingdom*, seen more as a documentary report, also reached Hawai‘i.¹⁰ As in the United States, these books were opinion makers.

Two technologically advanced displays, both fresh from U.S. tours, were another source of information.¹¹ In January 1864, Honolulu residents learned about the Civil War by viewing J. W. Wilder & Co.’s Polyorama depicting “The Terrible Rebellion.” Narration and music accompanied a series of interlocking painted images drawn across the stage of the Royal Hawaiian Theater. Advertisements promised a survey of the war east to west, land and sea, including the “Great Naval Combat between the Iron-Clad Monsters, The Monitor and The Merrimac!” Viewers would be informed on key political figures, “comic scenes in camp life,” and sad and mournful events, all for just \$.50 (about \$7.50 today).¹²

In February 1865, a new production came to Honolulu and eventually traveled to Hawai‘i and Maui islands.¹³ J. L. Wisely and M. Wormer’s Stereopticon projected an image from glass plates, often with color. This production showed the battles of Gettysburg and Chattanooga, and other Civil War scenes, but also provided images of great art and geography from around the world. As with the Polyorama, some scenes provided light relief and humor.¹⁴

These offerings were considered informative and educational. O‘ahu College (today Punahou School) students went as a group.¹⁵ Friends made up parties for viewing.¹⁶ Families were encouraged to attend with special prices for children and afternoon hours.¹⁷ The entertainment aspect was not lost on parents, however. When one

FROM NIBLO'S GARDEN
NEW YORK.
PLATT'S HALL, San Francisco.
J. W. WILDER & CO.'S
GIGANTIC POLYORAMA
Of the Present War,
ROYAL HAWAIIAN THEATER!
HONOLULU, O'H.
WILL BE EXHIBITED
This Ev'ing, Jan. 14th,
AND THEREAFTER,
FOR A FEW NIGHTS ONLY.

This Great Exhibition places before the beholder a vast and comprehensive view of

The Terrible Rebellion!
 From the dread signal at Sumter, down to

The Last Great Battle!
 From authentic sketches by a corps of eminent artists, and acknowledged perfectly correct by

Members of Congress and the War and Navy Departments.
 Profuse with marvellous scenic and dioramic effects!

OVER 1,000 VIEWS
 Of the Gigantic Rebellion—-together with a Grand Mirroring

Diorama of the Great Naval Combat
 Between the Iron-Clad Monsters,

The Monitor and the Merrimac!
 The Struggle in Virginia—The War in the West—The Contest in the East—The War upon the Ocean—-Comic Scenes in Camp Life, and Scenes of Sad and Heroic Interest.

PRICE OF ADMISSION:
 Dress Circle.....\$1 00 | Full50 cts
 Parquette.....75 cts | Childrenhalf price

Doors open at 7 | performances to commence at 7½ o'clock.

Showings of a touring dramatic program of images and narration were well attended by Honolulu residents eager for news of the American Civil War. *PCA* 1864 Jan. 14, 2.

of missionary Amos S. Cooke's children failed to carry out assigned chores, he was kept home and not allowed to attend the "Wisely show as promised, but Amos and Clarence did."¹⁸

For more serious news, there were no Hawai'i reporters on the front lines or in Washington or Richmond. Hawai'i news providers could only reprint war news they obtained from other sources. Each paper had arrangements with sea captains and travelers to obtain newspapers from a vessel's ports of call.¹⁹ In addition to the condensed news gleaned from papers brought in by ship, *Advertiser* editor Henry M. Whitney offered subscriptions to a long list of American publications.²⁰ Staying informed was expensive with a California paper selling in Honolulu for five times its pre-printed price.²¹ Because Hawai'i was a required stop for water and provisions for vessels crossing the Pacific, the major ports received news from around the world. Consequently, in breadth and depth, Honolulu newspaper readers were likely better informed on world affairs than many small American towns, North or South. For example, a former Hawai'i resident living in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, complained of a five-mile round-trip walk to obtain a paper.²²

Honolulu papers carried world news cribbed not just from American papers, but also from those of Britain, Japan, China, South America, Australia, and New Zealand. Hawai'i readers learned of revolts and conflicts in Poland, Italy, New Zealand, Peru, and Mexico. Non-Americans could easily see the Confederate states in the context of a global tide of independence movements. In a slanting of news, the pro-Union press reported the Russian tsar's relinquishing of his control over serfs as emancipation, drawing parallels to American slaves.²³

