

In recognition of the approaching bicentennial of Captain George Vancouver's expeditions to the Pacific, the *Journal* presents this recapitulation of Vancouver's place in Hawaiian history. We are also pleased to include the painting of Vancouver's ship *Discovery* by the noted Hawaiian artist Herb Kawainui Kane.

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Vancouver in Hawai'i

CAPTAIN GEORGE VANCOUVER has long been overshadowed by the name and reputation of Captain James Cook. Cook commanded the first European exploring expedition to visit the Hawaiian Islands; Vancouver in 1791 entered the Pacific a dozen years later in command of the second British exploring expedition. Cook opened the Hawaiian Islands to Western exploitation; Vancouver assisted the Hawaiian chiefs and people to reconcile their way of life with that of the foreigners and made every effort to negotiate an end to interisland warfare and to strengthen the government of the Islands through unification.

Vancouver initiated a treaty with Kamehameha I, the chief of the Island of Hawai'i, under which British protection was offered to the Hawaiian people to enable them to control the British, French, Russian, and American seamen who, at the end of the

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18th century, were beginning to arrive in the Islands in increasing numbers. Vancouver's treaty, although never ratified by the British Parliament, was an alliance which served to discourage other powers from invading the small and defenseless island nation and as such played an important role in the early history of the Hawaiian Kingdom.

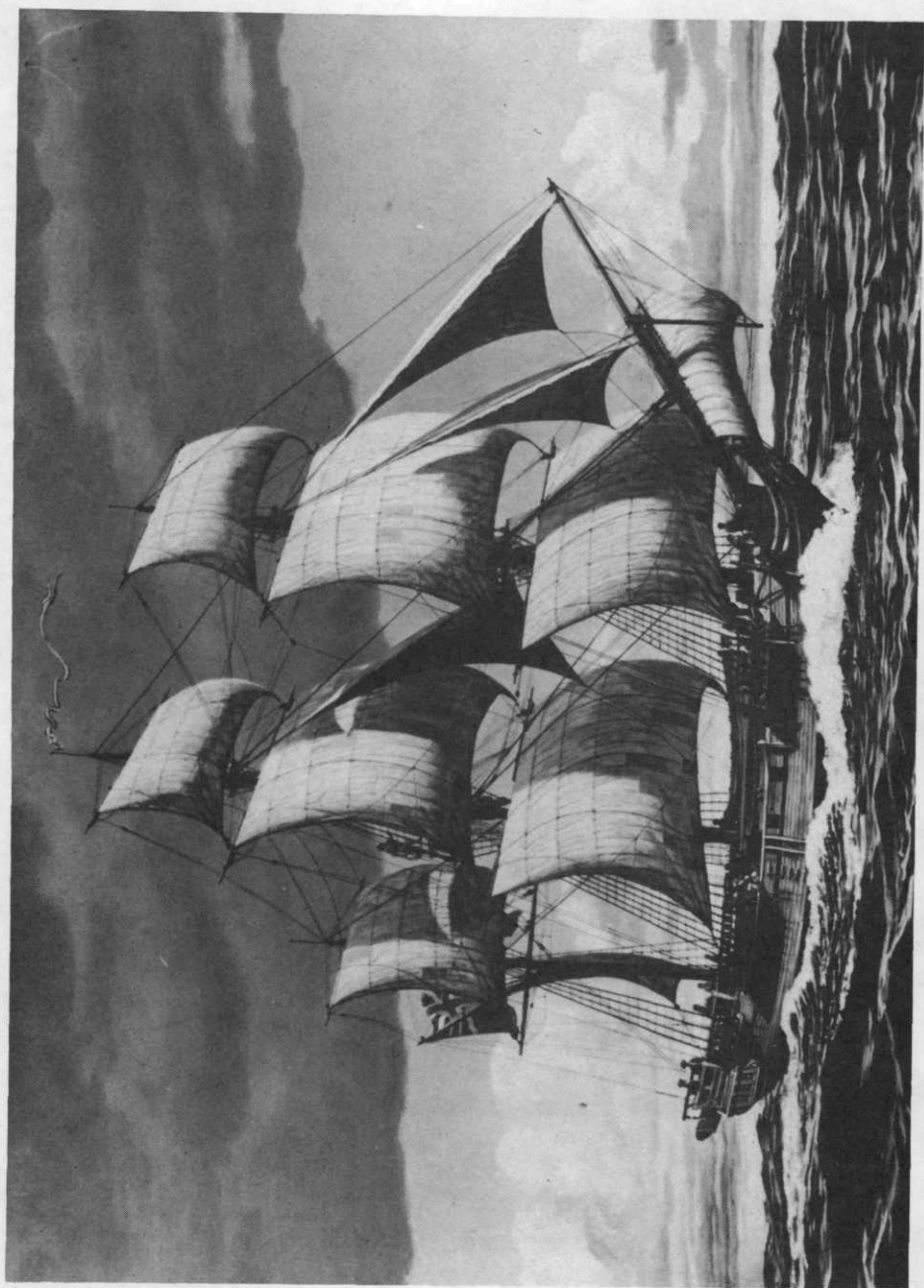
During the course of his Pacific explorations, Vancouver visited Hawai'i three times, in 1792, 1793, and 1794. He completed the charting of the Islands begun by Cook and William Bligh and spent enough time on each island to be able to accurately assess their culture and resources and the abilities of the various chiefs. Of all the chiefs he met he considered Kamehameha the most able, and the two men became close friends. Vancouver was convinced that Kamehameha was the one chief who possessed real leadership qualities and was capable of uniting the chiefdoms and maintaining peace.

MIDSHIPMAN GEORGE VANCOUVER

George Vancouver was born on June 22, 1757, in the busy English port of King's Lynn in Norfolk, the sixth and youngest son of John Jasper Vancouver, collector of customs there, and his wife Bridget Berners.¹

In the introduction to Vancouver's journals of his voyage to the Pacific, his brother John wrote, "that from the age of thirteen, his whole life to the commencement of this expedition, [to the Pacific] has been devoted to constant employment in His Majesty's naval service."²

When Captain James Cook returned to England from his first voyage to the Pacific, on July 12, 1771, John Vancouver was already seeking a berth as a midshipman for his son George and, undoubtedly, was soon in touch with Cook as well as some of the more influential members of the Royal Society. As John Elliott, one of George Vancouver's fellow midshipmen, later commented, "it would be quite a great feather in a young man's Cap, to go with Capt. Cook, and it requir'd much Interest to get out with him. . . ."³



Shortly after young Vancouver met Cook, he was appointed to serve on Cook's second voyage which was then preparing to return to the Pacific. The principal aims of that expedition were to settle once and for all whether or not a great southern Pacific continent actually existed (as many in Europe believed), to continue astronomical studies begun on Cook's earlier voyage, and to complete the mapping of recently discovered areas of the Pacific.⁴

When young Vancouver joined the *Discovery* on January 22, 1772, he was designated simply an "able seaman," while other new midshipmen on the voyage were entered as "volunteers" or "captain's servants."⁵ These boys were "young gentlemen" and as such were considered to be officers, not common seamen. This did not mean that their life aboard ship was an easy one. They stood regular watches at sea, performed the duties of seamen until they were well acquainted with handling sails and steering the ship, slept in hammocks below deck, and had very little leisure.

