

## Relationship between A'ina, early Chinese settler in Hilo, and Kamukai Victor; a correction

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Information has been found that requires some correction of the statements in "Chinese Settlers in the Village of Hilo before 1852" which appeared in the *Hawaiian Journal of History*, 1974. It was stated that A'ina left his property to his sons, Mikaele and Kamokai (more commonly spelled Kamukai). The assumption that these boys were his sons was based on two documents: the will of A'ina which was written in English and in which he twice referred to Mikaele and Kamukai as "my sons"; and on Mikaele's statement in the probate of the will, "the undersigned child and heir of Aiina. . . . Mikaele."<sup>1</sup> A'ina died before the Mahele, but in that division of land, his property in Hilo was granted to "Mikaele and heirs" as LCA 1783.

In 1863, Mikaele and Kamukai divided this four-acre piece of land into three equal parts, the third part going to Maria Kawaihae and her husband Joane Uluwale.<sup>2</sup> This led the author to assume that Maria Kawaihae was some relation to A'ina, possibly his daughter. No mention had ever been found of A'ina's wife in any of his business transactions or in his will.

Both of these assumptions were wrong. Mikaele and Kamukai were not his sons; they were not even brothers. Maria Kawaihae was not his daughter but his wife.

Kamukai, who later in the nineteenth century became known as Kamukai Victor, was the son of a Chinese man named Ako and a Hawaiian woman named Kaeha. He was born on Oahu in 1836. His mother died of smallpox and the father returned to China. Before leaving, Ako gave the child to A'ina and his wife, Maria Kawaihae, "when the child was small." Maria Kawaihae further testified that "when the child was very young he was given by my *kane* [husband] to Kui."<sup>3</sup> Kui was Evarito Kui who was a brother, probably half-brother, of both Maria Kawaihae and of Makaele. In spite of this, A'ina referred to Kamukai as his son in 1846 and left him half of his property.

In trying to judge how old Kamukai was when he was given to E. Kui, we have only the statements of Maria Kawaihae that he was "very young" and of Kui who stated in 1854 when he filed an application to legally adopt

Kamukai, "from his small time I reared him . . . cared for him as a proper parent . . . as though he were born to my own wife."<sup>4</sup>

The relationship between Maria Kawaihae, E. Kui and Mikaele is not entirely clear. It appears from baptismal records, the probate of the estate of Mikaele and the application for adoption by Kui that Maria, born 1811, and Kui, born 1814, were half brother and sister. Their father was Vailuahi. Kui and Mikaele, who was born in 1829, had the same mother, Ana Koliana, and so were half brothers.<sup>5</sup>

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> First Circuit Court Probate 15. (AH)

<sup>2</sup> HBC, 16:287-288.

<sup>3</sup> Third Circuit Court Minute Books. Probates, v. 1, p. 32. (AH)

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> St. Joseph's Church, Hilo. Baptismal Record; Third Circuit Court Minute Books. Probates, v. 2, pp. 33-36. (AH)