

J. SUSAN CORLEY

The British Press Greet the King of the Sandwich Islands: Kamehameha II in London, 1824

Portsmouth—May 17. Arrived *L'Aigle*, Captain Starbuck, from the South Seas and Rio de Janeiro; she has on board the King and Queen of the Sandwich Isles; and several chiefs, come to England to pay a visit to his Majesty King George IV.¹

KAMEHAMEHA II, who preferred the name Liholiho, became an object of considerable public curiosity as soon as he stepped ashore at Portsmouth, England on May 17, 1824. Over the next several weeks, the press speculated repeatedly about the visitors' reasons for coming to England. More than 80 newspaper items appeared about the royal couple from the time of their arrival until their deaths in mid-July. Some newspaper coverage looked for opportunities to poke fun at the Sandwich Islanders and deride their appearance, character, and background, and one newspaper's coverage was particularly virulent; but most newspapers just reported the news in a straightforward,

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objective manner. Whatever the slant adopted by any individual newspaper, more than a dozen mostly-London newspapers kept alive the story of the king and queen of the Sandwich Islands who had come to England to meet King George.

There is, of course, more to their story than just what one can read in the newspapers, but through newspaper articles a bystander can experience the same sense of fascination about every detail of these *Sandwichian Majesties* as did an average Englishman of London in 1824. At first viewed only as simple, curiously dressed people who act differently, through the eyes of most newspaper reporters Liholiho and Kamamalu grow into a stylish, well-mannered couple capable of handling a variety of social situations with aplomb. Liholiho—first seen just as a savage chief come to give away his islands—develops in the eyes of some reporters into a king who understands how to be a king. London takes this royal couple into their hearts—and then the city’s own heart breaks when Liholiho and Kamamalu die without ever getting to meet King George.

OFF TO ENGLAND

Captain Kent, aboard the British colonial cutter *Mermaid*, arrived at Oahu in 1822 from New South Wales to deliver into the hands of the king of the Sandwich Islands a present from the king of Great Britain—a schooner christened *Prince Regent*. This present, arriving so unexpectedly and at a time when Liholiho was casting about searching for pathways on which to lead his islands into a modern world, gave Liholiho the opportunity to introduce himself to George IV by way of a letter of thanks. Most poignantly in light of future events, Liholiho wrote George IV that he “wished to place his Sandwich Islands under the protection of the British crown,” and that he wanted to be “thought worthy [of] the confidence I place in your Majesty’s wisdom and judgment.” Signing with his regal name, Tamehameha II closed with the hope that George IV “may deem it fit to answer this as soon as convenient; and your Majesty’s counsel and advice will be most thankfully received by your Majesty’s most obedient and devoted servant.”²

Certainly Liholiho faced great leadership challenges, and he had

good reason to ask George IV for counsel, advice, and a speedy reply. Commercial growth at Oahu had grown exponentially with the expansion of the sperm whaling industry into the northern Pacific Ocean in the early 1820s. By 1823, upwards of 30 commercial vessels could be counted in the roadstead and harbor of Honolulu in any given month during the winter whaling season. Most of the vessels sailed from the United States of America; only a few from England.³ Sailors, merchantmen, and traders crowded the ports and harbor towns, ignoring the islanders' customs and beliefs, disdainful of the efforts of the foreign missionaries, and regularly inciting breaches of the peace.⁴ The traditional system of law and order had been intertwined with the traditional religion, and so when Liholiho abolished the *kapu* system in 1819, that left the islands with a weakened system of laws. Liholiho understood that he needed to put into place a new civil structure, and he also knew he needed advice on how to create a civil administration capable of handling the changing needs of his subjects and maintaining order among so many foreigners.⁵

But no speedy answer arrived. And so Liholiho, increasingly distrustful of the intentions of the resident Americans and other foreigners,⁶ formed a plan to travel to England to learn directly from King George himself how best to manage these new, complex commercial relations within his kingdom. Liholiho's chiefs did not endorse this bold plan. It was not just that the chiefs were concerned about the length of the voyage; they also distrusted the motives and character of Valentine Starbuck, the captain of the English South Seas whaler *L'Aigle*, on which Liholiho proposed to sail. Fearing Starbuck's chicanery but unable to dissuade Liholiho from going, the chiefs insisted that Liholiho's message should be delivered by him directly to the king of England himself. The chiefs apparently hoped that this restriction would prevent Starbuck from posing as Liholiho's spokesperson. Liholiho did agree to speak only to King George.⁷ He remained steadfast to this promise throughout his stay in London.⁸

And so, despite everyone's objections, Liholiho, his favorite queen Kamamalu, and his royal suite boarded *L'Aigle* and sailed away from the Sandwich Islands November 27, 1823. After a long voyage, including a lengthy stop at Rio de Janeiro, Liholiho and his suite arrived at Portsmouth, England aboard *L'Aigle* on May 17, 1824. Liholiho,

Kamamalu, and other members of their suite left the vessel at Portsmouth and traveled with Starbuck to London.⁹

THE PRESS SPECULATES

British Admiral Eyre stationed at Rio de Janeiro sent word to his Admiralty of Liholiho's intentions by letter marked "secret" and carried aboard *L'Aigle*. Relating that Liholiho was on his way to England "to pay his respects to His Britannic Majesty, and to put his islands, he says, under His Majesty's protection," Eyre also reported that Liholiho "seems to know how to appreciate the attentions which have been paid to him here" by the Brazilian Emperor. Traveling as it did on the same ship, the letter arrived at the Foreign Office in London the day after Liholiho stepped ashore at Portsmouth.¹⁰

These two themes sketched out by Admiral Eyre—that Liholiho seeks the protection of the British crown, and that the behavior of Liholiho and his royal suite appears to be appropriate enough for the British court—would be picked up by newspapers and would dominate coverage of the Sandwich Islanders' visit. The press would interweave with these threads a fascination about the Sandwich Islanders' physical appearance, personal manners and habits, and constant speculation as to when George IV himself would deign to grant them an audience.

Newspaper coverage began immediately. Brief press coverage in three different newspapers amounted simply to repeating "ship's news" picked up a day or two after the publishing of ships' arrivals of May 17 at Portsmouth.¹¹ Two days later, the royal suite had been tracked to their lodgings in London, at Osborn's Hotel in the respectable Adelphi Terrace area of London, just off the Strand near the Thames.¹² That location landed the royal party right in the heart of the London publishing district. More than a dozen well-circulated newspapers had their publishing offices within a mile or so of Osborn's Hotel. Each advocated particular points of view; some distinguished their editorial positions based on political or religious affiliation, and others provided sporting news, fashionable intelligence, or otherwise appealed to a variety of literary and dramatic interests. Only *The Times*, already esteemed internationally, eschewed political affiliation, with a

policy of providing “hard news” written with an indifference to political interests and connections.

And so it was *The Times* that printed one of the first “hard news only” stories amplifying an interesting tidbit printed elsewhere on the day after their arrival: Liholiho had traveled to England to study the English constitution and to seek the protection of Great Britain “in consequence of an attempt by the Russians to form a settlement there, to which the natives were extremely averse, but were not strong enough to resist openly.”¹³ *The Times* indicated skepticism about the judgment of the royal party generally, noting that very long voyages are “unusual with crowned heads,” and ending with the churlish comment that “[b]oth purposes, it is probable, might have been equally well answered had ‘their Majesties’ remained in their own dominions.”¹⁴ Liholiho’s desire to seek protection suited the understandings of the British government, however, which commonly distrusted the intentions of the Russians and had only the previous year disengaged itself from the Holy Alliance put together by Alexander I of Russia.

The story that Liholiho feared the imperialistic intentions of the Russians became firmly planted in the English press. But this was “old news,” no doubt gathered by reporters from naval officers and seamen who had not been to the Sandwich Islands in years. In point of fact, after their colonizing debacle of 1816 when Liholiho’s father expelled the Russian colonists from Kauai, the Russians had made every effort to reassure the Sandwich Islanders that they respected the islands’ sovereignty, even suggesting that Liholiho might establish a trade relationship with their Kamchatka colony in the Pacific Northwest.¹⁵

It does not seem remarkable that initial press coverage of Liholiho’s visit reflected how little the British public—and many in the British government—knew about the location, politics, culture, historical relationship with Britain, or strategic importance of the Sandwich Islands. Liholiho, on the other hand, understood perfectly well his islands’ strategic importance to Britain as a refueling stop for trade and rest and as a staging area for whaling, and had a very clear picture in his own mind of the mutually beneficial relationship that he understood existed between his country and Britain. Liholiho also understood that some greater power would seek to dominate the Sandwich

Islands, and by going to England to speak with King George, Liholiho made it explicitly clear that he chose Great Britain to be that greater power.