The Hawaiian-language press kept its readers informed on the war's progress, but reporting does not appear to take as partisan positions as the *Advertiser* and *The Friend*. Not surprisingly, the major English-language newspapers—*The Polynesian* and *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*—used the war as a surrogate for their ongoing rivalry. The fiercely pro-Union *Advertiser* sniped continually at perceived pro-Confederate writings in *The Polynesian*, the official publisher of government information. In attempting to guard the government's proclaimed neutrality, *The Polynesian* repeated U.S. news criticisms of the war's progress and General George B. McClellan's lack of success as commander of the Army of the Potomac.²⁴ The *Advertiser* pounced,

referring to *The Polynesian* as “our secession neighbor,” and the papers spent several issues in name-calling.²⁵ More serious was a March 1861 exchange between *Advertiser* editor Henry M. Whitney and holdover Buchanan appointee and southern-sympathizer U.S. Commissioner James Borden, the top U.S. diplomatic representative in the kingdom. Borden objected to *Advertiser* publication of statements by physician Dr. Charles F. Guillou, about an investigation of the hospital care of U.S. sailors. The aim was to justify closing hospitals in Hilo and Lahaina in response to war-generated budget cuts.²⁶ Whitney charged Borden with threatening him with a Bowie knife to inhibit publication of further articles.²⁷

LOCAL REACTIONS

Information may have taken four weeks to reach the Islands at war’s start, but it was news when it arrived.²⁸ When news came of Union losses, many in the Mission interpreted the events as a religious failing. For example, the defeat at Bull Run in 1861 was attributed to Union forces initiating battle on the Sabbath.²⁹ Mission families sought solace in the expectation that “the Lord reigns and can bring . . . light out of darkness”³⁰ and that more prayer would cause God to “smile on the right” aiding the North.³¹ Residents reacted with celebration to news of battle wins. When news of the surrender of Vicksburg reached Honolulu in July 1863, dedicated Union sympathizers hoisted American flags, sang patriotic songs, and downed cider and food while fireworks lit the city for hours.³² Attendees included Hawaiians who gave “triumphant hurrahs” at appropriate moments.³³ Similar displays greeted each major victory. Lee’s surrender to Grant brought mass celebrations in Honolulu and Wailuku with Hawaiians, French, and German residents joining. Toasts, an impromptu ball, a 100-cannon salute, street singing of “John Brown’s Body,” and fireworks were paired with church services pointing out that “an overruling Providence” made the Union victory possible.³⁴

When President Lincoln called for a day of fasting and humiliation September 26, 1861, Honolulu’s American Protestant community held services at both the Bethel and the Fort Street Church.³⁵ A similar response followed his declaration to observe August 6, 1863, in thanksgiving for victories in battle.³⁶ November 26, 1863³⁷ and

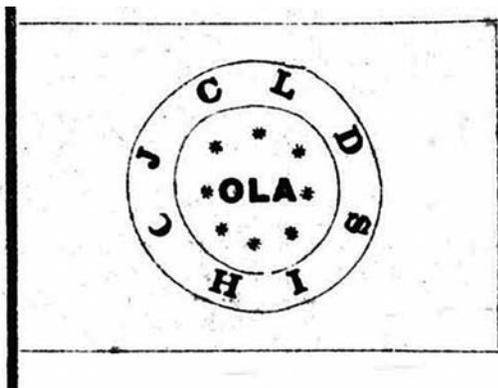
November 24, 1864³⁸ were celebrated in thanksgiving for America's blessings with sermons praising sacrifice and unity, while denouncing slavery.

A less somber response to the war was the hobby of a few Honolulu young ladies. They pestered their male relatives in school in the United States to send them the new, popular visiting-card sized photographs, or cartes de visite, people were exchanging. They wanted images of the important figures on both sides of the conflict—presidents, generals, and politicians. Each girl desired to amass more cards than her rival.³⁹ Also requested was popular American patriotic music such as “Ellsworth’s Avengers,” memorializing a Union military officer’s death early in the war.⁴⁰ Choirs performed at private and public celebrations and church services.

Displays of pro-Union sentiment were not confined to large population centers. The Rev. Lorenzo Lyons raised his U.S. flag in remote Waimea, Hawai‘i, on arrival of news of Lincoln’s re-election and on the days of Thanksgiving.⁴¹

DISAGREEMENTS AND DOMESTIC DISTURBANCES

Unionists became hyper-vigilant, seeing anyone who opposed them as a secessionist. Dueling letters warned Washington of suspects and defenses were mounted.⁴² Rumors said a newly-arrived Walter M. Gibson was outfitting a Southern privateer and displaying a southern flag. The charge was so untrue that the pro-Union *Advertiser* printed



Flag flown by a newly-arrived vessel of Mormon Walter M. Gibson. Feared by Hawai‘i Unionists as representing the seceded states, the *Advertiser* explained to readers the flag had no Confederate meaning. The outer circle bore letters for “Church of Jesus Christ—Latter Day Saints—Hawaiian Islands,” the center a star for each of the Hawaiian Islands, and inside the Hawaiian word for salvation. *PCA* Oct. 17, 1861, 2.