Equally important for these future officers were the daily sessions with "schoolmasters" who taught trigonometry, navigation, surveying, drawing, and other sea arts and sciences, for every midshipman had to prove his proficiency in those subjects when he took his examination for the higher rank of lieutenant. Vancouver and his fellow midshipmen were fortunate in that William Wales, the astronomer assigned to the second Cook expedition, was among the best in his field. They also had the benefit of Cook's own expertise as a cartographer and commander.⁶

On January 30, 1774, Cook's ships, while searching for the theoretical "great southern continent" were almost caught in the ice. In 71 degrees south latitude, the furthest point south reached by the *Resolution*, the order was given to "come about." Vancouver went forward to the extreme end of the bowsprit, waved his hat and cried out, "Ne Plus Ultra!" Later he would claim that he had been nearer the South Pole than any man before him.⁷

That Vancouver was favorably judged by Captain Cook is made

FIG. 1. Herb Kawainui Kane's painting of Captain Vancouver's ship *Discovery*. (Ariana A. Fairbanks collection.)

clear by his selection of the young man for what was to be his third and final voyage. Once again Vancouver joined as an A.B. but less than a month later, on March 18, 1776, he was appointed a full-fledged midshipman and assigned to HMS *Discovery*, companion ship to Cook's *Resolution*.⁸ The two vessels cleared the Cape of Good Hope, cruised through the South Seas, leaving Bora Bora in December of 1777, and one month later sighted land which proved to be O'ahu.

Because Cook felt the expedition was running behind schedule and winds were unfavorable, he did not attempt to make land but continued on. Sighting Kaua'i, with more favorable winds, he did some trading and sailed for Ni'ihau, where he paused for a few days before setting off for the North American coast. Cook was back in Hawaiian waters in late November 1778, off Maui trading with the many canoes surrounding the ships. He did not find a desirable anchorage, however, so was forced to continue across the channel to the island of Hawai'i and then almost entirely around that island before finally discovering a suitable place to anchor off Kealakekua Bay, on January 17, 1779.⁹

The story of Cook's death at Kealakekua Bay, on February 14, 1779, has been often described, but the small part played by midshipman George Vancouver is not widely known. The day before Cook's death, for the second time in one day, a Hawaiian took some tools from the *Discovery* and escaped in a canoe. Mr. Thomas Edgar, master of the *Discovery*, and midshipman Vancouver were immediately sent off in the ship's small cutter with two sailors to catch him. They were joined in the chase by the pinnace from the *Resolution*. As the two boats approached the shore, their paths crossed that of a Hawaiian canoe, returning the tools to the ship, but Edgar continued in pursuit of the man who had beached his canoe and raced inland. The British sailors then decided to seize the abandoned canoe as hostage for the capture of the man. Meanwhile, the real owner of the canoe, Chief Palea, arrived on the scene and objected to his canoe being taken. He was backed by a rapidly increasing horde of Hawaiians. In the melee that ensued, Palea grabbed Edgar and was promptly hit on the head with an oar by one of the sailors. Immediately other Hawaiians

converged on the British boats, and a flurry of stones from the shore forced the sailors to retreat. Unfortunately, in the excitement, the pinnace ran aground. Leaving Edgar, marooned on a rock close to shore, her crew abandoned her and swam out to the cutter. As Edgar later reported the incident in his journal:

I not being able to swim had got upon a small rock up to my knees in water, when a man came up with a broken Oar, and most certainly would have knock'd me off the rock, into the water, if Mr. Vancouver, [sic] the Midshipman, had not at that Inst Step'd out of the Pinnace, between the Indian & me, & receiv'd the Blowe, which took him on the side, and knock'd him down.¹⁰

Palea finally asserted his chiefly authority, quieted the mob, and departed to find the oars which had been taken from the pinnace. Edgar followed, leaving Vancouver to float the grounded boat. On their return with the oars, Palea and Edgar found that the Hawaiians had resumed their attack on the only Britisher still ashore in the area, Midshipman Vancouver. He had been knocked down and beaten, his cap had been taken, and the Hawaiians were trying to pry off the boat's fittings. That was enough for Edgar and Vancouver, who boarded the cutter and the pinnace and moved up the bay to report to Captain Cook. Later that day a truce was declared, and Vancouver's cap was returned to his ship.¹¹

That same night the cutter itself was taken, setting off the events which culminated in Cook's death on the beach, and the following day the young midshipman was again involved in momentous events when Lieutenant King chose him to accompany the armed party ashore to recover Cook's body.¹² This effort was only partially successful, but those parts of the body which they were able to retrieve were given a sailor's burial in Kealakekua Bay.

When repairs were completed, the two ships, now under the command of Captain Charles Clerke, sailed northeast to Alaska. They were on their way to survey the Northwest coast of the American continent and to have one more look for a hoped-for Northwest passage. Before leaving the Hawaiian islands, the ships,

unable to find an anchorage on Maui, sailed north to take on water and fresh provisions at Kaua'i. There, the hereditary high chief of Kaua'i asked the young Vancouver for a lock of his hair. Thirteen years later, Enemoh, regent for Chief Ka'eo, reminded Vancouver of this incident and told him that the Chief always carried the token with him. In March of 1792, Vancouver, the honest seaman, noted in his journal, "These circumstances were very likely to have taken place, although at the moment they did not recur to my memory." However, this early gesture of friendship between Vancouver and the Hawaiian chief, is an indication of the relationship which the young midshipman sought from the beginning to cultivate with the people of the Islands.¹³

Unsuccessful in their search for a Northwest passage, the expedition returned to England, in October of 1780, after more than four years at sea. Within two weeks after his arrival in England, Vancouver, then 23 years of age, took and passed his examination for lieutenant. His certificate is dated October 19, 1780.¹⁴

LIEUTENANT VANCOUVER

During the next seven years, Lieutenant George Vancouver served most of his time in the Caribbean. When the wars with the American Colonies, France, and Spain ended, the British naval vessels were employed in surveying, and Vancouver was assigned to Port Royal and Kingston on the island of Jamaica. There, surveying the harbors and coastline of that island, he practiced skills which he would need in his later exploring expeditions.

Over the years he was steadily promoted through the ranks of lieutenant to that of 1st Lieutenant or second in command of a ship of the line. When, in 1790, the Admiralty decided to follow up on Cook's work in the Pacific, Vancouver, who had proved himself to be an able young officer and surveyor, was offered command of the new expedition.¹⁵

CAPTAIN VANCOUVER

On December 15, 1790, Vancouver received his commission as

commander of the new *Discovery* (fig. 1), this one officially classed as a "sloop-of-war" but actually a three-masted, full-rigged ship, launched December 19, 1789.¹⁶ As Captain he was able to choose his own officers: 1st Lieutenant Zachary Mudge, 2nd Lieutenant Peter Puget, 3rd Lieutenant Joseph Baker, and Master Joseph Whidbey were all his former shipmates. The *Discovery* carried a full crew and a naturalist-botanist named Archibald Menzies who was initially listed as a supernumerary but later proved useful to the expedition as its acting surgeon. Altogether there were over 100 persons aboard a vessel only 99 feet 2 inches in length. Accompanying the *Discovery* was the armed tender *Chatham* under the command of Lieutenant William Robert Broughton.¹⁷

The Vancouver expedition lasted four and one half years, the longest voyage of exploration mounted by the Royal Navy up to that time. Their instructions were to proceed to the Sandwich Islands which they were to examine and survey, then go on to the Northwest Coast of America in search of a "water-communication" across Canada, and to report on any settlements made there by other European nations, and, if time permitted, to examine the western coast of South America.¹⁸ The British Admiralty was particularly interested in the movements of the Spanish on the American coast. The Nootka Sound Convention between Britain and Spain had just been signed, settling territorial disputes in that part of Vancouver Island, and the British government was anxious to know how well the Spanish were keeping to their part of the bargain.¹⁹ However, it is interesting to note that the first objective given Vancouver had to do with the Sandwich or Hawaiian Islands, and it was the fulfillment of this instruction on which the expedition spent a great deal of time.