Not until the weekend did a newspaper attempt to give context to the political situation facing the Sandwich Islands. *Bell's Life in London*, advertising itself as combining the news of the week with fashion, wit, humor, and "interesting incidents of real life," ran a newsy article discussing Liholiho's reasons for coming to England. Bringing up again the threat of a Russian takeover, and also noting that the Sandwich Islands are situated conveniently on routes to the Spanish Philippine Islands, *Bell's* concludes that Liholiho's suspicions about the Russians "are perhaps, not entirely devoid of foundation."¹⁶ *Bell's* had only a glimmer of understanding of Liholiho's political concerns, however, and it took several more days for any other newspaper to pick up on

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THE KING AND QUEEN OF THE SANDWICH ISLANDS.

The King and Queen of the Sandwich Islands have arrived at Osborn's Hotel, in the Adelphi. We were admitted to an interview with these Royal strangers last evening.
On our entering the room, the party were playing whist, the Queen having for her partner her female attendant, who is a daughter of one of the chief men of the islands, and his Majesty's partner was the Governor of the island, where the seat of Government was held. The ladies were dressed in loose *robes de chambre*, of straw colour, tied with rose-coloured strings, and on their heads they wore turbans of feathers of scarlet, blue, and yellow. The two males appeared in European costume, wearing plain black coats, silk stockings, and shoes. These Islanders are of a very large size. We only saw them sitting; but judging of their height from that posture, we should say the men were above six feet and exceedingly stout. The females were equally fat and coarse made, and proportionably taller than the men. The whole party were of the darkest copper colour, very nearly approaching to black.

The following are extracts from Speeches made at the fifth Annual Meeting of the HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

Reverend JOHN REYNOLDS said that they had heard of many instances of GOD sending his light of the Gospel through the world, and he thought that nothing was more likely to do honour to his holy name than the circulation of that which had already been of so much benefit by being put into the hands of those who were ignorant of the darkness that pervaded their own country.
The Rev. Dr. MORRISON said that the Pagans of China considered selfishness as the root of all vices, and so in the present case it was his firm belief that all those Christians that merely gave themselves up to contemplation and prayer, were guilty of the greatest selfishness; there were those who would not stir a foot to join in the excellent Society, the anniversary of which they were met to celebrate.

It appeared in the middle of the week towards London well knowing I had been robbed much like a thief what he had got from a man, "I am live in the common my fortune is nothing in his hand he who could not a large bundle "come what it shirts—for I'm patrol, however he rather particular in his mode into custody; it was a light, he the crown of his back—one over waistcoats—a arm, all round "Chelmsford" The prisoner swer to question found all these nion seemed I Chelmsford; w

An Evening with the King and Queen of the Sandwich Island as Described in the May 18 to 20, 1824 Issue of *The English Chronicle and Whitehall Evening Post*.

the fact that the dynamics of the relationship between the two countries could have significant importance for both countries, not simply the Sandwich Islands.

Letters to the editors of two newspapers gave greater depth to the news industry's understanding of the importance of the Sandwich Islands to British interests, and three weeks later, *The Observer* ran a lengthy article describing the position of the islands, their discovery by Captain James Cook, and their advancement towards modernity during the intervening years.¹⁷ *The Observer*—a liberal newspaper known for shrewd analyses—summarized the reasons that the strategic location of the Islands might be of potential advantage to Russia, even giving her “a controlling power in this corner of the globe.” Unstated in the article but implicit from its analysis is the idea that the Sandwich Islands could just as well serve the interests of Britain as those of Russia. *The Observer* closes its long article with the exhortation “We sincerely trust that we shall confirm the confidence of the king of the Sandwich Islands in Great Britain by our friendly reception of him.”¹⁸

THEIR SANDWICHEAN MAJESTIES

At first the press was merely curious. Are they really a “king” and “queen?” What sort of clothes do they wear? Is it possible for “black-looking Majesties” to behave in a civilized manner?

Reporters from *The Courier* interviewed “these Royal strangers” on the evening of May 18 and gave elaborate descriptions of the party—what they wore, what they did, what they looked like—:

On our entering the room, the party were playing whist, the Queen having for her partner her female attendant, who is a daughter of one of the chief men of the islands, and his Majesty's partner was the Governor of the Island, where the seat of Government was held. The ladies were dressed in loose *robes de chambre*, of straw colour, tied with rose-coloured strings, and on their heads they wore turbans, of feathers of scarlet, blue, and yellow. The two males appeared in European costume, wearing plain black coats, silk stockings, and shoes. These Islanders are of a very large size. We only saw them sitting, but judging of their height from that posture, we should say the men are above six feet, and exceedingly stout. The females were equally fat and coarse made, and

proportionately taller than the men. The whole party were of the darkest copper colour, very nearly approaching to black.¹⁹

The English Chronicle and Whitehall Evening Post picked up the story next and claimed that its own reporters had conducted the interview.²⁰

For this visit promised to be the sort of story that sells newspapers, and even the initial disdain of *The Times*—suggesting that their Majesties should have stayed at home—couldn't prevent the story's development. Not to be outdone, *The Times* later printed a similarly chatty article about the interview under the title "News."²¹ This journalistic pattern continued throughout their stay in England—virtually identical articles appearing in two or more newspapers—with each newspaper claiming the news item as its own.

Meanwhile, using identical wording, newspapers on the Strand commented on the "considerable crowds of curious spectators" that Liholiho and his suite attracted "by the singularity of their appearance." Apparently Liholiho and his company liked to stand at the windows of the hotel at the Adelphi Terrace staring back at the crowds who stared at them. One of the newspapers commented that when beggars and itinerant musicians attract their attention from the windows, members of the royal suite generously throw dollars to them.²² The crowds grew so numerous over the next several days that the proprietor of Osborn's Hotel applied to the Magistrate's office at Bow Street for protection against

... the crowds of idlers who throng the front of his house from morning to night, for the sake of getting a peep at their *Sandwichian* Majesties. It was stated that no coach could approach the door of the hotel but it was instantly surrounded on all sides by a rabble of the open-mouthed curious, all trampling and scrambling over each other, and poking their prying noses into its windows, in search of copper-coloured Royalty—to the very great annoyance of the customers of the house, the injury of its business, and the scandal of the whole neighborhood.²³

Clearly, the Sandwich Islanders had become a publicity phenomenon. Press coverage continued at a high pitch in response to readership interest. And would Liholiho accomplish his goal and meet King George?

LONDON.

The *Eagle*, Captain Starbuck, arrived at Portsmouth from Rio de Janeiro, has brought to this country the "King and Queen" of the Sandwich Islands. Their Majesties' chief object in making this very long voyage, so unusual with crowned heads, is said to be that of putting the islands under the protection of Great Britain, in consequence of an attempt by the Russians to form a settlement there to which the natives were extremely averse, but were not strong enough to resist openly. Another project of his Majesty is announced to be that of studying the English constitution, which he understands is peculiarly suited to islands, with the view of bestowing so excellent a form of government on his own subjects.

The Arrival of the King and Queen of the Sandwich Islands as Announced in the *St. James Chronicle and General Evening Post* on May 18 to 20, 1824. Included is the belief that Liholiho sought to have Hawai'i placed under the protection of Great Britain because of the threat of Russian settlements and that he wished to study the English constitution.

The press turned that question over and over, first speculating that the king of the Sandwich Islands, together with his queen, would be presented at court immediately, as soon as May 20, when it so chanced that George IV intended to hold his first audiences after recovering from a long illness.²⁴ However, newspapers later announced that the Sandwich Islanders had not been presented at court "as had been anticipated" because "their recent arrival in this country had not afforded sufficient time to provide them with a proper dress and equipage" in which to meet His Britannic Majesty.²⁵ It is not possible to tell from newspaper accounts whether or not Liholiho knew that he had missed an opportunity to meet the king, or whether or not he knew that his wardrobe was thought to be inadequate. *L'Aigle* did not reach its dockyards at Gravesend up the Thames River until May 24.²⁶ It could be that the royal party had sufficient clothing on board, but that it had not yet been delivered to their lodgings. Explaining the failure of the British king to receive these interesting visitors immediately, several newspapers went on to relate that the Tory Government had stepped in, and that "arrangements are . . . in progress . . . and

THE KING AND QUEEN OF THE SANDWICH ISLANDS.

These illustrious foreigners were not presented at Court on Thursday, as had been anticipated, their recent arrival in this country not having afforded sufficient time to provide them with a proper dress and equipage.