a drawing of the flag noting the eight stars might be twisted by “silly bodies” to represent the seceded states. Readers were assured the flag was a Mormon flag adapted to acknowledge the eight Hawaiian islands.⁴³

The only member of the American consular staff who refused the oath of allegiance when requested by the Union late in 1861 was Hilo consul Thomas Miller. Miller wrote Secretary of State W. H. Seward saying although “attached to the Union” and wishing to see it preserved, he could not sign a statement that required him to act against his native state of Virginia. He resigned and asked that a replacement be named.⁴⁴ The transit time for mails between Hilo and Washington meant Miller was still in his position in March 1862 when he attended the mid-year examinations for a Hilo school. Among the student recitations was a choir singing the “Star Spangled Banner.” Miller reportedly left the room, reinforcing for observers his status as a secessionist.⁴⁵

Confederate sympathizers were present in Hawai‘i, but maintained a low profile. There were no public displays of cheer or flying of flags on news of southern victories. The wife of Dr. C. Guillou reportedly displayed a Confederate flag, but only in her parlor.⁴⁶ In 1861, when Godfrey F. Wundenberg’s children created a “Secesh” flag, hoisted it over their small boat, and drifted down a Kaua‘i river, Hawaiian Minister of Foreign Affairs R. C. Wyllie, advocate of Hawaiian neutrality, requested no repeat displays.⁴⁷ When a visitor to Honolulu displayed a southern flag on a house verandah, a resident Union supporter managed to tear it down, eventually making U.S. national news.⁴⁸

The highest profile southern sympathy event also highlighted Hawai‘i unionist anger at perceived British aid and sympathy for the Confederacy. April 9, 1865, HMS *Clio* stopped in Honolulu during a world voyage.⁴⁹ The purpose was to embark Queen Emma as a passenger for a visit to England. A series of insults delivered by the crew of the *Clio* to the community, especially Americans, however, overshadowed this royal event. Bad feeling in the community grew as the crew committed infractions such as robbing a Chinese restaurant.⁵⁰ On the evening of April 21, three midshipmen removed a wooden American eagle sign from the U.S. minister’s gate and carried it aboard the *Clio*. A formal diplomatic demand brought about the eagle’s return and re-installation the next day by the thieves. A *Harper’s Weekly* cover

story with art depicting the restoration of the eagle spread news of the incident across the United States.⁵¹ Summaries were reprinted from Sacramento to New York to Paris.⁵² The night before departure, rather than staying quietly aboard ship, the crew spent May 6, outside the U.S. minister's home loudly singing ribald songs "known only to English sailors," including "Hang Old Abe from a Sour Apple Tree" in



When *Clio* midshipmen removed an American eagle from the U.S. minister's gate in Hawai'i it was reported widely in the American news. *Harper's Weekly* (July 22, 1865) Hofstad Collection, HHS.

parody of “Hang Jeff Davis . . .”⁵³ In another diplomatic breach, when word came to the *Clio* that Americans in town were considering measures to stop the singing by force, a British officer apparently landed a party of men armed with clubs, raising questions of violations of Hawaiian sovereignty.⁵⁴

In 1863, after abolition advocate and *The Friend* editor the Rev. Samuel C. Damon proclaimed slavery the cause of the war,⁵⁵ a Southern sympathizer replied in *The Polynesian*, signing only as “K” to mask his identity. K asserted slavery was natural, part of God’s plan to save souls, and declared slaves “the best cared for four millions of human beings on the face of the earth.”⁵⁶ The next week *The Polynesian* editorialized, attempting to find fault in both North and South.⁵⁷ Damon’s rejoinder in the monthly *Friend* used K’s own words to end the discussion. Given slavery is such a wonderful care system, Damon asked, “If Mr. ‘K’ has any children, we wonder he does not place them under that best system.”⁵⁸

RAISING FUNDS AND SENDING SUPPLIES

War news included coverage of the realities of wounded soldiers and prisoners-of-war in need of clothing, food, and medical care. The U.S. Sanitary Commission addressed these needs, as did the U.S. Christian Commission, which added Protestant Christian ministry to physical care of prisoners and wounded. Both *The Friend* and *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* gave wide publicity to the groups’ calls for help, often directly suggesting action.⁵⁹ Americans in Hawai‘i organized a support committee chaired by Alexander J. Cartwright, with members Charles R. Bishop, Benjamin F. Snow, Edwin O. Hall, and Sherman Peck. The community responded with in-kind gifts and fundraising. By September 1862, Honolulu’s ‘American Patriotic Fund’ had collected donated funds for the Sanitary Commission from several islands.⁶⁰ As the sums collected reached the Commission, Hawaii’s donations were held up as an example to those in the United States, making news from San Francisco to Washington, D.C.⁶¹ In November 1862, a request came from women in San Francisco to women in Hawai‘i for bandage-making supplies: cloth strips and lint, a linen equivalent of cotton fluff. Organizing and responding to Sanitary Commission needs gave women a role in the war. Elizabeth M. Aldrich (Mrs. W.