RETURN TO HAWAII, 1792

Rounding the Cape of Good Hope, a major crossroad in that day of sail, the *Discovery* and the *Chatham* reached Tahiti in December of 1791, via Australia and New Zealand, and then sailed north to the Hawaiian Islands. As Vancouver approached them for the third time, he must have remembered the sorrow he

had known there upon the loss of his Commander 13 years before and wondered what sort of reception was awaiting him from the Hawaiians. Arriving off South Point, on March 1, 1792, the *Discovery* and the *Chatham* sailed close to the western coast of the island of Hawai'i. Winds were light, and the next day Hawaiians came off in canoes to trade, but they "demanded a very exorbitant return for"²⁰ their hogs and vegetables. Vancouver soon found the reason. All that the chiefs wanted in exchange were firearms, which they had been receiving from the traders who had begun to flock to the Islands, but Vancouver firmly refused to traffic in arms.²¹

Sailing on along the coast of Hawai'i to Kealakekua Bay, the first visitor of importance to come on board the *Discovery* was the High Chief Ka'iana (Tianna). Ka'iana, in 1787, had been the first Hawaiian to visit China, as a passenger aboard a fur-trading ship, the *Nootka*, under Captain John Meares. When he returned to the Islands the following year, he chose to cast his lot with Kamehameha, the ambitious chief of the Island of Hawai'i. In view of Ka'iana's travels and his association with Europeans, Vancouver was "not a little surprized" to find him unable (or unwilling) to converse in English.²² Fortunately, the British had just had a refresher course in Polynesian languages in Tahiti and were able to understand Ka'iana quite well.

Ka'iana asked Vancouver to take him and his retinue to Kaua'i. Allowed to spend a night aboard the *Discovery*, his many questions about the number of crew members and how many were on deck during the night aroused Vancouver's suspicions. The following morning, after consulting with his people, Ka'iana changed his mind and decided not to embark for Kaua'i after all. Vancouver was then convinced that the chief's intention had been to seize the ships.²³ He was even more certain of this later on, at Kaua'i, when he was told that Ka'iana would have been killed instantly if he had set foot there; therefore, his only objective could have been to take over the British ships long before they reached Kaua'i.²⁴

After leaving Ka'iana ashore, Vancouver's ship moved on along the coast of Hawai'i. At dusk a man in a double canoe hailed him in broken English, introducing himself as Kalehua [Tarehooa]

and "very civilly requesting to be admitted on board." There he told of leaving Kaua'i aboard an American fur trading vessel and sailing to China and then on to Boston. While away from Hawai'i he had picked up the name Jack. Vancouver judged him to be a "shrewd active fellow" and saw that there was a probability of his being useful in the voyage ahead, so when Kalehua asked to be allowed to accompany the expedition to the North American coast, he accepted his services with pleasure.²⁵

Jack introduced Vancouver to his chief, Ke'eaumoku (Kahow-motoo). This was an important meeting as Ke'eaumoku turned out to be one of the great chiefs of the Kona district and the first among the war leaders of Kamehameha. Ke'eaumoku was also the father of Kamehameha's favorite wife, Ka'ahumanu. Ke'eaumoku and his supporters gave Vancouver a different and more favorable account of the recent interisland wars and the rise of Kamehameha than the tale they had received from Ka'iana. In his journal, Vancouver comments that the two versions of the conflict and of the status of Kamehameha "illustrate how very difficult it is, according to our comprehension of their language, to obtain matter of fact from these people."²⁶

Leaving Kawaihae Bay, Vancouver's ships made their way past Maui, Kaho'olawe, Moloka'i, and Lāna'i, to O'ahu, anchoring off Waikiki at the end of the first week in March. There the caulkers set to work on the quarter deck, "the seams of which [according to Archibald Menzies], were so open as to admit the rain through them as it fell."²⁷

The villages, although "numerous, large, and in good repair," were almost deserted as the ruling chiefs of O'ahu and Kaua'i, Kahekili and Ka'eo, were away on Moloka'i preparing to repel an expected invasion by Kamehameha and the Hawai'i chiefs. Those people left on O'ahu whom Vancouver did meet he described as "orderly and docile" but very different from the friendly natives of Tahiti. "At Woahoo we were regarded with an unwelcome austerity, and our wants treated by the generality with a negligent indifference."²⁸

The water at Waikiki was stagnant and brackish. Pure water could only be obtained from a stream a mile from the beach,

reached by a road which was too rough for the sailors to roll their casks over. The alternative was to induce the Hawaiians to bring the water to the shore in large calabashes, which they were reluctant to do; therefore, Vancouver decided to proceed to Kaua'i (Attowai) where he was assured that he "should have that necessary article completely within our own reach and power."²⁹

On March 9, 1792, Vancouver's ships anchored off Waimea on the southwestern side of Kaua'i. There the two chiefs who came aboard told him that Kaumuali'i, the young son of Ka'eo, the absent King of Kaua'i and Ni'ihau, and Enemo, the regent of the island, were on the east side of the island and would visit him in a day or two. Vancouver sent a message advising the Prince that he planned to sail as soon as his water casks were filled so he hoped that he would "lose no time in giving us the honor of his company."³⁰

Meanwhile, taking three boats, Vancouver and several of his officers landed on a sandy beach near the mouth of the Waimea River to make arrangements for water and to see something of the countryside. He found the same absence of high chiefs and the same reserve among the people that he had noticed on O'ahu. A minor chief, on learning of his wants, placed a *kapu* (tabu) on some houses near the beach, thus reserving them for the use of the supply parties. With the protection of Hawaiian law and British armed men, Lieutenant Puget carried out the details of filling water casks from a stream and trading for fresh provisions. Among the supplies obtained were hogs, yams, sweet potatoes, taro, sugar cane, melons, pumpkins, and, to everyone's surprise, cabbages grown from plants left by Captain Cook in 1778, which were "sufficient every day to supply the Officers Messes and boil in the Ship's Company's Soup."³¹

By March 12, although the young chief Kaumuali'i had not yet arrived, Vancouver decided he could no longer postpone his departure, but when he ordered the shore party aboard the surf was so high that Mr. Puget had great difficulty in getting all his men and their arms safely out to the ships even in the Hawaiian canoes. In fact, one canoe was swamped, spilling men and goods into the sea. Departure was therefore delayed until the following

morning when the equipment remaining ashore and that retrieved from the sea could be safely brought aboard.³² When Mr. Puget went ashore on the morning of the 13th of March to accomplish this final task, he found that the young chief and the regent had arrived. The Hawaiian chiefs were promptly invited to visit the ships, but the older man cautiously insisted that two British hostages should first be put ashore.

It is clear from Vancouver's *Journal* and other accounts of events in Hawaii in 1792, that neither Vancouver nor the Hawaiian chiefs were completely confident of the good will of each other. On Hawai'i, he had found that the people refused to trade except for arms and ammunition, which Vancouver refused to agree to, and on Kaua'i he was alarmed by tales of Hawaiian hostility related to him by three foreign seamen who had lived on the island for some time. He had also seen extensive fires on Kaho'olawe and on Kaua'i, for which the Hawaiians gave conflicting explanations, causing Vancouver to be even more wary.³³

On the Hawaiian side, there was also a good deal of reasonable apprehension, bolstered by recent encounters with foreign traders. In this instance, Vancouver immediately agreed to send two of his officers ashore. Reassured, Enemo then allowed the young heir to go out to the ships. The youth appeared to Vancouver to be about 12 years of age, affable and cheerful, polite and mature beyond his years. Presents were given, a meal consumed, and, as a further treat, at dark the British entertained the Hawaiians with a display of fireworks which the people "observed . . . with infinite surprise and admiration."³⁴

Vancouver concludes his remarks on this visit to Kaua'i on an optimistic note, commenting on the apparent honesty of the Hawaiians he encountered. He rationalized that past misunderstandings and transgressions which had been committed by both the foreigners and the Hawaiians may have been due in part to "the want of a sufficient knowledge of each other's language." Furthermore, Vancouver had great confidence in the power of the chiefs and made every effort not only to cultivate them but "to impress on the minds of the natives the most favorable opinion of the English."³⁵

Vancouver was also concerned about the apparent drop in the Hawaiian population since his earlier visit with Captain Cook. He acknowledged the fact that foreigners were no longer a novelty, able to attract great crowds of curious Hawaiians to the beach, but he doubted if that was the complete answer to the evident depopulation. Waikiki was "thinly inhabited, and many [houses] appeared to be entirely abandoned." On Kaua'i, the village of Waimea had been "reduced at least two-thirds of its size, since the years 1778 and 1779." Vancouver does not seem to have been conscious of disease among the Hawaiian people, but he was aware of the arms trade and interisland warfare and attributed the decrease in the population to the deplorable sale of arms by avaricious European traders to "ambitious and enterprising chieftains."³⁶

Studying Vancouver's journal, one can recognize, as early as 1792, his keen interest in the internal politics of the Hawaiian Islands, in the status and fortunes of the various chiefs, and the welfare of the Hawaiian people. His instructions told him only to examine the Islands and complete the survey Cook had commenced, but he sensed the strategic importance of the chain and formed in his own mind the idea of an alliance between the Hawaiians and the British. By the time he left Ni'ihau for the coast of America, he had begun to have a concept of the antagonisms and alliances among the various chiefs, the extent of the civil wars then in progress, and the reality of the depopulation of the islands.