Arrangements are, however, in progress, under the direction of the Earl of Liverpool and Mr. Secretary Peel, for this purpose, and, no doubt, in a few days, they will be presented to his Majesty in due form. They have received several invitations from Noblemen and private individuals, but these have been declined until they have an opportunity of paying their respects to his Majesty, whose countenance and protection they have journeyed hither to solicit. They are extremely anxious to view the curiosities of this great metropolis, but for the same reasons have refrained from appearing in public. The King is a man of pleasing countenance and gentlemanly deportment; he is tall and well-formed, and is dressed in European costume. The Queen is a large woman, and appears fond of dress, which she changes three or four times a day. Her Majesty is somewhat indisposed, and frequently retires to rest during the day; she and her sisters smoke their segars with as much *gout* as some of our modern dandies, and constantly amuse themselves in playing cards. A gratifying treat has been afforded them by the performances of the celebrated Mr. Punch and his family, whose merits they acknowledged by an ample reward; they were also highly delighted by an exhibition of the Fantoccini.

A *St. James Chronicle and General Evening Post* Article of May 20 to 22, 1824 Describes the Royal Couple and their Dress and Daily Activities.

no doubt, in a few days they will be presented to his Majesty in due form.”

These same newspaper articles noted that the royal suite could not accept any of the numerous invitations they had received from noblemen and private individuals because they had not yet had the opportunity to pay their respects to George IV, and for the same reason the suite had as yet been unable to satisfy their curiosity about the city of London because they could not appear in public. All four articles ended with a description of Liholiho as “a man of pleasing countenance and gentlemanly deportment; he is tall and well formed, and is dressed in European costume.” Kamamalu is described as “a large woman, [who] appears fond of dress, which she changes three or four times a day.”²⁷

Even though they could not travel about the city, entertainment

The King and Queen of the Sandwich Islands, as every body knows, are arrived in a whaler, on a visit to this country. They have brought over the bones of the celebrated Captain Cook, which will now be consigned to some suitable place of interment. The King's travelling name is Tirahee Tirahee, which, being translated, signifies Dog of Dogs—how her Majesty is designated, as the female of so noble a race, we have not yet heard.—*John Bull*.

The suppression of Lord Byron's memoirs of his own life must be considered a wise and politic proceeding on all sides, even should it not have been accomplished upon quite such moderate terms as have been mentioned. The greedy appetite for personal anecdote will be disappointed; while the respectable hands in which the manuscripts remained till it was destroyed, will be a security to the public that no surreptitious edition can be attempted to be fuisted upon them.

The Arrival of the King and Queen of the Sandwich Island as Noted in May 22 to 25, 1825 Issue of *The English Chronicle and Whitehall Evening Post*.

THEIR SANDWICH MAJESTIES—His Majesty is of very gentlemanly appearance, and but for the darkness of his complexion, which is of very deep copper colour, might pass for an Englishman, having in every respect correctly adopted our costume. The Queen is not so tall nor of so robust an appearance as has been represented. Her Majesty is certainly a fine full grown lady, but very little above the middle stature; she is remarkably well made, possesses an open and very agreeable countenance, not devoid even of sweetness and sensibility, with good eyes and teeth, and is by no means deficient in gracefulness of manner or elegance of demeanour. Already, with the exception of her head-dress, which is very plain, has she, like her Royal Husband, conformed in a great degree to the English mode of dress.—The Royal Suite are eight in number, composed of the Governor, his wife, Admiral of the Fleet, Treasurer, Secretary, Steward, and two mutual servants. On their way to this country they touched at Rio Janeiro, and during their stay their Majesties were presented to the Emperor of Brazil, at a Court Levee, when the Emperor was pleased to present the King with a most elegant sword; and in return the King presented the Emperor with a most curious cloak or mantle, made of the richest materials of his islands, the outside of which is of feathers of rare birds, of the most beautiful colours. Their Majesties and Suite landed at Portsmouth, under a salute of 21 guns from the ship. The following are the names of those distinguished Islanders: Rheo Rhio, the King; Kamehameha-Queen; Boky, Governor; Twinny, Governor's Lady; Kapili, Admiral; Juanoa, Treasurer; John Rives (a Frenchman and Interpreter,) Secretary; Macawaw, Steward; Wawwaw, Maumua, servants.

Under the Heading "Their Sandwich Majesties," the May 26, 1824 Issue of *The British Guardian and Protestant Chronicle* Describes the Composition of the Royal Suite, the King and Queen and their Attire, and the Journey to England.

appears to have been brought to them at Osborn's Hotel on May 20. Five separate articles write that they had enjoyed "a gratifying treat" of a performance by Punch, and had been "highly delighted" by an exhibition of the Fantuccini, a type of performance that combines animated puppets with actors. Liholiho and Kamamalu enjoyed the performance so much that they rewarded the managers with a gold piece.²⁸

LIHOLIHO: GENTLEMAN OR SAVAGE?

This benign, merely curious initial press coverage ended abruptly on May 23 with *John Bull's* first virulent attack on Liholiho and Kamamalu, linking them to the death of the English hero, Captain James Cook, and delivering the grossest of insults:

The King and Queen of the Sandwich Islands, as every body knows, are arrived in whaler, on a visit to this country . . . They have brought over the bones of the celebrated Captain Cook, which will now be consigned to some suitable place of interment.

The King's traveling name is Tirahee Tirahee, which being translated signifies Dog of Dogs—how her Majesty is designated, as the female of so noble a race, we have not yet heard.²⁹

The Morning Herald picked up this gross insult to the king and queen the next day, and then *The English Chronicle and Whitehall Evening Post* reprinted it as well.³⁰ Clearly the first blush of novelty about the couple had ended.

Bell's, self-described as a "sporting chronicle" and decidedly liberal, had little interest in hard news, and published a mean-spirited article on the same day as *John Bull's* slur. Starting with a rehash of other news about them, their lodging at Osborn's Hotel, their card playing habits, and their physical descriptions—"black looking Majesties"—the article moves on to twit the Tory government and their own King George—who is meticulous about his own dress—by retelling the story with classic British sarcasm that their majesties had not yet been presented at court because they lacked the proper clothes, ". . . and without these—what would become of mortal Majesty in any civilized country!" Next, commenting on the couple's simple pleasure

with a presentation of Punch's puppets, *Bell's* is the first newspaper to openly refer to them as savages: "What a proof this of savage life! *Civilized* Monarchs would have thought they had conferred an honor in *allowing* themselves to be amused!" Thus *Bell's* makes sure its readers understand that, while Liholiho may be "a man of pleasing manners and gentlemanly deportment," he is still a savage.³¹

THE FOREIGN OFFICE

More time passed, and still no date was set. On Tuesday, May 25, the Foreign Office took charge of the royal suite from the Home Secretary, and Foreign Office Secretary George Canning appointed a staff member, the Hon. Frederick C. Byng, to attend to Liholiho and assist with his social activities. Although he was a Tory conservative, Canning supported the growth of nationalism and liberalism around the globe and was in the midst of leading Britain away from involvement in Europe's largely reactionary politics. Because of this, his foreign policy views ran opposite to powerful, more conservative, factions within his own party. *John Bull*, espousing the cause of the "ultra conservative" faction, used the Foreign Office's treatment of Liholiho as a means to attack Canning directly as well as through Byng, who *John Bull* called the Tory government's "chief show-man to the *Royal Coppers*." *John Bull* closed one of its attacks with a crude joke—Byng's nickname is "Poodle," and, it was said, "he has been told these Sandwich people eat dogs." "By that rule," the joke goes, "they should be afraid of poodles, for *they eat sandwiches!*"³²

It is obvious from his cordial treatment of the Sandwich Islanders that Secretary Canning understood and valued the relationship that their government enjoyed with Great Britain. No doubt in consequence of the regard emanating from the Foreign Office, other press coverage for a period of time treated the couple in a courteous and dignified manner, consonant with their titled standing. For on the same day that the Foreign Office took charge of their visit, *The Times* and two other newspapers published a favorable article under the heading "Their Sandwich Majesties," and rendered Liholiho the greatest compliment possible—why, "but for the darkness of his complexion, . . . [Liholiho] might pass for an Englishman" because he dressed like one! The article provided flattering descriptions of the

various members of the royal suite and included mention of the Court Levee at which the Emperor of Brazil honored Liholiho by receiving him and exchanging presents. These “distinguished Islanders” had landed at Portsmouth “under a salute of 21 guns from the ship.”³³ The entire article served to boost the prestige of the royal suite and elevate their status in the view of press readership.