A.) and Annie S. Parke (Mrs. W. C.) organized the collection of bandage material and clothing.⁶² Hoping a bit of Hawai'i would bring injured soldiers back to health, they added jars of guava jelly to the bundles.⁶³ By June 1864, donations of produce were being solicited, to be shipped free of charge, sold in San Francisco, and the proceeds given to the Sanitary Commission.⁶⁴ Prized were molasses and sugar for their high sale value, but also solicited were tamarinds, arrow root, and more jelly.⁶⁵ Maui sugar planter James Makee responded with a gift of more than 200 barrels of molasses, making news in San Francisco, reprinted as far away as Burlington, Vermont.⁶⁶ The Emerson and Holt families contributed tamarinds.⁶⁷

The 4th of July 1864 became the backdrop for U.S. Sanitary Commission fundraising efforts. In addition to straight solicitation of funds, the celebrations included novel giving options. H. Weld Severance auctioned donated copies of the Emancipation Proclamation and a George Washington portrait. In an apparent spontaneous action, the first buyer of the Emancipation Proclamation, William A. Aldrich, returned it for resale.⁶⁸ Sixteen buyers repeated his action, as did 20 for Washington's portrait.⁶⁹ Publication of Sanitary Commission donor names encouraged contributions and listed the U.S. state with which donors associated. A few donors, demonstrating their transfer of identity to Hawai'i, gave a Hawai'i place name rather than a U.S. state. Members of the government and royal family generally gave to charitable collections, but this undertaking was seen as political. Given Hawaii's neutrality, none chose to give to the U.S. Sanitary Commission collections.⁷⁰ The exception was Privy Council member John O. Dominis (listed as Oswego, New York), who gave in 1863, before he was appointed O'ahu governor.⁷¹ Between 1861 and 1865, the U.S. Sanitary Commission recorded Hawai'i donations valued at \$17,955.51 (nearly \$300,000 today).⁷²

Raising funds for the U.S. Christian Commission began in earnest in October 1864 when *The Friend* stated the Rev. Damon would "receive and forward all moneys." Damon chided the Hawai'i American community "Those who do not go to the front ought to willingly contribute to the comfort of those who are brought to the rear wounded and bleeding."⁷³ An ad hoc committee headed by Catharine M. Whitney (Mrs. Henry M.)⁷⁴ organized a two-day fair and sale, with displays and tableaux scenes, all requiring admission. Male family

and friends became stagehands and tableaux cast members. For this worthy cause, young men and women could pose publicly in frozen scenes with titles such as “Arabian Nights” or “The Lion in Love.” Art is not always well received, however, even when presented for a worthy cause. “The Mistletoe Bough” did not “carry the audience . . . a miserable failure . . . by the shout of laughter which the small boys in the front set up . . .” “Military Scene,” with imitation fire warming bivouacked soldiers, proved more successful, and “The Execution of Mary Queen of Scots” was “called the best scene of the evening.” Attendance was good despite rain “in torrents and heaven’s artillery” [thunder].⁷⁵ Merciless fundraisers, the committee finagled a follow-up news article and display ad in the *Advertiser* reminding those who had bid on objects at the fair to pay up.⁷⁶ Funds came also from Hilo, Kona, Kohala, Waimea, Makawao, ‘Ulupalakua, Wailuku, Kōloa, Hanalei, and other locations. Again, Hawai‘i agricultural produce increased the gift with Henry Cornwell, Waikapū, Maui, adding 25 kegs of sugar to the total.⁷⁷ In all, the women’s efforts allowed them to send \$5,500 (about \$80,000 today) to the U.S. Christian Commission.⁷⁸

FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATIONS

Honolulu already had been celebrating the Fourth of July, but it took on new meaning during the U.S. Civil War. The Fourth in Hawai‘i was one of several home-country remembrances celebrated by expatriates. Germans, for example, had regular ‘fatherland’ festivals.⁷⁹ Fourth of July was experienced as a Hawai‘i party. It was treated as “a day when it was a sin to be sober” by many residents outside the Mission.⁸⁰ In 1859, hapa [part] Hawaiian William P. Ragsdale shepherded the entertainment and included a “Grand Hula.”⁸¹ Parties of “young couples” picnicked with poi lunches, the British community partied, and the royal family joined in the events.⁸² In 1860, there were similar celebrations with bands and luau in the Hawaiian community. The night sky was lit by rockets and a burning tower of tar barrels that surely sent a choking, sulfurous smoke across the city.⁸³ Prince Lot arranged salutes by government cannon and flags “of every hue, texture and nationality” were flying all over the city.⁸⁴ Celebration was not limited to Honolulu. James Makee’s Maui Rose Ranch gave workers the day off and fed all.⁸⁵