SURVEYING THE NORTHWEST COAST OF AMERICA

From March of 1792 until January of 1793, Vancouver carried out a painstaking survey of the American coast, charting the shore from the 30 degree parallel to Cook Inlet in Alaska and settling the controversy between Great Britain and Spain regarding trading rights and territory on Vancouver Island.

Late in 1792, he learned the distressing news that in May the commander of his expedition's supply ship *Daedalus*, Lieutenant Richard Hergest, had been killed by Hawaiians at Waimea Bay,

O'ahu, together with Mr. William Gooch, the ship's astronomer, and Manuel, a Portuguese sailor. Hergest appears to have acted in an arrogant and foolhardy manner towards the people of Waimea who retaliated in the only way they could. Whatever the rights or wrongs of the incident, the loss of the commander of the *Daedalus* and two other men at O'ahu fortified Vancouver's conviction that he was correct in being cautious in his relations with the Hawaiian people.³⁷

THE SECOND VISIT TO HAWAII, 1793

In February of 1793, as the *Discovery* and the *Chatham* approached the Island of Hawai'i, Vancouver ordered the ships to separate in order to survey the island as expeditiously as possible. They were to meet at the Kealakekua anchorage. The *Discovery* took the north side of the island and, on February 14, 1793, anchored for a few days at Kawaihae.³⁸ There Vancouver found that the people still wanted to trade only for firearms; however, when he explained that his arms belonged to King George and were *kapu*, they seemed satisfied and entered into trade for items with less immediate military value such as nails and red cloth.³⁹

When Vancouver, still apprehensive of "hostile behavior," went ashore, he took two armed boats and a guard of marines but admitted, "These precautions . . . appeared to have been entirely unnecessary, as nothing but the most civil, attentive, and friendly deportment was experienced from all classes of the people."⁴⁰ The chief, Ke'eaumoku, who had come on board earlier to renew their acquaintance of the previous year, joined him in a walk through the village. Vancouver paid his respects to the chief's wife, mother, and two sisters, inspected the Hawaiian method of making salt, and was shown a large war canoe which the chief was building and for which Vancouver promised to provide enough canvas to make a sail.⁴¹ As the goat which he had given Ke'eaumoku the year before had kidded twins and all three goats were alive and had obviously been well cared for, Vancouver gave the chief a ram, two ewes, and a ewe lamb, as well as a variety of presents,

but kept on board the bull and other animals which were meant for the High Chief Kamehameha.⁴²

When the trading was over, *Discovery* sailed for Kealakekua Bay with Ke'eaumoku and his wife Nāmāhana aboard, for Vancouver recognized the importance of their being present when he met Kamehameha. But, even before reaching Kailua in the Kona District, Vancouver regretted not leaving at Kawaihae the remaining bull and a cow that had just delivered a dead calf. The animals were so weak that they were unable to stand, and it did not look as if they would survive unless they could be put ashore immediately. But Vancouver noted, "favorable circumstances often take place when least expected." So it was on this occasion when some eight or nine leagues from land the ship was met by a group of canoes. In a particularly large one was Kalaimanahu (Crymamahoo), a half brother of Kamehameha. Anxious to get the poor beasts ashore alive "for the future advantages these people would derive by the propagation of these animals," Vancouver used all his powers of persuasion on Kalaimanahu to induce him to undertake the awesome task of ferrying the two large animals to the beach in his canoe. Ke'eaumoku added his pleas, and a bargain was struck. Vancouver was delighted to see, as the canoe headed for shore, that the bull was contentedly eating some vegetables with apparent appetite. He later learned that the cow died *en route* to shore but that the bull arrived safely and seemed to recover.⁴³

VANCOUVER MEETS KAMEHAMEHA

Off Kailua, Kamehameha met the ship, and on boarding, Vancouver, who remembered Kamehameha from 1779 as having "the most savage countenance" was

agreeably surprised in finding that his riper years had softened that stern ferocity which his younger days had exhibited, and had changed his general deportment to an address characteristic of an open, cheerful, and sensible mind; combined with great generosity, and goodness of disposition.⁴⁴

With Kamehameha was an English seaman, John Young, who had been left ashore by the American captain of a small trading vessel, the *Eleanora*. He was then an interpreter and advisor to Kamehameha, particularly regarding relations with foreigners.⁴⁵ After the usual ceremonies and assurances of friendship had passed between the captain and the King, Kamehameha asked that Ka'ahumanu, his favorite queen, and several of his friends and relations who were waiting alongside in a canoe, be admitted on board, to which Vancouver acceded with pleasure, noting "the kindness and fond attention, with which on all occasions [Kamehameha and Ka'ahumanu] . . . seemed to regard each other." Vancouver was delighted at "the decorum and general conduct of this royal party. . . . They seemed to be particularly cautious to avoid giving the least cause for offence. . . ."⁴⁶

Vancouver was also impressed with the fact that the people no longer clamored for arms and ammunition as they had the previous year but offered a profusion of goods at a reasonable rate of exchange. He was anxious to preserve this spirit of good will by quickly making handsome presents to his visitors. When all the British gifts had been distributed, the King was presented with an additional one, a full length scarlet cloak trimmed with tinsel lace and various colored gartering tapes and tied with blue ribbons down the front. Two mirrors in the captain's cabin, placed so that the King could see "the whole of his royal person, . . . so delighted him that the cabin could scarcely contain him."⁴⁷

After the King left the ship, Vancouver set sail for Kealakekua Bay. About noon the next day, February 22, 1793, as the ship was being secured, Kamehameha, arrayed in "the most elegant feathered cloak . . . composed principally of beautiful bright yellow feathers, and reaching from his shoulders to the ground," led a formation of 11 large canoes in a ceremonial visit to the British ships. Vancouver and the other British seamen, well used to naval displays, were nevertheless impressed with the dignity and precision of the procession.⁴⁸

Kamehameha boarded the *Discovery* and asked Vancouver most seriously if he and King George were his sincere friends. On being reassured, Kamehameha touched noses with Vancouver and

presented him with four handsome feather helmets and a profusion of hogs and vegetables. In exchange, Vancouver gave Kamehameha the live-stock still aboard his ship.⁴⁹

Watching the cattle being off-loaded, Vancouver was impressed with "the particular attention paid by Tamaahmaah [Kamehameha] to the placing of these animals in the canoes. This business was principally done by himself. . . ." When landed, the cattle ran wildly here and there, terrorizing the people who had never seen cattle before, but Vancouver was convinced that in introducing sheep and cattle to the Hawaiian Islands he had rendered a service to the people and earned the gratitude of the chiefs.⁵⁰

Ka'iana, who had excited so much suspicion the year before, then came aboard bringing a present of a helmet and 15 hogs, for which Vancouver had no room on the ship, thanks to the earlier generous gifts of Kamehameha, so he refused to take them aboard. Pragmatically, Vancouver realized that receiving lavish presents from Kamehameha, while deferring acceptance of those from lower chiefs, would make it difficult to keep in the good graces of everyone; nevertheless, he had already determined that Kamehameha was the highest Chief and "king of the whole island" and he decided to "pay my principal court" to him while treating "the other chiefs with a due degree of respect and attention."⁵¹ This decision was reinforced by Kamehameha's firm statement that in the future it would not be necessary for Vancouver to accept hogs or any other produce from Ke'eaumoku or Ka'iana or any other chiefs as he himself had an ample supply for the British. This may have been the beginning of Kamehameha's monopoly of trade, for as he expanded his rule in the following years, he maintained this policy of restricting trade by the lesser chiefs.