Under the leadership of Foreign Office Secretary George Canning, Byng arranged appropriate social activities for the royal suite, suitable to their rank and to the tastes of British titled society. It had become clear that George IV had no intention of receiving the king of the Sandwich Islands immediately and the royal suite could not be isolated in its hotel indefinitely. Secretary Canning devised a way around



As Kamehameha II Appeared to Londoners during His 1824 Visit. From John Hayter's lithographic print first published in London in June, 1824, shortly before the king died. State Archives of Hawai'i.

protocol and launched the royal couple into society. First came an evening reception held in their honor by Secretary Canning. Approximately 200 people of the “first rank and fashion” had been invited to meet them at Gloucester-Lodge, and upon their arrival about 11 p.m., the king and queen “were received by Mr. Secretary Canning, who introduced them to their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester,” and to the Duke of Wellington, most of the Cabinet ministers, and nearly all of the diplomatic corps. After a walk in the gardens attached to the Lodge, where they enjoyed the music played by the band of the Life Guards, the royal couple returned to the refreshment room and drank to the health of the company present. The Royal couple departed at half past twelve o’clock, and showed much satisfaction at their reception and with all of the arrangements. Only one sour note appeared in the press. *Bell’s* printed this couplet at the end of its article: “From Majesty take the first and last letter, T’will be seen the improvement is *much* for the BETTER.”³⁴

LONDON EMBRACES THE KING AND QUEEN

Now that Liholiho and Kamamalu had been launched into London’s titled society, they began to enjoy those sorts of social activities that drew attention to their status and enhanced their public standing, even—it was rumored—observing the races at Epsom from their carriage.³⁵ The details of every event made the daily newspapers.

On Monday, May 31, accompanied by the Honorable and Mrs. Byng, Liholiho, Kamamalu, Liliha, and Boki, attended *Pizarro*, followed by *Spirits of the Moon*, at Covent Garden Theater. It was their first public appearance in London society, and several newspapers reported the event in a straightforward style. The Royal Box having been fitted up for the occasion by order of George IV’s Lord Chamberlain, the royal suite arrived at the “King’s door” soon after seven o’clock, where they were warmly welcomed by the theater officials in much the same manner as George IV would be welcomed. “[Liholiho] bowed several times, by no means ungracefully, on coming into the box, and remained standing while “God Save the King” was sung, bowing again before taking his seat.” His appearance “need hardly give way to any potentate in Europe,” and—while he verges on being a bit too plump—“his general manner is easy, and extremely unaffected.”

Upon leaving the theater, “the illustrious visitors retired to their carriages by the door in the prince’s place, at which they entered, and were loudly cheered, as at their first appearance, by the people both within and without the theatre.”³⁶

Another newspaper suggested that the presence of the royal party provided the real “entertainment” of the evening, and described the appearance and manners of the royal suite in greater detail:

All were dressed in the English costume; the men, including the King, in the ordinary evening dress with cocked hats and the Queen and her lady in waiting in white turbans, red silk dresses and shawls, loosely knotted round their necks. The Queen wore a green mantle. The King is a well-looking person shorter nearly by a head than the Queen. Her Majesty is a very imposing figure. The dress of the ladies was rich without splendour, and even elegant, and their complexions not so dark as those of the men. The whole party was distinguished by an entire ease and propriety of deportment, constant attention to the stage and no signs of surprise or vivacity of gesture. The lady in attendance upon the Queen . . . occasionally and very excusably seemed rather tired of the performance, but, instead of yawning or sleeping, she rested her cheek upon her hand, and an elegante of St. James’ could not more skillfully give an air of graceful melancholy to *ennui*.³⁷

Buried in the middle of the article is an ominous observation: “The Queen laboured under a slight cold.”

The queen’s health had been noted almost from the first—she had a cold; she was indisposed—and the cold she exhibited at *Pizarro* was no better the following day, preventing her from attending the “grand assembly” put on by Countess Bathurst, the wife of the Cabinet Secretary of State for the Colonies, at her house in Great Stanhope Street, Mayfair. Between 200 and 300 of “the leading and distinguished fashionables” had been invited to meet the king and queen of the Sandwich Islands. The interior of the Countess’ home was fitted up with “great taste and elegance, and was most brilliantly illuminated.” As at Canning’s reception several days earlier, many of the highly titled members of London society attended, including the Duke of Wellington, and most of the foreign princes and ambassadors present at London.³⁸

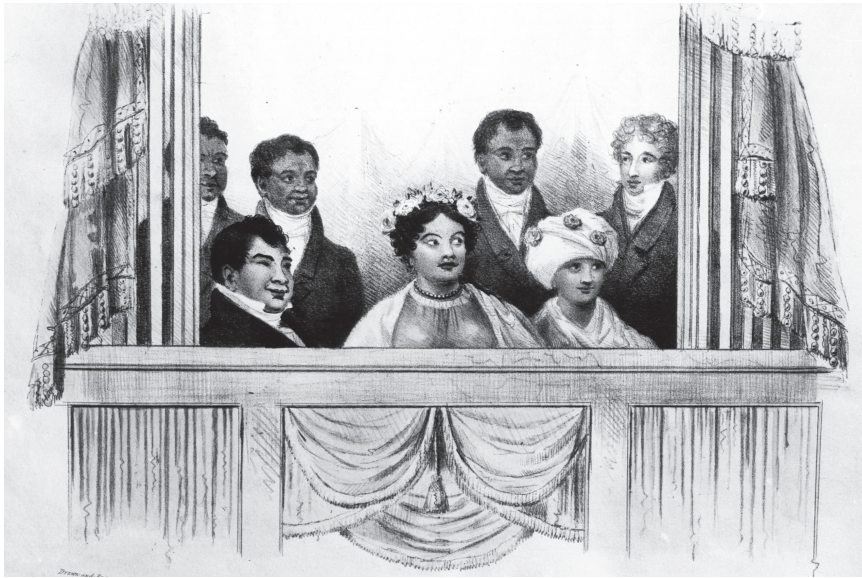
The queen seemed to recover from her cold. Three days after the Countess' reception, she appeared at another theater performance with the royal party and Byng. This time they saw *Rob Roy MacGregor* followed by a ballet at the New Theatre Royal in Drury Lane. *Bell's* reported that "certain females of rank, who were at Drury Lane Theater . . . declared themselves quite fascinated with the manly appearance of King Rhio-Rhio . . . and thought him likely to become a rival to our Royal Sovereign." The article goes on to dispute this potentiality by saying "—possibly his age may be considered an advantage, but



As Kamamalu May Have Dressed for a London Outing. From John Hayter's lithographic print first published in London in June, 1824, shortly before the queen died. State Archives of Hawai'i.

he does not bow so gracefully, nor does the English coat seem to sit quite so easily upon his shoulders.” Both he and the queen, who wore ornaments “which became her very well,” reacted with visible emotion to the acting skills of the main performer, as did most of the theater audience, but otherwise “they conducted themselves with an easy nonchalance that astonished John Bull [an English term for the common man], who is accustomed to gape and wonder at everything.” In fact, *Bell's* claims that the theater manager feared that they had not enjoyed the theatrical performance, but when Liliha's “eyes sparkled with rapture” in reaction to the ballet, the manager “exultingly retired exclaiming ‘*I thought we could please them!*’”³⁹

On Saturday, June 5, the king and queen visited the Duke of York's Royal Military Asylum in Chelsea,⁴⁰ and on the following Tuesday night their majesties with Liliha and Boki entered the Royal Box at the King's Theater just after the conclusion of the first act of the opera *Tancredi*. The queen seemed most pleased with the divertisse-



The Royal Suite Seated in King George IV's Royal Box at the Drury Lane Theater on June 4, 1824. Seated, left to right, are Liholiho, Kamamalu, and Liliha and standing, left to right, are two unidentified members of the royal suite, Boki, and the Honorable Frederick C. Byng.

ment, *L'Offrande, aux Graces* “and scarcely ceased smiling with surprize, while she looked at the wonderful agility of the dancers . . . to whose astonishing performance she frequently called the attention of the King.” Although uninterested in the opera, the royal party “appeared to be highly gratified” when the ballet, *La Nooe du Village*, began.⁴¹ Bell’s had a bit of a different take on the queen’s reaction to the ballet, unkindly describing her as unable to stifle hearty laughter as if she found the dancers’ movements to be “ridiculous contortions.”⁴²

As they entered the royal box, specially fitted up for them, they were received by the whole company present in the theater, “standing, with loud demonstrations of applause, which they returned with graceful bows.” The queen was beautifully outfitted in European costume consisting of a white satin dress, with her head ornamented with a wreath of flowers. Liliha, who sat between Boki and Liholiho, was dressed in the same style but wore a turban. The queen saluted several parties in other boxes, “with a grace by no means unbecoming royalty.” On leaving the theater, “they were followed by the same plaudits which greeted them on their entrance.” The house was very full, more so than usual on a Tuesday night, and among the attendees were the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, the Duchess of Kent, and the Duke and Duchess of Argyll.⁴³ This night of their greatest social triumph was also their last public appearance.