During the Civil War years, the Fourth of July was decidedly pro-Union, but continued to be a multicultural party enjoyed by all. The breadth and volume of celebration outside the American expatriate community was a positive show of respect, but was not support for political attachment to America. The party, the day off, free food and entertainment surely drew the large crowds of non-Americans. In 1864, James Dowsett invited “all the mechanics of Honolulu to partake of a luau” at Moanalua, for example.⁸⁶ Exemplary of the day as an excuse to celebrate was the 1863 party given by baker Robert Love where the “pastries, dessert and cakes were elegant.” Twenty Englishmen and 20 Hawaiians attended, “keeping ‘the fourth’ in true Christmas style.” Similarly, at Kālia near Waikīkī, Mr. Naone hosted hundreds of Hawaiians at a luau with Hawaiian music.⁸⁷ *The Polynesian* was straightforward: “As the day embodies a principle in the history of humanity, we see no reason why the rest of mankind should not make a holiday of it if they so choose.”⁸⁸

Planning groups varied over the years and the level of somber reflection vs. party varied accordingly. Plans in 1862 drew a rebuke from the *Advertiser*: “If this is the best celebration Americans in Honolulu can produce . . . we may as well hang down our heads . . .”⁸⁹ The activities deplored included horse races on the Waikīkī plains, a greased pole climb, greased pig chase, and sack and wheelbarrow races.⁹⁰ Perhaps in response, 1863 planners experimented with a somber, no frivolity day, including a picnic at Punahou as the “only gathering open to ladies and children” other than church services.⁹¹ That somber experiment apparently received poor reviews, as it was not repeated in 1864. Most years the celebration was a balance of party and patriotism. It started at dawn with 13 cannon salutes followed by church services. During the day the Punchbowl battery fired 34 cannon salutes (35 after West Virginia), continuing to count the seceded states in the complement.⁹² Honolulu’s diplomatic community attended official dinners and speeches in the evening and formal dances attracted King Kamehameha IV and Queen Emma. More cannon and rockets plus evening bonfires rounded out the day. Everyone had license to set off fireworks and sellers touted torpedoes as safe for children.⁹³ Perhaps thinking to add safety before setting off a bigger bang, the Cooke family “prayed before sending up Roman candles.”⁹⁴ Music by bands and choral singing was part of each year’s entertain-

ment. Official events had no liquor on the menu. Nevertheless, the pro-Union Hawaiian Brewery told customers beer was how the Glorious Fourth should be celebrated, advertising with the slogan "One Country, one People, one LAGER."⁹⁵

Orations usually praised and recalled the involvement of Hawai'i people in the Union fight. A toast asked "The Hawaiian boys in the Union Army, may they be shielded from rebel bullets and bayonets. . . ."⁹⁶ In 1865, three cheers went up for "the five Hawaiians who stormed Fort Fisher"⁹⁷

Each year, the reading of the Declaration of Independence created a fundamental conflict for event speakers. Liberty, self-government,

1776. **1865.**



89th Anniversary
—OF THE—
INDEPENDENCE
—OF THE—
United States America.
JULY 4th, 1865!

Programme of Celebration:

Federal Salute at Sunrise.

Exercises at "Iuehue," foot of Richard Street at 11 O'Clock, A. M.

PRAYER.

SINGING—National Ode—"America."

Reading of the Declaration of Independence.

SINGING—"Star Spangled Banner."

Oration by Rev. L. H. Gulick.

MUSIC—"Hall Columbia."

Young America—Oration.

National Salute at 12 O'Clock.

COLLATION

Federal Salute at Sunset.

All Citizens of the United States and **ALL OTHERS** desiring to join with them, in celebrating the day, are cordially invited to be present.

PER ORDER OF COMMITTEE.

N. B.—A Special Table will be provided for the Children.

The entire city was invited to celebrate the Fourth of July in Honolulu before and after the Civil War. During the war, the events tended to be more sober and mention the war's progress. *PCA* Jul. 1, 1865, 2.

LOYAL AMERICANS
DESIROUS OF CELEBRATING THE
“Glorious Fourth!”
 As they should, will please leave their orders for
Lager Beer!
 In the HAWAIIAN BREWERY ORDER BOX, Post Office
 Building previous to 12 M. of TUESDAY—“One
 Country, one People, one LAGER.”
 It PER ORDER.

Although official Fourth of July programs in Hawai'i were always alcohol-free, unofficial events considered it an essential ingredient. *PCA* Jul. 1, 1865, 2.

and a republic were being memorialized and praised in a monarchy. Speakers assured the king that American residents “would be among the first to frown upon any attempt to dismember this . . . kingdom.”⁹⁸ Reassuring messages to the king and his advisers came as Hawaiian and American flags decorated dinner tents in pairs, as sober toasts in honor of the king followed those for President Lincoln, and playing “God Save the King” followed “Hail Columbia.” The speakers, however, did not praise monarchies. Rather they found Hawaiians lacking:

To insure the success of a Republican form of government there must be a general intelligence diffused among the people, and the masses must be educated . . . we would all deplore the existence of a Republican form of government for the islands. They are not fit for it . . .⁹⁹

The speakers agreed with Kamehameha V, who promulgated a new constitution August 20, 1864, withdrawing universal suffrage from the Hawaiian population, substituting a property qualification.