When Vancouver indicated to Kamehameha that he wished to establish an observatory ashore and put up tents for some of his men to remain by the instruments, Kamehameha granted permission to do so, "provided we would subscribe to such regulations as he should point out, tending to the preservation of that harmony which so happily existed at the present moment." Vancouver

gladly agreed to this arrangement. Kamehameha set aside a portion of the land at the same *heiau* (place of worship) which Cook had used for his observatory. However, remembering the unhappy events of February 1779, almost exactly 14 years earlier, Vancouver took the precaution of posting a marine guard ashore and maintaining vigilance aboard ship, although he admitted it "seemed almost an unnecessary precaution."⁵²

Kamehameha undertook to control his people and see that no harm came to the British but in return asked that Vancouver regulate the conduct of his officers and men ashore, prohibiting them from entering any *heiau* or from straying about the countryside, and permitting only the principal chiefs to come aboard his ships. It is clear that Kamehameha did not want the British to stumble into trouble. He would sanction excursions inland, so long as they were announced in advance and the Englishmen agreed to be accompanied by the porters and guides which he would provide.⁵³

Vancouver still feared that Kamehameha's authority was not supreme, even on the island of Hawai'i, and he was well aware that the people were so avid for firearms that in order to obtain them they might break even Kamehameha's laws. Therefore, he determined to minimize the number of arms his men took ashore. The marine guards were not allowed to carry extra arms to the beach, and the officers and seamen might only have small pistols concealed in their pockets, completely out of sight.⁵⁴

On the Hawaiian side, an incident occurred which illustrated Kamehameha's desire to maintain good relationships. An axe and some other things were appropriated from the *Chatham* by one of the women who had free run of the ships. Even before the loss was noticed aboard, Kamehameha sent word to Vancouver and took quick action for their return.⁵⁵

When the ships had been supplied with wood, water, and food, and the refitting completed, Vancouver relaxed his own monopoly on trade by allowing his officers and men to barter for "curiosities," a privilege which had previously been strictly prohibited. They were also allowed to explore the area about Kealakekua Bay. Vancouver, accompanied by Kamehameha and some of his

officers, visited several villages, one on the spot where Cook was killed. (It is interesting in this connection that the journals of Vancouver and Puget both mention a prophesy by native priests at Kealakekua, foretelling Cook's death, but both after the fact.⁵⁶)

Vancouver was delighted to find that the numerous inhabitants of each village "behaved with the utmost civility and decorum." He felt that "possibly our appearance had some influence on their general behavior." On coming ashore, Vancouver was accompanied by a guard of marines, both his boats were well armed, and the men all dressed in their best uniforms, as was the usual practice on a Sunday. Vancouver added, "I entertained not the least suspicion that such protection was at all necessary. The vanity of Tamaahmaah was however highly gratified by the parade . . .", and probably so was Vancouver's.⁵⁷

Kamehameha then invited the officers and crew to witness a sham battle the next day between the best of his warriors who could be assembled on so short a notice. This type of non-lethal combat was part of the military training of Hawaiian men. The following day 150 men assembled on the beach. They were divided into the armies of Kamehameha and of his adversaries, Kahekili and Ka'eo. Several types of weapons were used, and the participants were able to exhibit their dexterity and cunning in many types of warfare.

These military exploits lasted most of the day, and Vancouver was impressed with the ability of Kamehameha's men to sustain "a very heavy assault." In return, as soon as it was dark, Vancouver put on a fireworks display which was greeted by the chiefs and people "with the greatest mixture of fear, surprize and admiration." Both the Hawaiians and the British had done their utmost to awe the other with their potential military superiority.⁵⁸

VANCOUVER URGES PEACE

It was on this visit to Hawai'i, when he felt he had developed cordial relations with Kamehameha and the other chiefs of Hawai'i, that Vancouver first began a personal campaign for peace among the warring chiefs. The impetus, according to Vancouver,

actually came from Kamehameha and his chiefs who asked for his assistance in their conquest of the other islands. Vancouver refused to encourage hostilities and instead pointed out the advantages of friendly relations among all the Hawaiian chiefs.⁵⁹ He not only considered peace preferable to warfare but was convinced that Kahekili would not relinquish his control of territory his family had possessed for years. He was aware that Kamehameha had defeated Kahekili and Ka'eo before, but that he could not retain his sovereignty over Maui and Moloka'i then, and he thought it probable that he would not be able to do so in the future. Vancouver foresaw a continuing internecine war which would devastate the countryside and decimate the population, but he had a solution. He suggested that Kamehameha content himself with governing the island of Hawai'i, and Kahekili and Kae'oa do likewise on the other islands.⁶⁰ This did not turn out to be an acceptable settlement for any of the chiefs, but during the next years Vancouver did his best to convince them of its advantages to them and their people.

Vancouver urged a meeting of Kamehameha and his paramount chiefs with the chiefs of the other islands to negotiate a peace, but the exorbitant terms insisted upon by Kamehameha convinced Vancouver that a fruitful agreement could not be reached immediately. He did believe, however, that he had planted the seeds which might eventually bring all the chiefs to the peace table and stimulated discussion of the role Great Britain might have in the future welfare of the Islands.⁶¹

Just before the British departure, Kamehameha, not taking offence at Vancouver's refusal to serve as his peace envoy, entrusted to the Captain his priceless yellow feather cloak for King George, impressing on him "that it was the most valuable thing in the island of Owhyhee" and that no one other than the British monarch should be allowed to wear this particular cloak. Kamehameha also gave Vancouver a red and yellow feather cloak and some other "curiosities." Not to be outdone, Vancouver lavished presents on Kamehameha, not only for the "very essential services he had rendered us, [but also for] his steady friendship, and the attachment he had shewn to our welfare."⁶²

To the delight of Kamehameha, Vancouver also had one of the King's largest canoes rigged as a sloop and provided with a full suit of sails, a union jack and a pendant.⁶³ Kamehameha did suggest that his "man of war" would be improved by a few swivel guns on its deck, but when Vancouver refused with the words "Taboo King George," no further plea was made. Vancouver did entrust to the English sailors in Kamehameha's employ, Davis and Young, "a dozen sky rockets, and half that number of effective hand grenades, for the sole purpose of Tamaahmaah's protection," not for "any ambitious schemes for the conquest of the neighboring islands."⁶⁴ Vancouver's presents helped cement relationships with the Hawaiian king and at the same time acted as additional payment for the hogs and fresh produce that had been abundantly supplied to the ships.