GEORGE IV DELAYS

And when would they meet King George, so that Liholiho could complete his mission to Great Britain and return home? Not soon, for *Bell’s* reports that Liholiho again was not invited to meet the king at the next Court Levee held June 9. We know from newspaper articles that Liholiho dressed elegantly when he attended the May 31 performance of *Pizarro*, and on every social occasion thereafter. Surely it wasn’t still his clothes. Why the delay?

But it was put out that it *was* his clothes. *Bell’s* claims that Home Secretary Mr. Peel and Lord Bathurst, Secretary of State for the Colonies, could not agree “*respecting the ground colour of the embroidery to be used on his Majesty’s coat,*” and so the presentation was deferred until another day. No other clue can be gleaned from newspaper coverage to explain the delay.

Now it may be an apocryphal story, or it may be that Liholiho's ire began to rise, or it may be that *Bell's* just wanted to disparage George IV, for at this point, *Bell's* goes on to relate that:

... [w]hen a description of the manner of holding the Levee was made to [Liholiho], he abruptly stopped the narrator, on hearing that the Grand hall at Carlton Palace was lined with police officers, to ask "*If the great and good King of England expected his subjects to commit any violence?*" But an explanation being given that their appearance there was merely a matter of Royal Choice, meant only to add grandeur to the scene, the King observed, with a very expressive smile, "*That he had never before supposed so much useless show could add to the support of dignity.*"⁴⁴

Perhaps *John Bull* held the real key to the delay by George IV, for on Sunday, June 13, *John Bull* lashed out with a vicious article that derided the treatment of and respect shown to the Sandwich Islanders by Canning's Foreign Office:

... the whole thing is in bad taste, and can conduce to no good purpose:—to see the Royal Boxes at our theatres, destined for the reception of our accomplished and excellent Monarch, occupied by a copper-coloured Chieftain and his female companion . . . is quite abominable . . . let [these savages] be well-treated, . . . but do not take them out of their proper sphere, and place [them] upon a footing with the enlightened sovereigns of Europe.⁴⁵

It may be that George IV, too, thought it an affront to good taste that these *Sandwichian Majesties* should be so well received by his government.

Or perhaps *Bell's* hit on the reason in its June 20 piece, suggesting that Liholiho's sudden absence from the elite London social scene may be because he had fallen out of favor with the government's ministers. The Tories had found Liholiho unwilling "to concede his authority to any set of men, [and he] wishes to retain the management of his subjects in his own hands." *Bell's* offers that "it is very amusing . . . to watch how Ministers will deal with this [unexpected] Kingly opposition,"⁴⁶ then two weeks later repeats what must be the Foreign Office's official position, that the timing of their introduction to the king "will depend, like all other state matters, on the arrangements of

the Cabinet.”⁴⁷ Perhaps the cabinet deliberately delayed their meeting while attempting to learn from Liholiho what he intended to say to the king.

Apparently, there had been behind-the-scenes disagreement over the propriety of even receiving the king of the Sandwich Islands at court. *The Times* comes squarely down on the side of presentation, deeming that “A King is a King,” and “the more savage the race the Monarch reigns over, the more the majesty of the office shines forth. . . .” *The Times* asserts that it has as much respect and reverence for the king of the Sandwich Islands as for any European sovereign, pointing out that its own monarch has German family branches that are “ragged and regal.” Concluding its argument, *The Times* writes that it has seen nothing in Liholiho’s conduct at all unprincely or insensible, and there is precedent for Liholiho’s presentation to be found in the presentation of the king of the Creek Indians to George II.⁴⁸

At long last, more than one month after Liholiho had arrived in England, *The Times* announced that George IV agreed to set a date to meet him “shortly.” It no longer mattered. *Bell’s* last comment in its June 20 article foreshadows the tragedy ahead: “We have just heard it assigned, as the cause of Rhio-Rhio’s absence from certain great festivities that their Majesties are confined by the English measles.”⁴⁹

KAMAMALU SUCCUMBS

It took until June 29 for another newspaper to pick up the story about their illness when *The Times* printed an unflattering reference to them in its society column as the “*soi disant*,” or “self-styled” king and queen who are laid up with the measles. *The Times’* blurb ends most ungraciously: “Lord F. Conyngham, who lately visited them, is indebted to them for having communicated to him the contagion of this very unpleasant epidemic distemper.”⁵⁰ A member of Canning’s diplomatic corps, Conyngham is also the son of one of George IV’s mistresses. Several days later, *The Sunday Times* printed a somewhat less derogatory line: “The King and Queen of the Sandwich Islands having caught the measles, have communicated that disease to Lord F. Conyngham.”⁵¹ As if the king and queen were responsible for spreading the English measles.

Word about-town of their illness didn't keep *The Oxford University and City Herald* from poking fun at them with a few crude jokes. Claiming that "Owhyddee" means "child-hunter," in the Islanders' language, the article later joked that when told that the king of the Sandwich Islands had been invited to visit Oxford town, a gentleman inquired "O-why-he without his Queen?" The article's main joke is a report that Liholiho intends to visit Oxford, and that a member of his royal suite is already arrived. This personage is:

. . . often seen parading our principal streets, his head covered with an enormous cocked beaver deeply bordered with gold lace, and his body clothed in an elegant coat and vest of green and gold. He is altogether a most pompous personage, and exemplifies the great taste, munificence, and wisdom of his royal patrons.⁵²

This silly hoax was even picked up by the prestigious *Times*.⁵³ *The Oxford University and City Herald* acknowledged the hoax in its next edition and reported that their majesties were both ill with the measles. Unwilling to curb its derisive tone, however, the paper reprinted *The Times*' rude comment about Lord Francis Conyngham.⁵⁴

Not all the newspapers got the word about the measles. On July 4, *Bell's* repeats banalities to explain the absence of the king and queen about the town attending "present gaieties," saying they are not being "overlooked," but rather "are busily and usefully employed in the study of the English manners and language, in which, it is said, they make great progress." *Bell's* goes on to report that "it is thought [that Liholiho] will not stay a great while longer;" and—right in the middle of a generally sympathetic article—announces that his return will no doubt please the five wives whom he has left behind, who he may have to give up if he adopts an English-style constitution. *Bell's* then turns that joke into disapproval of their own sovereign, George IV, a notorious philanderer, because such a wifely limitation should cause Liholiho no disadvantage, for "there is no doubt, that the example of European Monarchs will allow King Rhio Rhio every convenient indulgence on that head . . ."⁵⁵

Meanwhile *John Bull* had printed another attack intended to illustrate its principal objection—that British citizens should not be asked to respect and venerate in London's public theaters—sitting in George

IV's own royal box—such black savages who are insensible to appropriate conduct between civilized sovereigns. *John Bull* wishes them well out of their sickness and a pleasant journey home, but this treatment of them is one of those concessions by the Tory government “to mock sanctity and sham liberality which we most cordially despise.”⁵⁶

Then there is an absence of newspaper coverage about them for several days, broken on July 10 by *The Morning Herald* and *The Times* announcing the “Death of the Queen of the Sandwich Islands,” followed on July 11 by *Bell's*. All three articles are written very touchingly and are nearly identical. The physicians' official statement, dated Thursday evening, July 8, announces that “The Queen of the Sandwich Islands departed this life about half past six this evening, without much apparent suffering, and in possession of her senses to the last moment.” Noting that news reporters had learned the king took his last farewell of the queen about ten o'clock on the morning she died, and that Kamamalu had told him she knew she was dying and was resigned to it, the newspapers go on to quote the official statement:

The King, in the midst of this deep sorrow, manifests a firmness of mind which has penetrated every body about him with a feeling of respect. Though very anxious to express his grief in the manner of his country, and to show the marks of deference which are usually paid to the dead there, he submits, with good sense and patience, to every suggestion which our habits dictate.”

The immediate cause of her Majesty's death is reported to be inflammation of the lungs, a result of the measles. The physicians' official statement ends with their expression that “we have every reason to believe, that his Majesty's anxiety and depression have aggravated all the symptoms of his disease . . . but we hope in a day or two that he will be better.”⁵⁷

SENSATIONALISM AND SYMPATHY

Hopelessly out of touch with Liholiho's modernizations, all three newspapers shamelessly print an excerpt taken from Archibald Campbell's observations written more than a dozen years prior, describing funeral customs that had largely been abandoned by Sandwich Islanders when Liholiho abolished the *kapu* system five years previously.