LINCOLN'S DEATH

Hawai'i mourned the news of Lincoln's assassination. Although President Lincoln was shot April 14, 1865, news did not reach Honolulu

until San Francisco newspapers and passengers arrived sixteen days later. Perhaps the blow was harder following recent positive American war news of Confederate General Robert E. Lee's surrender to Union General U. S. Grant.¹⁰⁰ May 8, 1865, when the American-flagged bark *D. C. Murray* entered the harbor, flags at half-mast, word spread quickly to expect grave news. A small boat coming ashore with the mail and foreign newspapers was hailed before it could reach the pier. The boat's crew called out the shocking news of President Lincoln's assassination. Incoming U.S. newspapers sold out quickly and the city shut down as stunned residents closed businesses. The community responded without regard to nationality. Southern sympathizers wisely hid their feelings with "one or two miserable exceptions, which met with a quick, forcible rebuke."¹⁰¹ Quickly, the Hawaiian government ordered its offices closed, flags lowered, and officials to wear crepe in formal mourning for 14 days. The American consul's and minister's offices received a stream of condolences. May 9 church services consoled the Protestant, Episcopalian, and Catholic communities. American Minister James McBride opened the official memorial at the Fort Street Church. E. H. Allen, chief justice of the Hawaiian Supreme Court, and the Rev. E. Corwin, pastor of the church, delivered speeches of praise, mourning, and hope. Hymns and prayers of sorrow and support preceded the event-closing statement by the Rev. Samuel C. Damon. Representatives of other foreign governments attended, as did the Hawaiian ministers of finance and interior, and the governors of O'ahu and Maui.¹⁰² Common threads in news coverage and speeches noted that this terrible act must fit into God's plan, that slavery caused this tragedy and the war, and now there could be no leniency to traitors.¹⁰³

Due to the Honolulu weekly papers' schedules, the first published information on the assassination and events was in Hawaiian. *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa* printed the May 11 issue with all columns edged in black as did the May 13 *Advertiser* and the June *Friend*. As interisland travelers spread the news, responses followed. American residents of Wai'ohinu, Ka'ū, sent a formal resolution of mourning, vowing to wear crepe for 30 days.¹⁰⁴ Members of the Hawaiian Protestant church at Waine'e, Maui, long supporters of abolitionist causes, transmitted a resolution of sympathy to Mrs. Lincoln as the newest war widow.¹⁰⁵ A committee drew up a resolution recorded by secretary D. Kahaule-

lio. Given to the U.S. consul in Lahaina, forwarded to Honolulu's American minister, it was transmitted, as requested, to secretary of state W. H. Seward in Washington, D.C.¹⁰⁶ On June 1, 1865, Honolulu joined in the day of Humiliation and Prayer called by U. S. President Andrew Johnson. Services were at 11 a.m. at the Bethel Church under the Rev. Damon, and at Fort Street Church that evening with a sermon by the Rev. Henry H. Parker, pastor of Kawaiaha'o Church.¹⁰⁷

LETTERS HOME AND THE DUTY TO SERVE?

The majority of those from Hawai'i who performed military service in the American Civil War were Native Hawaiians. Their reasons for joining were likely as varied as the reasons American citizens were enlisting.¹⁰⁸ Economic motivations may have been stronger among sailors, many of whom served in the Union Navy. Before the war, they had been civilian sailors on American commercial vessels, now turned to military purposes.

Americans and their descendants in Hawai'i had to decide if it was their duty to return to volunteer for service, Union or Confederate, or focus on their home in the Kingdom of Hawai'i. A few decided it their duty to return and take part in the war. Having left the U.S. Navy in 1852 for a quiet life on Kaua'i, William Reynolds returned to naval service on hearing of the war.¹⁰⁹ His original purpose was defending the Union, not eliminating slavery. After witnessing slavery's reality in South Carolina, he was reported "an out-and-out Abolitionist."¹¹⁰ The members of the Protestant mission who had stayed in the islands after the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions reduced support were generally too old for military service. Their children were Hawai'i citizens raised with pride in their American ancestry. Did the parents intend for their children to be citizens of America or Hawai'i? At what price? Were they so committed to the Union or to their abolitionist beliefs that they would offer their children for military duty? Missionary Cochran Forbes, then in Kendallville, Indiana, with three sons enlisted, William, Joseph, and Theodore, wrote his children it was "all right." Their service was "for our union for the liberties God gave our Fathers 70 years ago." His wife, he admitted, is "almost sick over it . . . finds it hard to reconcile . . . cries bitter tears."¹¹¹ A high price would be paid. Joseph was killed by a sniper May