The farewell between the British and the Hawaiians was emotional, but both understood that Vancouver would be returning the following winter. Just before Vancouver left Kawaihae on March 9, 1793, he gave Davis and Young a letter testifying that "Tamaah Maah, with the generality of the Chiefs, and the whole of the lower order of People, have conducted themselves toward us with the strictest honest, civility and friendly attention." He singled out Kamehameha, Ke'eaumoku, Keli'imaika, and Keaweheulu as having rendered "every service in their power" to the British but warned future visitors to Hawai'i against Ka'iana, Kame'eiamoku, Kamanawa and Namakeha, "persons not to be trusted."⁶⁵

The ships entered Maui waters on the island's eastern coast, sailed along the Southern side and up the east where, at Mā'alaea Bay, Kamohomoho, a brother of Kahekili, the ruler of Maui, appeared in a canoe and came on board to pilot the British ships to a safe anchorage at Lāhainā. Examining the coast of Maui from his ship, Vancouver was appalled by the impoverished circumstances of the people and the barren and uncultivated appearance of their lands. "The deplorable condition to which they had been reduced by an eleven years war" and the advent of "the half famished trading vessels" convinced him that he should pursue

his peace negotiations for "the general happiness, of the inhabitants of all the islands."⁶⁶

In addition to Kamohomoho, his pilot and constant companion since entering the water around Maui, at Lāhainā Vancouver met the High Chief Namahana (Namahanna) and his wife "far the handsomest couple we had seen on these islands. He was next in consequence to Kahekili [Titeeree], and possessed at that time in Mowee almost the sovereign power over its inhabitants."⁶⁷

Vancouver was given to understand that Kahekili was the ruler of all the islands except Hawai'i and that Namahana and Ka'eo derived their authority from him. When the great chief arrived in Lāhainā on March 13, 1793, Vancouver found:

nothing in his character or appearance to denote so high a station, nor was his arrival attended by any accumulation in the number of the natives on the shores, or in the canoes about the vessels. He came boldly alongside, but entered the ship with a sort of partial confidence, accompanied by several chiefs who constantly attended him; his age I supposed must have exceeded sixty; he was greatly debilitated and emaciated; and, from the colour of his skin, I judged his feebleness to have been brought on by an excessive use of the ava. His faltering voice bespoke the decline of life; and his countenance, though furrowed by his years and irregularities, still preserved marks of his having been, in his juvenile days, a man of pleasing and cheerful manners, with a considerable degree of sensibility, which the iron hand of time had not yet entirely obliterated.⁶⁸

When the exchange of presents was begun, it is to Vancouver's credit that he treated the impoverished King of Maui with the same respect and generosity which he had shown Kamehameha. His first gift was a scarlet cloak, similar to those given Kamehameha, and he also gave gifts to the chief's entire suite in accordance with their rank and position.⁶⁹ Kahekili had nothing to give in return at the moment but later presented Vancouver with three small pigs and a few vegetables, which, because of the destitute state of the island, the captain accepted and then returned to the chief.⁷⁰

One issue which was preying on Vancouver's mind was the

murder of Lieutenant Hergest, Astronomer Gooch, and the seaman Manuel of the *Daedalus*, that had occurred the year before on O'ahu. Kamohomoho assured Vancouver that his brother was not involved in the affair, but that he had had the three men responsible executed. This statement supported comments made by the chiefs on Hawai'i and convinced Vancouver that it was "more than probable, that Titeeree [Kahekili] and Taio [Ka'eo] were . . . not concerned in the perpetration of the murders at Woahoo," but he was still determined to investigate further when he reached O'ahu.⁷¹

Even more important to Vancouver was the question of peace among all the Island chiefs, and this he began discussing with Kahekili and his supporters at Lāhainā. There was general agreement that peace would be beneficial to all, but the chiefs assembled on Maui were just as apprehensive of Kamehameha's territorial ambitions as the Hawai'i chiefs had been of Kahekili's and Ka'eo's. Though Vancouver continued to picture Kamehameha as sincere and willing to abide by a peace agreement, it is clear that at this point in the negotiations Vancouver was overly optimistic of success.⁷²

Meanwhile, Ka'eo arrived from Moloka'i by canoe. He remembered Vancouver from their meeting on Kaua'i a dozen years before and told the Captain that he still kept a lock of hair given him in friendship at that time. Vancouver still did not remember the incident, nor did he recognize Ka'eo, but next day the Chief appeared with a lock of hair neatly tied up with some red feathers. It matched Vancouver's hair and the captain had to admit it probably was his. The preservation of his token to Ka'eo touched Vancouver and proved to him that all men are equally prone to the "passions and affections, that . . . govern the human heart." In his journal, Vancouver admitted that he felt humiliated "at the superiority which the steadiness of Taio's friendship had gained over me;" his having kept the lock of hair and his almost total recall of events 14 years earlier while the whole episode "had been long obliterated from my memory." Vancouver, therefore, proceeded with the peace negotiations aboard the *Discovery* under some sort of special obligation to Ka'eo.⁷³

Everyone at the council of chiefs expressed a desire for peace, but how it might be achieved was the topic of heated discussion. Notwithstanding past friendship, Ka'eo questioned Vancouver respectfully but persistently as to why his plea for peace was directly opposed to advice the chiefs had received in past years from foreign traders who were in favor of a continuance of the war and had supplied the islanders with great quantities of arms and ammunition. Vancouver pointed out that the arms trade was at the root of the problem, for the traders were not interested in the welfare of the Hawaiian people as he was, they were only concerned with making a profit for themselves by selling more and more implements of war, without any regard for the resultant destruction of society, devastation of the countryside and depopulation of the islanders.

Persuaded by these arguments that Vancouver's motives were honorable, Ka'eo asked Vancouver to return to Hawai'i to carry on the negotiations with Kamehameha, but the captain was forced to reject the idea because of lack of time. The *Chatham* was almost ready to leave for the coast of North America in a few days, and the *Discovery* still had to visit O'ahu and Kaua'i before following her to continue their coastal survey.

Ka'eo then urged the Englishman to return to Maui the following year, pick him up, and take him to meet Kamehameha on Hawai'i. This proposal was agreed upon, and Vancouver prepared a letter to John Young on Hawai'i explaining the plan. The bearer was to be Makia (Martier), a chief who was also to open preliminary negotiations with Kamehameha. Unfortunately, when Makia reached Hawai'i his mission was misunderstood, and he was not allowed to land.⁷⁴

Moving on to O'ahu, Vancouver anchored off Waikiki on March 20, 1793, where he inquired into the circumstances surrounding the death of Hergest, Gooch, and Manuel on that island the year before. He was determined that all the perpetrators of the murder be punished as a lesson to the people of the Islands, and although he was satisfied that the chiefs were not involved, he was not content with the execution of only three of the murderers when it seemed to be common knowledge that several others had

escaped justice. Three more culprits were promptly apprehended at Waikiki, tried, and executed by their chief.⁷⁵

When Vancouver visited Waikiki, Kalanikupule (Taytooboory), Chief of O'ahu, appeared to be about 33 years old, but he was suffering from a pulmonary complaint which rendered him weak, emaciated, and completely unable to walk. He was only able to come aboard the *Discovery* in a specially rigged chair. After Acting Surgeon Menzies had prescribed medicine for his illness, once again Vancouver brought up the subject of peace. Kalanikupule seemed totally in agreement with his efforts toward that goal but suspicious of the good intentions of the other chiefs, and their discussions bogged down. That evening, the 23rd of March, a farewell fireworks display was given, ostensibly to entertain the people but also to impress upon them the superior power of Great Britain and as a not too subtle hint that the chiefs should pay attention to Vancouver's peace initiatives.⁷⁶

Vancouver then moved on to Kaua'i where he was greeted by the regent Enemo who had just survived an insurrection against his rule and though in poor health was surprisingly cheerful. Kaumuali'i also visited the *Discovery*, and there was some talk of peace but no serious discussions such as had been held on the other islands, possibly because of lack of time and the relatively minor positions of Enemo and Kaumuali'i in 1793.⁷⁷

On the night of March 29, the *Discovery* headed north east, back to the American continent. The expedition had made a visit of about 48 days to Hawai'i, Maui, O'ahu and Kaua'i. The majority of the time was spent on Hawai'i, and the most important issue raised with the Hawaiians was the establishment of peace throughout the Islands.