Stories such as these kept alive in readers' minds the idea that these Sandwich Islanders lived in a savage, uncivilized state. No doubt that view enhanced reader interest about the royal couple, but it misrepresented the present state of the Sandwich Islands, where Liholiho had enabled missionary efforts and trading arrangements that had brought reading, writing, Christianity, brisk commercial activity, and the beginnings of a modern society to the Islands.

Even worse, in the moment of Liholiho's greatest sorrow, some newspapers couldn't resist turning the death of the queen into an opportunity to titillate their readers with stories of Liholiho's "savage" excesses. *The Sunday Times*, a liberal newspaper publishing to please a weekend crowd, began its article about the queen's death in a vein sympathetic to Liholiho, describing his great sorrow, and writing that "We hope the pen of satire will now drop from the hands of those who have so cruelly employed it; and that the sympathy with the bereaved monarch, will be strong and universal." However, *The Sunday Times* promptly abandons its own hope, for "we have received the following letter, which places the loss of the 'Sovereign mourner' in a less irreparable light:—He has four wives yet left to cheer the solitude of his widowed arms."⁵⁸ The letter referred to originated from an anonymous correspondent who described other instances of Liholiho's behavior unbecoming of a civilized monarch. In short, Liholiho is a savage; sympathy for his loss is misplaced.

The next day, one of *The Morning Post's* two articles about the queen picked up that same tone, and announced that *The Morning Post*, too, feels "considerably relieved in our affliction for the loss of the King . . . by [finding] . . . that he has four more wives at home." Nearby in the same column is a second article written in a completely different manner, using an objective tone to describe the details surrounding the disposal of the body of the queen.⁵⁹ As a conservative daily newspaper with an interest in foreign affairs, *The Morning Post* also catered to those readers who wanted to read about the goings-on of the rich and famous. Running two articles in the same column with different slants appears to have satisfied both editorial positions.

John Bull printed yet another attack. First, the newspaper acknowledges the stories of the queen's death printed in other newspapers, then rehashes Archibald Campbell's outdated descriptions and adds

similarly outdated observations made by French voyager Jacques Arago in 1819. Considerable newspaper space is used to buttress *John Bull's* editorial position that Liholiho is a “savage chief” and thus undeserving of the attentions given to him by the Canning forces. In conclusion:

. . . . the mode of treatment here would naturally tend to increase the self importance of the Savage Chief, who on his return to his island would be apt to look down with contempt upon masters of merchantmen, (persons whom, before his *regalization* in England, he worshipped as gods, because they were white,) and regulate his demands for hogs and water by the notions which we had instilled into his mind—as it is, the consequences will be worse, because the whole of the Sandwich Islanders will believe that we have for some great end, poisoned the royal family⁶⁰

Outnumbering these pieces are several sympathetic articles in four different newspapers, detailing the manner of embalming of the body of the queen, the lying in state, the richness of the coffin arrangements, including the placing of a large brass plate on the lid of the oak exterior coffin giving details about the queen both in English and in her native language, and the disposition of her body. There is a lengthy *Times's* article about the details of the queen's lying in state, which it describes as having been conducted “with a simplicity, regularity, and solemnity, consistent with the most rational taste, and was at once demonstrative of respect for the rank and of attachment to the person of the deceased.”⁶¹

And would the queen be buried in England, or would her body be taken home? Liholiho asked that her body be preserved and deposited in some church until he had recovered himself and was able to leave the country and take her body home with him. The government selected the crypt at St. Martin's in the Fields, in what would become Trafalgar Square, as the queen's temporary resting place, only about a half a mile distant from Osborn's Hotel. *The Morning Post* and *The Morning Herald* end their articles claiming that Liholiho had passed a good night on Saturday night, but awoke Sunday morning saying that he had hoped that he and his queen would have been well enough to be presented to the king of England on “Wednesday next.”

“I AM DEAD, I AM HAPPY!”

The Times continues its July 13 article with the information that both the king and the queen had been converted to Christianity while still at home, and that the king’s faith has been the instrument for his resignation at her death, and his demeanor since that occurrence. The article then describes him as having penned dispatches home, announcing Kamamalu’s demise. Clearly Liholiho—described here as a literate Christian—is no longer a “savage” to *The Times*.

Most touching is learning in this *Times* article that official reports about the king’s health are sent daily both to King George IV—who is described as “much concerned”—and to Secretary Canning, and that on Sunday, upon learning that Secretary Canning intended to pay him a visit, Liholiho gave particular instruction that Canning should be conducted to his bedside. Canning expressed his concern for Liholiho’s health, and his hope that Liholiho would not let his feelings aggravate his illness. Liholiho responded that he was most gratefully sensible for the kindness and attention which he had received, and that he would strive to endure the trial with fortitude. So concerned is the public about the royal couple that “numbers of the nobility and gentry, and many distinguished naval officers, have left cards of condolence.”

The next day found him no better, and at three o’clock in the afternoon, they carried the king in a sedan chair from Osborn’s Hotel, down the street to the end of Adelphi Terrace to a house belonging to the same proprietor, known as the Caledonian Hotel. Situated at the secluded end of the Adelphi Terrace, he moved into a room facing the Thames, where “he would be more tranquil.” Liholiho passed Monday night “composed,” and was said to be “a little better” on Tuesday.⁶²

Even as that edition of *The Times* hit the streets, the king lay dying. Although somewhat better in the morning, by Tuesday afternoon he became worse, and that night the doctor found him in a “very low state, and death appeared to be approaching fast.” Sensible of this, Liholiho caught the doctor’s hand and said in his own language “I am dying; I know I am dying.” Liholiho breathed his last early Wednesday morning, at four a.m., at the Caledonian Hotel, Robert Street, in the Adelphi. “Farewell to you all, I am dead I am happy.”⁶³

PRAISE AND "CALUMNY"

Now the newspapers exploded with articles. *The English Chronicle and Whitehall Evening Post* alone ran four articles in the same edition, dominating their own news of the day. Known for a good mix of hard news and human-interest stories, they led their coverage on page one with a report of the preparation for burial of the king's body along with details about his lying-in-state entitled "The Late King of the Sandwich Islands." Immediately below this article is a lengthy apologia "From a correspondent" correcting "inaccurate" representations of Liholiho in an effort "to do some justice to the memory of an extraordinary visitor." At the end of this same column is "Manner of Mourning amongst the Natives of the Sandwich Islands," giving the usual outdated view of Sandwich Island funeral customs, this time taken from King's voyage with Captain Cook in 1778. Moving on to page four, one finds a reprint of a letter dated July 15 written by Liholiho's secretary, John Rives, to Kalaimoku at Honolulu, telling of Liholiho's death.⁶⁴

Both the lead article on page one and Rives' letter are well covered by other newspapers. It is the report from the correspondent that makes news. No other newspaper picked up these same sentiments. The first paragraph acknowledges that the king and queen had been "kept in a species of distinguished custody; nobody was to approach them but persons of rank or official character; hence the most absurd stories have got into circulation respecting them, and they were generally looked upon as no better than savages and cannibals" and the author hopes that his information "may enable the public to do some justice to the memory of an extraordinary visitor." Then the correspondent discusses Liholiho's faith as a liberal Christian, his use of power to protect merchantmen in trouble in his waters, his mysterious object in visiting England about which he would communicate only with King George himself, and his considerate demeanor, seemingly mindful to sustain the dignity of his station. The prominent placement of this article, in a newspaper noted for its objective reporting, serves more than any other to illustrate the growth in the English mind of Liholiho's character and kingly ability, from savage to civilized monarch.

Several articles reprint Rives' letter to "Mr. Pitt, Prime Minister at the Sandwich Islands, or Krimaku" in which Rives tells him of Liholiho's

liho's death and reassures him that "every thing was done by the English Government and private gentlemen to promote our comfort, and assist our unfortunate Monarch." Through Rives' letter, the English people learn that the king of England finally had promised to give Liholiho an interview as soon as his health was restored, and of course, this is what the Sandwich Islanders also need to know.⁶⁵

Three more articles, all entitled "Death of the King of the Sandwich Islands," appeared July 15. The articles mirror each other and contain only slight differences. All three relate the bare details of the



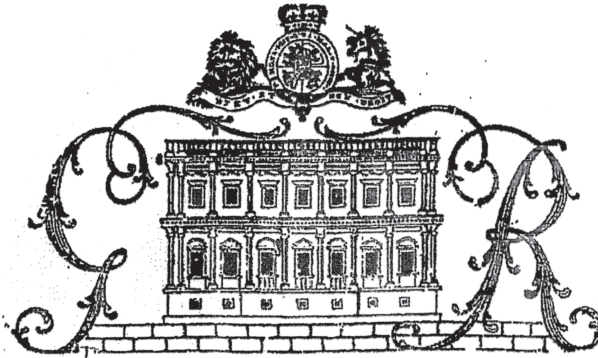
A 1933 Photograph of the Former Caledonian Hotel at the Corner of Robert Street and Adelphi Terrace, Adelphi, London. Kamehameha II was taken to the Caledonian Hotel after becoming ill and passed away here in 1824. He lay in state in the room occupied by Booth SS Co Ltd in 1933. State Archives of Hawai'i.