31, 1864, at the Battle of New Hope Church, Georgia. At great effort, brother William was able to retrieve the body and return Joseph to his parents for burial in Indiana, where friends quietly paid the bills for the funeral and burial.¹¹² A grieving Mrs. Forbes was still saving to put a tombstone on her son’s grave years later.¹¹³

Many Hawai‘i sons were in college in the United States on Hawaiian passports. Others had been taken to the United States when their missionary parents returned after finishing or resigning their work in Hawai‘i. In Hawai‘i, contemporaries of these young men saw them as “mission children” or cousins, despite being out of the Kingdom. As young men saw classmates leave school and volunteer, pressure grew to act. Twenty-one men with Punahou School backgrounds eventually served in some capacity—Army, Medical Corps, chaplain, Sanitary Commission volunteer. None of them left Hawai‘i to go directly into the war. Most joined after graduation from college as, for example, did Samuel Chapman Armstrong in 1862 after graduating from Williams College.¹¹⁴ William F. Snow, Harvard graduate and Andover ministry student, joined the Massachusetts Infantry in September 1862, progressing from private to elected chaplain, ordained October 6, 1862.¹¹⁵ By February 1863, he would write from the Fifth Regiment’s camp at New Berne, North Carolina, to Albert F. Judd, still in school. He began by relating what he had seen of slavery, its effects on both the enslaved and enslavers and the intelligence of the runaways. Snow then noted that although he entered the war to preserve the Union. “I never was an abolitionist until I came out here, but I now am.”¹¹⁶

For Samuel L. Conde, the war was a fight between “Liberty & Bondage.” Having raised a company of men in Chittenango, New York, in May 1861, he was about to go to war, writing, “I must not enjoy the blessings [of the United States] and shun the dangers. . . . I believe it my duty as a Christian and a Republican to go.”¹¹⁷ For Nathaniel B. Emerson it was a decision that grew. In September 1862 he was “waiting for . . . full conviction of duty.” Emerson did enlist as the country needed an army of men “of the right sort brave, Christian men,”¹¹⁸ and by November 9 word had reached Honolulu.¹¹⁹

“Cousin” designation extended to those the mission children considered part of their extended family, such as the Pitmans. Private Henry Hoolulu (Timothy) Pitman was the son of high chiefess Kino‘ole o Liliha Pitman of Hilo and a Massachusetts businessman,

Benjamin Pitman, who had resettled his family back in Boston after the death of Kino'ole. Henry Pitman enlisted,¹²⁰ but may not have told his family in advance. His enlistment was reported in Hawai'i mission circles as "Henry Pitman has run away from home and gone [to war]."¹²¹ A member of the 22nd Massachusetts Infantry, he was captured, paroled, and died of a camp fever at Camp Parole, Annapolis, Maryland, February 27, 1863.¹²²

Although committed to abolition, in 1862 Abner Wilcox wrote from Waioli, Kaua'i, to his sons George and Albert in school in the United States that he hoped "neither of you will enlist." He feared that after all the blood, the North "will not most fully offer freedom to all the slaves."¹²³ Indeed the question of eliminating slavery and giving full rights to former slaves and their descendents would be a battle fought, in some ways, for another century.

From some parents the message to their sons was clear: Stay committed to Hawai'i nei. This is your home. We have plans for you to continue our work. In the pages of the *Maile Wreath*, the newsletter written and read by the missionary cousins in Hawai'i, the second generation debated among themselves if indeed they wished to go in the paths their parents had chosen. If they saw themselves "as a hereditary class," were they actually frustrating the goals their parents originally had? Were they obliged to continue the mission? Did they have a choice?¹²⁴ Albert Francis Judd, at Yale University in 1861, was tasked by father Gerrit P. Judd to choose an advanced degree that would fit him for 'usefulness' in Hawai'i.¹²⁵ Frank, as family knew him, enrolled in Harvard Law School in 1862, graduated in 1864, and returned to Hawai'i. It might not have been. In April 1861, Judd noted the federal call for troops, followed the war news carefully, observed troops departing, and visited American Revolution historical sites. In May, the Yale students organized a company to practice infantry drilling and Frank participated. At church services he heard "a rousing war sermon" and sang "America." More drilling, more war sermons, and then letters home.¹²⁶ Father Judd sent an immediate, hand-carried response in hopes it would reach his son faster. That response included ironic humor, reason, and most strongly the message that God had another plan for Frank.¹²⁷ Father, mother, and sisters reiterated this theme in their letters for years. His mother allowed if the Southerners got as far as New Haven (Yale), he could fight back.¹²⁸ The consistent message

was that, in America, “You have no fireside or home in that country to protect. Your home is here.”¹²⁹ Frank continued an internal debate, discussing his citizenship with a law professor,¹³⁰ feeling attached to both America and Hawai‘i,¹³¹ but admitting to relief when, as a foreigner, his name was not on the draft lists in 1863.¹³² One source of continuing conflict was surely that many of the letters telling him he must not enlist included praise for his peers who *had* enlisted: “I am glad Sam Armstrong has enlisted, the more brave men, the better.”¹³³