THE THIRD VISIT TO HAWAI'I, 1794

The year 1794 was just nine days old when *Discovery* again entered Hawaiian waters. Accompanied by *Chatham* and *Daedalus*, she had left California 24 days earlier and had again followed the tracks marked on the old Spanish charts. Vancouver, still looking for the island group identified as Los Majos, steered a few miles

south of the route he had followed the year before. The weather was clear, but no land was seen until on January 8, 1794, Mauna Kea showed its "hoary head above the clouds."⁷⁸

Vancouver was looking for Waiākea (Whyeatea) in the district of Hilo, the good harbor that Kamehameha had told him about on his previous visit. When the ships were within two leagues of the shore, he sent out a survey team under Mr. Whidbey. Their boat had scarcely departed when several canoes came off to the ships. Although a heavy swell kept the people from bringing a large supply of refreshments from the shore, within a short time Kamehameha himself came on board

. . . with his usual confidence and cheerful disposition. It was impossible to mistake the happiness he expressed on seeing us again which seemed to be greatly increased by his meeting us at this, his most favorite part of the island. . . .⁷⁹

Late in the day Whidbey and his survey party returned to report that the northerly winds that were then blowing made any attempt at landing impracticable. Vancouver then decided to go on to Kealakekua Bay and invited Kamehameha to accompany him,

knowing that his influence over the inferior chiefs and the people would be attended with the most desirable consequences, in preserving the harmony and good understanding that already so happily existed.

The king "did not, however, seem much inclined to accept my invitation" and countered with a request that the ships remain at Hilo and avail themselves of the ample supplies available there.⁸⁰

With the wind driving the ships to leeward and the heavy sea making repairs impossible, Vancouver explained the difficulties and, calling upon his friendship, again asked Kamehameha to accompany him to Kealakekua. Kamehameha explained that as the New Year *kapu* (tabu) required he remain in the district in which he began the ceremonies, he would not be able to leave Hilo at this time. (Bell commented that Kamehameha's reluctance to leave Hilo was also because all his canoes, arms, and ammunition were

stored there, and if he left, this mass of equipment would have to be safeguarded or moved, and, too, the surf was perfect for Kamehameha to indulge in his favorite amusement-surfing.)⁸¹

Although Vancouver "resolved not to detain him [Kamehameha] contrary to his own free will and inclination, . . . yet as I considered his attendance to be an object of too much importance to be readily relinquished, I . . ." used every argument to persuade him to accompany the British ships. Finally, after much soul searching, Kamehameha agreed to turn over his religious and administrative duties to his brother, Kalaimamahu, and join Vancouver, although as he told the Captain, "he considered himself to be the last person in his dominions who ought to violate the established laws, and the regulations of the country which he governed."⁸²

While the chiefs who were to accompany Vancouver assembled, the Captain was surprised to find that Ka'ahumanu, the King's favorite consort, was not among them. On enquiring, Vancouver found that the two had separated and that Ka'ahumanu was suspected of having had an affair with Ka'iana. When Vancouver offered his services in an attempt to effect a reconciliation, Kamehameha expressed his thanks, but he assured Vancouver that while

he should be always happy to receive any advice on state affairs, or any public matters, especially where peace or war might be concerned; . . . such differences as might occur in, or respect, his domestic happiness, he considered to be totally out of my province.

Vancouver accepted this rebuff but hoped Kamehameha would let him assist in the future.⁸³

For three days the British ships, accompanied by a number of Hawaiian canoes, sailed along the coast of Hawai'i, looking for a suitable harbor but found nothing better than Kealakekua Bay, which they reached on the evening of the 13th of January. Kamehameha himself appointed the place where their cargo could be safely stored on shore while the British ships were refitted

and provided help in off-loading and guards to protect the supplies ashore.

He also provided daily supplies of water, hogs, and vegetables as

... he considered that bartering with the several chiefs, and other individuals, for the valuable refreshments of the country, would not only be troublesome and unpleasant, but might give rise to disputes and misunderstandings between the parties.⁸⁴

It was obvious that Kamehameha wanted to limit Vancouver's contact with other chiefs and establish a royal trade monopoly.

When the first of these supplies were delivered to the ships, the cattle Vancouver had picked up in California were put in the canoes and taken ashore. They included a nearly grown bull, two bull calves, two cows, five rams and five ewe sheep. The bull that had been landed the year before had died, but the cow had delivered a healthy calf, and two of the ewes had lambed. When the calf was born there was such excitement that it was carried to the other side of the island where Kamehameha was at the time. Separated from its mother, the calf was fed on a diet of fish, pork, and potatoes. To the surprise of the English the calf not only survived but was healthy and growing well.⁸⁵ At these successes in introducing livestock Vancouver was exceedingly pleased, "having at length effected the very desirable object of establishing in this island a breed of those valuable animals."⁸⁶

Later, on Vancouver's urging, the livestock he had brought to Hawai'i were placed under *kapu* for ten years to allow them to multiply, but it was understood that as soon as there were sufficient animals to provide meat both sexes would be allowed to partake equally. Kamehameha agreed to this new provision if the sexes ate of different animals, as they then did under their own laws.⁸⁷

VANCOUVER AGAIN URGES PEACE

While the business of repairs to their ships and equipment went forward and supplies were accumulated, the observatory was again set up ashore. The strict rules of conduct formerly imposed by

Kamehameha and Vancouver on their respective people were reimposed, and, considering it quite safe to go ashore, British exploring parties were despatched to ascend Hualālai and Mauna Loa. Vancouver then returned to his efforts to peacefully settle the interisland wars and, at the same time, to press the idea of a cession of the island of Hawai'i to Great Britain.⁸⁸

Kamehameha called a grand council, and within days the chiefs, summoned from the distant parts of the island, began to arrive. Before the conclave assembled, Vancouver was able to further obligate Kamehameha to the English. Lumber to build a schooner had arrived at Kealakekua, supervised by James Boyd (Boid), an Englishman. Vancouver's carpenters laid the 36-foot keel and set up the frame, at the same time instructing Boyd, Young, and Davis in the method of ship construction in hope that in the future they would be able to build additional vessels themselves. Named *Britannia*, the small man of war "was intended as a protection to the royal person of Tamaahmaah; and I believe few circumstances in his life ever afforded him more solid satisfaction." Vancouver also supplied a set of sails, masts, iron-work, and other items to outfit the boat. The Hawaiians themselves had plenty of good cordage for rigging. The *Britannia* was the first western style boat built in the Islands, and Kamehameha was well pleased.⁸⁹

As a matter of fact, the Captain was well pleased also. His expedition was preparing for its final phase. All three of his ships were in good condition and riding in a safe harbor at Kealakekua Bay; the *Discovery* and the *Chatham* were once more ready to complete their survey of the coast of Northwest America, and the *Daedalus* prepared to return to England via Australia. Relations between Kamehameha and Vancouver were entirely cordial: the handling of the provisioning by the King was efficient and productive, and progress was being made on the construction of the King's ship. But best of all, Kamehameha seemed willing to agree to a treaty of cession to Great Britain. Vancouver, therefore, saw no reason for his not extending his visit to the Islands for another two weeks, in hopes of negotiating a treaty.⁹⁰

It was also during this relaxed period that Vancouver renewed

his efforts to bring Kamehameha and his favorite consort, Ka'ahumanu, together. He saw her only rarely but was in daily contact with her father, his old friend Ke'eaumoku, who assured Vancouver that his daughter desired a reconciliation. Kamehameha remained aloof, but the Captain learned that he too was anxious for an end to their separation. Seeing a political advantage in helping to heal the rift between Ka'ahumanu and her powerful family and Kamehameha, as well as the personal gratitude of the King in restoring his marital tranquility, Vancouver arranged a meeting aboard *Discovery* between husband and wife in such a way that it would appear to come about by pure chance. The subterfuge worked, and Ka'ahumanu was "restored to all her former honours, and privileges, highly to the satisfaction of all the king's friends" and the king himself.⁹¹