THE ENGLISH CHRONICLE,

AND

Whitehall Evening Post.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON, JULY 17.

**THE LATE KING OF THE SANDWICH ISLANDS.**

Yesterday morning, Doctors P. P. M'Gregor, Ley, and Peregrine, arrived at the Caledonian Hotel. The body of his Majesty was then wrapped in a sheet, and brought down stairs from his bed-chamber into the parlour, where the operation of preserving the corpse was performed. The body was entirely stripped, and then it was enveloped in waxed linen, resembling parchment; it was next wrapped up in white silk, and afterwards in light blue amazine. The body having thus been secured from the action of the air, was wrapped in a winding sheet, and placed in a leaden coffin on supporters in the middle of the room. Doctors M'Gregor, Ley, and Peregrine, then left the rest of the business to Poki, the Governor, who was appointed by his Majesty just before his death, to superintend the disposal of his body.

The attendants then set about decorating the room after the custom of their country. The war cloaks were hung round the coffin in the same manner as they were when her late Majesty lay in state. On the coffin lid was placed his Majesty's magnificent sabre; it is entirely of gold, and beautifully ornamented about the handle. It was presented to the King by the Emperor of the Brazils, when his late Majesty had an audience with the Emperor at his Palace, in Rio Janeiro, when he and his Queen were on their voyage to this country. At the head of the coffin stands the Royal spear. It is composed of wood of exquisite workmanship. The floor of the room is, as before, strewn with rose leaves, and the whole has a very grand and imposing effect.

The body will lay in this state to-day, Saturday, and Sunday, and on Monday it will be entombed with that of the Queen, in St. Martin's Church, till a vessel can be got ready to convey them and the suite to their native land.

Despatches communicating the news of the King's death, were yesterday morning sent to Falmouth, to be conveyed by a vessel to his Majesty's Prime Minister, at the Sandwich Islands. The vessel sails on Monday, and it is supposed she will be five months on her voyage.

Madame Poki, the Governor's wife, is somewhat better; as also is Mr. Reeves, the interpreter.

The Admiral still remains in a very weak state.

A Front Page Article of the July 17, 1824 *English Chronicle and Whitehall Evening Post* Discusses Preparations for Liholiho to Lay in State.

king's mood, his failing spirits, the visits of the doctors, his failure to recognize his attendants, his final words, and the reactions of his suite to his demise. All three articles note that the king had gradually become worse since the death of Kamamalu, and that he had anxiously questioned his attendants if they had seen to it that she was safely entombed in St. Martin's Church. He is reported as having told his attendants that "he hoped he should soon be with her," and that should he too die, his body, with hers, should be conveyed with as much speed as possible to the Sandwich Islands. Two of the papers printed the official statement of the physicians who had attended Liholiho, and both reported the physician's finding that his death occurred through the formation of a large abscess on the lungs. Only *The Morning Post* voiced concern that their deaths would impede the progress of civilization in the Sandwich Islands:

The King and the Queen . . . proved in their own persons the blessings of civilization. Mild and amiable in their dispositions, . . . had they lived to return home, [they] would no doubt have introduced many of our [British] customs; their own knowledge and example would have enabled them to facilitate the march of civilization; while the hospitable receptions they met with would have filled the inhabitants of the islands with joy and gratitude.

Lastly, *The Morning Post* gives voice to the concern abroad throughout London that day, hoping that the surviving members of the royal suite "can convince [the islanders left at home] that all that the best medical advice and the kindest attention could do, had been done for them."⁶⁶

John Bull had raised this concern after the death of the queen. John Rives alluded to the concern in his letter to Kalaimoku announcing Liholiho's death. The king himself is quoted by *The Times* as saying that he is well satisfied with the efforts of the physicians on behalf of the queen, for "as it has pleased God to take her away, it was out of the power of human hand to prevent it."⁶⁷ Tastelessly, *The Sunday Times* addresses this concern with a very bad joke printed in its "Odds and Ends" section: "A Russian hearing of the death of a king and queen said, 'We have swallowed the Sandwiches out of revenge for their killing Capt. Cook.'⁶⁸

Taking the lead from *The English Chronicle and Whitehall Evening Post's* page one story, *The Times* printed an identical article on July 16, under the same heading "The Late King of the Sandwich Islands." Both articles detailed the operation of preserving the king's remains performed by the three physicians, followed by a description of the decoration of the room and the coffin by members of the royal suite led by Boki and using feather cloaks, Liholiho's saber, and his royal spear. More detail about the scene in the room where Liholiho lay in state and the constant attendance of members of the suite appeared in a subsequent article in *The Times*, together with the news that on Friday night the leaden coffin in which his body had been placed was moved into the "splendid case" of immense width made for it by a Mr. Jarvis, of Long Acre. These arrangements presented "a strange though imposing effect." Readers learn that "a great number of applications [by the British public] were made yesterday morning for admission, which were generally complied with."⁶⁹

The Courier took a different slant, concentrating its coverage on a description of the curiosity of the London crowd to come and see "the novel manner in which his Sandwich Majesty is laid in state." When the coffin was exhibited to the public for the first time, "[v]ast crowds of respectable people presented themselves [Saturday] morning for admission at the Caledonian Hotel, but only those who produced their cards were suffered to enter the state apartment." Liholiho's lying in state would close at six o'clock on Saturday evening, and early on Sunday morning his remains would be moved to the crypt at St. Martin's Church, already containing the remains of Kamamalu.⁷⁰

Then *John Bull's* weekend edition hit the stands with a rather vicious diatribe against a potpourri of current events it described as "absurdities." Beginning and ending its lengthy article with discussions of the ludicrous treatment by other press and the Tory government of the Sandwich Islanders, *John Bull* knocks down reports that Liholiho was a Christian, that he could write, that Madame Boki should be dignified with any sort of "frenchified" appellation, that Liholiho's "incoherent wanderings" on his deathbed should be printed, or that Byng could have exhibited genuine sorrow about Liholiho's demise.⁷¹

Unlike *John Bull*, *The Sunday Times* struck a melancholy and forgiving note, and suggested that Liholiho's death resulted from feeling

desolate and dreary in a strange land, “coupled with the weakness which preying disease had induced, made him too acutely sensible to his situation,” and that “[h]e aggravated his malady by dwelling on the sad bereavement of his Queen.” And so, asks *The Sunday Times*, as the royal couple had traveled voluntarily to England on a highly praiseworthy mission, “we hope the angry voice of calumny will cease; and that we will hear no more of the cruel and unmanly sarcasm in which some of our contemporaries so openly indulged.”⁷²

Only two newspapers report the end of the story:

Yesterday morning, between four and five o’clock, the undertaker and his assistants, arrived at the Caledonian Hotel, to prepare for placing the Royal body in the temporary depository in the vault at St. Martin’s Church. About five, a hearse drawn by six horses, and a mourning coach drove up to the tavern, and the coffin was brought out on the shoulders of eight men, and placed in a carriage.

[Boki, Kekuanaoa, Rives, and Starbuck] then entered the mourning coach, and the procession moved on at a funeral pace towards St. Martin’s Church, where, on its arrival, the coffin was taken out and carried through the aisle of the church, and deposited by the side of Tamehamalu the late Queen. The mourning coach then conveyed the suite back to the Caledonian Hotel.