Another source of conflict was to be *in* America, but not able to affect the events around you. Joseph P. Cooke, after a personal debate over the consequences, decided to register to vote, an action then legally open to him despite his lack of citizenship. He felt it his duty to help elect a Republican governor in Connecticut and defeat the Copperheads, southern-sympathizing northerners. Voting made him liable to the draft, as he well knew in warning those he informed not to write his mother and scare her.¹³⁴

Even those in Hawai‘i felt the need to go. Sanford B. Dole, enrolled at O‘ahu College in 1864, wrote letters to his parents that elicited worried replies. He suggested it was his duty to volunteer. His parents’ replies parallel the concerns and advice of the Judds. They believed the imagined romance of service stimulated his interest. “There is not much romance in freezing to death. . .” Why did he not talk with them when he was home on Kaua‘i? Nathaniel Emerson did not think of the hurt to his family when he enlisted.¹³⁵ Your duty is here to take the place of the aging mission cohort. There are sufficient soldiers; our American relatives are serving.¹³⁶ He should study the Hawaiian language and begin writing sermons.¹³⁷ The tension was clear, some descendants served, others did not, but there was much concern back home for the Hawai‘i sons who did.

BUSINESS AND WAR

On a macro level, Hawaii’s main industry shifted from the whaling trade to sugar plantations.¹³⁸ In the short term, on the Hawaiian home front, business and markets were affected. Business suffered as fear of Confederate raiders reduced ship traffic and travel soon after the war’s start. Just as in World War I and II, merchants began marketing to consumers using the war as an advertising hook. Advertisements

for tobacco from the South¹³⁹ and maps to help readers follow the news¹⁴⁰ were “From the seat of war.” Union sympathizers could display their support by wearing a Union necktie or writing on Union theme paper and envelopes.¹⁴¹ Patriotism was not cheap. Each sheet of paper or envelope cost today’s equivalent of \$1.25. Fireworks to celebrate positive Union news extended the selling of this formerly seasonal product throughout the year. The new Hawaiian Mission Children’s group linked a membership fee discount to the “war in America.”¹⁴² To attract reader attention, the advertisement of the annual meeting of the German athletic group Turn Verein was headed “War! War! and Rumors of War!. . .we are at peace with all. . .”¹⁴³

LEGACY

There was also a legacy of the war on the home front. In the years following the American Civil War, a man’s service would be part of his life story, his bona fides, his proof of patriotism. When Americans in Hawai‘i wanted to prove their record of contribution, Civil War service and donations to care for soldiers would be recalled. In late 1883 and early 1884, as anti-Reciprocity Treaty forces in the United States sought to “disparage the character of American residents’ in Hawai‘i, an article appeared recounting the islands’ contribution to the Civil War.¹⁴⁴ In 1917, when The Great War called upon Hawai‘i to serve, *The Friend* reminded readers of that prior service as inspiration.¹⁴⁵ When Hawai‘i was threatened with loss of self-government after the sensational Massie case publicity portrayed the islands as un-American, U.S. district court official Olaf Oswald countered with articles showing a long Hawai‘i-America beneficial association, including Hawai‘i residents’ service in the armed forces in the Civil War.¹⁴⁶ A chapter of the Grand Army of the Republic was formed in Hawai‘i in 1882 and membership would be, with few exceptions, men who came to Hawai‘i after the war.¹⁴⁷ Native Hawaiian veterans do not seem to have been members. The military and civilian contribution of those from Hawai‘i was largely forgotten until 2010 when members of an ad hoc community committee placed a plaque at the National Cemetery of the Pacific commemorating the sons of Hawai‘i who served in the American Civil War. This generated new interest in Hawaii’s role in the Civil War coinciding with the sesquicentennial of the great conflict.¹⁴⁸

The people of Hawai‘i experienced many of the same feelings and took part in many of the same activities as their American counterparts during the U.S. Civil War. News of the war was followed closely and even took the form of entertainment. Letters from loved ones on the front arrived regularly. People debated freedom and slavery, union and liberty. People donated money and goods, and offered their sons to the cause in which they believed. They celebrated the end of the war and mourned Lincoln’s death. They saw their economy altered by the war in the short term and the long term. Lastly, when their veterans came home, they were remembered for a while, even received pensions from the United States,¹⁴⁹ but their service was eventually forgotten.

NOTES

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