"The domestic affairs of Tamaahmaah [Kamehameha] having thus taken so happy a turn, his mind was more at liberty for political considerations . . .", which suited Vancouver perfectly.⁹² He had only a short time more which he could spend in the Islands, and he hoped to negotiate some momentous political agreements before he sailed back to the American continent. He was convinced that the chiefs so distrusted each other that only by personal discussions with them on all the islands and by bringing them together under the protection of the British flag could there be any hope of achieving peace throughout the Islands, and he did not have time to accomplish this task. His secondary goal, however, to establish between Kamehameha and the chiefs of Hawai'i and the English the closest of relationships through a cession of the island of Hawai'i to Great Britain, did seem possible of achievement. Vancouver conceived of such a treaty as affording British protection to the Hawaiians from unscrupulous traders and predatory foreign powers, although how such protection was to be afforded by the British was unclear.⁹³

The principal chiefs arrived at Kealakekua Bay from all over the island, most of them already familiar with the honesty and the friendship offered by Vancouver and apprehensive of the questionable methods and harshness of the foreign traders. On February 25, 1794, the chiefs gathered aboard the *Discovery* for a serious

discussion of cession. As the principal chiefs, Kalaimanahu of Hāmākua, Ke‘eaumoku of Kona, Keaweheulu of Ka‘u, Ka‘iana of Puna, and Kameeiamoku of Kohala, and their retainers climbed one by one up the ship’s ladder. Splendid in their feather capes and helmets, they were greeted by Vancouver and his officers in their dress uniforms and by Kamehameha and Ka‘ahumanu.

The King opened the ceremonies with a speech in which he explained his reasons for offering to place the island of Hawai‘i under the protection of Great Britain. He listed the nations whose ships had visited the Islands and pointed out the fact that Hawai‘i was not strong enough to resist an attack from any of them. It would be, therefore, to their advantage to put themselves under the protection of the nation most favorably known to them, which in his opinion was Great Britain.⁹⁴

High Chief Ke‘eaumoku spoke next, urging again that Maui had been the aggressor on more occasions than Hawai‘i and that “when a force for their protection should be obtained from England, the first object of its employment ought to be the conquest of Mowee.” Keaweheulu, content with the present state of affairs, spoke in favor of Vancouver’s proposition, while Ka‘iana, always the pessimist and often an obstructionist, protested that a garrison and ships from England must be stationed in Hawai‘i and proposed that some of the officers then with Vancouver should be sent out with whatever military establishment the British intended to station on Hawai‘i for the protection of the people so that they would know that the newcomers actually “belonged to King George” and were not Americans or other foreigners.⁹⁵

In writing about the meeting, Vancouver stressed the point that the chiefs stated clearly that this cession was not to alter their religion, economy, or government, and that Kamehameha, the chiefs, and priests “were to continue as usual to officiate with the same authority as before in their respective stations . . .”.⁹⁶

After a full discussion, the King summed up the agreement, and the chiefs proclaimed that “they were no longer Tanata no Owhyhee, (i.e.) the people of Owhyhee; but Tanata no Britanee, (i.e.) the people of Britain.”⁹⁷ Lieutenant Puget then went ashore, hoisted the British colors, and took formal possession of the island

in the name of King George. A gun salute was fired from each of the vessels and a copper plate was installed at Kamehameha's residence which read:

On the 25th of february, 1794, Tamaahmaah, king of Owwhyhee, in council with the principal chiefs of the island, assembled on board His Britannic Majesty's sloop Discovery in Karakakooa bay, in the presence of George Vancouver, commander of the said sloop; Lieutenant Peter Puget, commander of his said Majesty's armed tender the Chatham; and the other officers of the Discovery; after due consideration, unanimously ceded the said island of Owwhyhee to His Britannic Majesty, and acknowledged themselves to be subjects of Great Britain.⁹⁸

The deed was done. There was rejoicing on the ships and ashore at the time, but Vancouver, while pleased that the agreement seemed to meet with general approval among the Hawaiians, commented philosophically in his journal "whether the surrender of the island will ever be attended with any additional happiness to its people, time alone must determine."⁹⁹

Vancouver was wise to wonder what the outcome of his efforts to secure peace throughout the Hawaiian Islands would be. The British government did not receive a copy of the "cession" until after Vancouver's return to England a year later, and then the British parliament never acted on it. The British ship and men expected by the Hawaiians never arrived, and Kamehameha and his chiefs resumed the wars against Maui and the other islands until, in 1810, Kamehameha was King not only of Hawai'i but of all the islands of the Hawaiian chain.

Vancouver's "cession" did not bring peace to the people of the Hawaiian Islands, but it may have prevented some impositions on them by foreigners. As the special relationship between Kamehameha and Vancouver became known among the seafarers of the Pacific, foreigners trading in the Islands took the potential might and wrath of Great Britain into account in their dealings with the Hawaiian people, and because of the treaty the Hawaiian Kingdom was protected from foreign incursions until the mid-1820s.¹⁰⁰

The alliance with Kamehameha complete, on March 3, 1794, Vancouver and his men said a regretful farewell to their Hawaiian friends. They sailed along the coast of Maui and O'ahu, finishing their survey of those islands, but did not encounter Kahekili or Ka'eo, as Vancouver had hoped to do, in order to carry on his efforts to conclude an interisland accord. At Kaua'i, Vancouver did see the regent Enemo and the young prince Kaumuali'i, but no substantive peace negotiations took place there either. On March 14, 1794, Vancouver headed back to the Northwest Coast of America where he spent the next months surveying, completing his work in mid-August. He then began the long voyage home to England.¹⁰¹

On their fourth Christmas away from home, the officers and men celebrated with an ample repast and an extra allowance of grog which led to toasts to friends and favorites at home and "the health of Tamaahmaah."¹⁰² The *Discovery* entered the River Thames on October 20, 1795.¹⁰³

Thus ended one of the most notable voyages in the annals of navigation. It was certainly one of the longest, perhaps the longest exploring expedition up to that time. Vancouver spent the two and a half years left him before his death on May 12, 1798, in putting together an account of his voyage which included valuable ethnographic material as well as volumes of navigational charts and profile drawings produced by the members of the expedition and botanical information collected by Menzies.

Vancouver had obeyed his instructions from the Admiralty to examine the Sandwich Islands, but he had done more. He had befriended Kamehameha, the King of Hawaii, introduced the idea of a peaceful coexistence to the chiefs of all the Islands, and in so doing exerted his best efforts to bring peace to the Hawaiian people, and he had, through the Kamehameha-Vancouver treaty, established Great Britain as the predominant foreign power in the Islands, a situation which produced a certain caution on the part of other foreigners visiting them.

During his three visits to the Hawaiian Islands, George Vancouver, given the relatively short time at his disposal, may not have been able to give the Hawaiian people domestic peace,

but he did offer them an alliance with Great Britain, the strongest naval power in the world at the time, which provided them with international peace. That he was truly a friend to Hawai'i and Hawaiians should not be forgotten.

NOTES

- ¹ George Vancouver, *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific and Round the World, 1791-1795*, ed. W. Kaye Lamb, 4 vols. (London: Hakluyt Society, 1984) 1:3. Hereafter referred to as Lamb, ed., *Voyage*.
- ² George Vancouver, *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean and Round the World, 1791-1795*, 3 vols. (London: G. G. & J. Robinson and J. Edwards, 1798) 1: xxix. Hereafter referred to as Vancouver, *Voyage*.
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- ²⁵ Vancouver, *Voyage* 1:157-59; Lamb, ed., *Voyage* 449-51.

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- ⁴⁷ Vancouver, *Voyage* 2:123-24; Lamb, ed., *Voyage* 3:809.
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- ⁶² Vancouver, *Voyage* 2:159-60; Lamb, ed., *Voyage* 3:839-40.
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