Both newspapers report that there was no ceremony performed, and that the proceeding attracted very little notice.⁷³

There they lay, side by side, in the crypt at St. Martin’s Church, until that September evening when they were carried to the River and placed aboard the *Blonde*, captained by Lord Byron, for their long trip home:

On Tuesday night at ten o’clock the remains of the late unfortunate King and Queen of the Sandwich Islands were removed from the vault in St. Martin’s Church, in which they had been deposited since their decease, and conveyed in two hearses to the London docks, where they were yesterday embarked on board the vessel which is to carry the corpses back to the royal residence at Woahoo. The hearses were followed by two mourning coaches in which were Poki, the treasurer, and his wife; Rives, the Interpreter, and the other members of the deceased king’s suite.⁷⁴

NOTES

- ¹ *Morning Herald*, 19 May 1824, 1.
- ² *Historical Records of Australia, Volume XI, January, 1823—November, 1825* (The Library Committee of the Commonwealth Parliament, 1917) 22.
- ³ William Ellis notes dated October 30, 1823, CWM/LMS/South Seas, Incoming Correspondence 1823–1825, SOAS, University of London.
- ⁴ C. S. Stewart, *Journal of a Residence in the Sandwich Islands* (Honolulu, Hawaii: U of Hawaii P, 1970 [1830]) 158–162.
- ⁵ Ellis, notes dated Oct. 30, 1823.
- ⁶ *Missionary Herald, Vol. XVIII, No. 2* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, Printers, Jul. 1822) 206; James Montgomery, ed., *Journal of Voyages and Travels by the Rev. Daniel Tyerman and George Bennett, Esq., deputed from the London Missionary Society to visit their various stations in the South Sea islands, China, India, &c., between the years 1821 and 1829* (London: Frederick Westley and A. H. Davis, 1831) 471–472.
- ⁷ Ellis, notes dated Oct. 30, 1823.
- ⁸ *The English Chronicle and Whitehall Evening Post*, 15–17 July 1824, 1.
- ⁹ *Bell's Life in London*, 23 May 1824, 3.
- ¹⁰ FO 58/3, 22–24, British National Archives.
- ¹¹ *Morning Herald*, 19 May 1824, 1; *The Courier*, 18 May 1824, 4; *The English Chronicle and Whitehall Evening Post*, 15–18 May 1824, 4.
- ¹² *The Courier*, 19 May 1824, 3; *The English Chronicle and Whitehall Evening Post*, 18–20 May 1824, 3.
- ¹³ *Morning Herald*, 18 May 1824, M-418, AH.
- ¹⁴ *The Times*, 19 May 1824, 3; *St. James Chronicle and General Evening Post*, 18–20 May 1824, 1.
- ¹⁵ Letter from Governor of Kamchatka to Liholiho, 5 Sept. 1820, 402-2-11, AH.
- ¹⁶ *Bell's Life in London*, 23 May 1824, 3.
- ¹⁷ *The English Chronicle and Whitehall Evening Post*, 27–29 May 1824, 4; *The Times*, 15 June 1824, 3.
- ¹⁸ *The Observer*, 14 June 1824, 1.
- ¹⁹ *The Courier*, 19 May 1824, 3.
- ²⁰ *The English Chronicle and Whitehall Evening Post*, 18–20 May 1824, 3.
- ²¹ *The Times*, 20 May 1824, 2.
- ²² *The Morning Post*, 21 May 1824, 2; *The Morning Chronicle*, 20 May 1824, 3.
- ²³ *The English Chronicle and Whitehall Evening Post*, 25–27 May 1824, 2.
- ²⁴ *The Morning Chronicle*, 20 May 1824, 3.
- ²⁵ *The Morning Chronicle*, 21 May 1824, 3; *Bell's Life in London*, 23 May 1824, 1.
- ²⁶ A.G.E. Jones, *Ships Employed in the South Seas Trade 1775–1861 (Parts I and II) and Registrar General of Shipping and Seamen Transcripts of Registers of Shipping 1787–1862 (Part III)* (Canberra: Roebuck Society Publication, 1986) 74.
- ²⁷ *The Morning Chronicle*, 21 May 1824, 3; *The English Chronicle and Whitehall Evening Post*, 20–22 May 1824, 4; *Morning Herald*, 22 May 1824, 3; *St. James Chronicle and General Evening Post*, 20–22 May 1824, 2.

- ²⁸ *Morning Chronicle*, 21–22 May 1824, 3; *Bell's Life in London*, 23 May 1824, 1; *Morning Herald*, 22 May 1824, 3; *The English Chronicle and Whitehall Evening Post*, 20–22 May 1824, 4.
- ²⁹ *John Bull*, 23 May 1824, 173.
- ³⁰ *Morning Herald*, 24 May 1824, 3; *The English Chronicle and Whitehall Evening Post*, 22–25 May 1824, 1.
- ³¹ *Bell's Life in London*, 23 May 1824, 1.
- ³² *John Bull*, 13 June 1824, 197.
- ³³ *The Times*, 25 May 1824, 3; *The English Chronicle and Whitehall Evening Post*, 22–25 May 1824, 1; *British Guardian and Protestant Chronicle*, 26 May 1824, 168.
- ³⁴ *The Times*, May 31, 1824, 2; *Morning Herald*, May 31, 1824, 4; *The Weekly Register*, 30 May 1824, 173; *St. James Chronicle and General Evening Post*, 29 May–1 June 1824, 1; *Bell's Life in London*, 30 May 1824, 173.
- ³⁵ *The Observer*, 30 May 1824, 3; *The English Chronicle and Whitehall Evening Post*, 29 May–1 June 1824, 4.
- ³⁶ *The Evening Mail*, 31 May–2 June 1824, 2; *The Times*, 1 June 1824, 3; *Pierce Egan's Life in London*, 6 June 1824, 147.
- ³⁷ *The English Chronicle and Whitehall Evening Post*, 29 May–1 June 1824, 4.
- ³⁸ *The English Chronicle and Whitehall Evening Post*, 1–3 June 1824, 4.
- ³⁹ *Bell's Life in London*, 13 June 1824, 5.
- ⁴⁰ *The Times*, 9 June 1824, 2.
- ⁴¹ *Pierce Egan's Life in London*, 13 June 1824, 158.
- ⁴² *Bell's Life in London*, 13 June 1824, 5.
- ⁴³ *Pierce Egan's Life in London*, 13 June 1824, 158.
- ⁴⁴ *Bell's Life in London*, 13 June 1824, 5.
- ⁴⁵ *John Bull*, 13 June 1824, 197.
- ⁴⁶ *Bell's Life in London*, 20 June 1824, 5.
- ⁴⁷ *Bell's Life in London*, 4 July 1824, 4.
- ⁴⁸ *The Times*, 21 June 1824, 3.
- ⁴⁹ *Bell's Life in London*, 20 June 1824, 5.
- ⁵⁰ *The Times*, 29 June 1824, 2.
- ⁵¹ *The Sunday Times*, 4 July 1824, 2.
- ⁵² *The Oxford University and City Herald*, 26 June 1824, 4.
- ⁵³ *The Times*, 1 July 1824, 2.
- ⁵⁴ *The Oxford University and City Herald*, 3 July 1824, 3.
- ⁵⁵ *Bell's Life in London*, 4 July 1824, 4.
- ⁵⁶ *John Bull*, 28 June 1824, 212–213.
- ⁵⁷ *Morning Herald*, 10 July 1824, M-418, AH; *The Times*, 10 July 1824, 3; *Bell's Life in London*, 11 July 1824, 1.
- ⁵⁸ *The Sunday Times*, 11 July 1824, 2.
- ⁵⁹ *The Morning Post*, 12 July 1824, 2.
- ⁶⁰ *John Bull*, 11 July 1824, 228.
- ⁶¹ *The Morning Post*, 12 July 1824, 2; *The Times*, 12 July 1824, 1; *Morning Herald*, 12 July 1824, M-418, AH; *The Times*, 13 July 1824, 3; *The Weekly Register*, 11 July 1824, 221.

- ⁶² *The Times*, 14 July 1824, 2.
- ⁶³ *The Times*, 15 July 1824, 2; *Pierce Egan's Life in London*, 18 July 1824, 199.
- ⁶⁴ *The English Chronicle and Whitehall Evening Post*, 15–17 July 1824.
- ⁶⁵ *The English Chronicle and Whitehall Evening Post*, 15–17 July 1824, 4; *Morning Herald*, 17 July 1824, M-418, AH; *The Times*, 17 July 1824, 2.
- ⁶⁶ *The Times*, 15 July 1824, 2; *Morning Herald*, 15 July 1824, M-418, AH; *Morning Post*, 15 July 1824, 3; *The Weekly Register*, 18 July 1824, 230.
- ⁶⁷ *The Times*, 12 July 1824, 1.
- ⁶⁸ *The Sunday Times*, 25 July 1824, 2.
- ⁶⁹ *The Times*, 16 July 1824, 2; 17 July 1824, 2.
- ⁷⁰ *The Courier*, 17 July 1824, 3.
- ⁷¹ *John Bull*, 18 July 1824, 236.
- ⁷² *The Sunday Times*, 18 July 1824, 2.
- ⁷³ *The Courier*, 19 July 1824, 2; *Morning Herald*, 20 July 1824, M-418, AH.
- ⁷⁴ *The Times*, 9 Sept. 1824, 2.

