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Doctor Auguste Jean Baptiste and Evelyn Oliver Marques

HOW LITTLE IS REMEMBERED of two well-known and influential people—Doctor Auguste Jean Baptiste and his wife Evelyn Oliver Marques (figs. 1 and 2). Yet he was a doctor of science, philanthropist, scientist, musician, teacher, diplomat, and capitalist; and she was the owner-manager of a downtown shop that encouraged Hawaiian crafts, a suffragette, and occasionally French consul. Together and separately, they were illustrious in the cultural life of Honolulu at the end of the last century and for three decades into this.

Had he not been cast in bronze on a tablet commemorating his bringing in the first artesian well in Honolulu (fig. 3), of which more later, I might have missed him while working on the history of Mānoa Valley.

Doctor Marques (1841–1929) lived much of his Hawaiian life at 1928 Wilder Avenue (now the site of a small apartment building). He originally owned about 30 acres of land, most on the slope below Vancouver Place. Immediately *‘ewa* (toward the direction of Ewa) is Punahou School.

For good reason his area was called “Marquesville.” He “was instrumental in bringing a colony of Portuguese to Honolulu . . . and sold lots on long term credit to encourage them to become home owners.”¹ His doctoral degree was in science from

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The Hawaiian Journal of History, vol. 26 (1992)

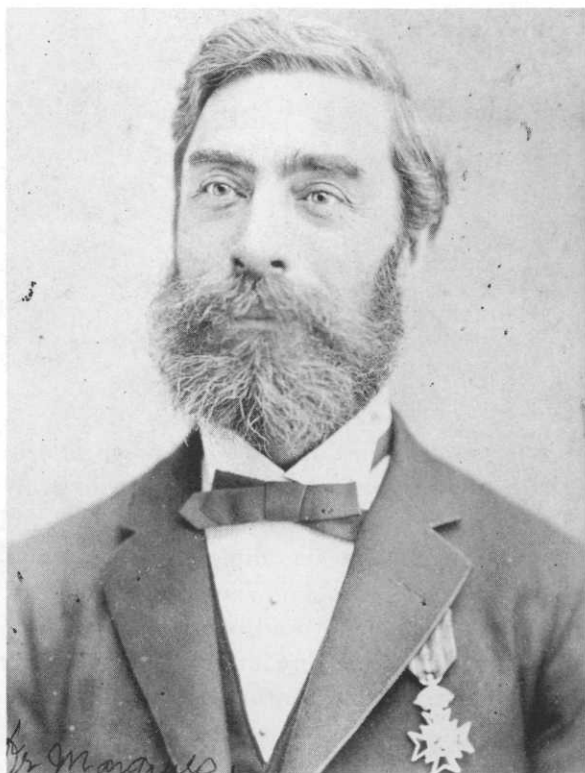


FIG. 1. Doctor Auguste Jean Baptiste Marques. (Bishop Museum.)

the University of Lisbon (granted apparently after only one year of study).²

On January 24, 1887, Doctor Marques petitioned the Minister of the Board of Education for a school in the Seaview and Metcalf Streets area. He mentioned the area as "Marquesville" but disclaimed responsibility for the name. He counted 66 children, of whom 37 were of school age. He promised that it would be "exclusively an English school," though the Portuguese language would be taught for one hour a week. He noted that "a village has been developing at the corner of Beckwith and Metcalf Street[s]," where there were 22 house owners. At the end of the petition and continuing on a second page are the signatures of all the parents. I have not found a response from the Kingdom.³

Doctor Marques was not of Portuguese origin. Of French birth



FIG. 2. Evelyn Oliver Marques, from *Women of Hawaii*, ed. George F. Nellist, vol. 2 (Honolulu, 1938).

at Toulon on November 17, 1841, he was only one-fourth French, for his father John was half Spanish (a general in the French army), and his mother, Augusta Cooke, was half English, half Scottish (her father a general in the British army). Marques had spent part of his "boyhood in Morocco, Algiers and on the Sahara desert," perhaps when his father was with a French legion.⁴

A man of unusual education, he had gone all the way through the course in medicine at the University of Paris when his mother begged him not to take the degree (perhaps from a sense that doctors in 1870 did not rank with generals?). He had also acquired a "musical and scientific education," and soon he was working for the bureau of agriculture in Paris. After his mother's death in 1875, when he was 34, he began a prolonged world tour.⁵



FIG. 3. Artesian well monument on Wilder Avenue, Honolulu. (Author's photo collection.)

Marques arrived in Honolulu on the *City of Sydney* December 30, 1878.⁶ Between ships he decided to stay and did, for the next 50 years.

According to obituary notices in the two daily papers, Marques purchased 400 acres of lower Mānoa land—the unlikely figure an error in duplication.⁷ For in 1879 he bought 27 acres from Alfred Sumter on “Manoa Valley Road.” (This was also “Stonewall” Road, which would become Wilder.) Other purchases in the next few years in the same area were small, usually along “Beckwith also to become Wilder, Metcalf, Dole Streets, & Marquesville.”⁸ The eventual tract (of about 30 acres, one supposes) was complete by 1880, at a cost of perhaps \$10,000. The Bureau of Conveyances shows his selling lot-sized tracts from 1882 to 1899. Between 1885 and 1894, he sold 22 lots, 18 to persons with Portuguese names: from 1895 to 1899, 21 more. The 16-year effort tapered off in 1900. His name is seldom in the city directories. When it appeared in 1899, he chose to list his occupation as “Capitalist.” In the midst

of this philanthropic and capitalist effort, he was for a time a music, then a French instructor at Punahou School.⁹

In 1886, Marques went to Russia on a diplomatic mission for King David Kalākaua. In 1890-1891, he served in the last year of the King's legislature. He was the Russian consul from 1908 to 1917, the Panamanian counsul in 1909, French consul from 1910 to 1929, and of beleaguered Belgium in 1914. He continued to be Russian consul long after the revolution. From so much diplomatic representation came many awards and orders of merit, including one from Kalākaua for work on leprosy and one even from Samoa. In 1883, "Marquis" (*sic*)¹⁰ became a Companion of the Loyal Order of Kapiolani. Our photograph (fig. 1) shows him in full regalia.

For his home and others in "Marquesville," he had the first artesian well in Honolulu. A large bronze plaque set in a massive stone now marks the place:

Site of
Honolulu's Pioneer
Artesian Well Brought
In On April 2 1880 For
Dr. Augustus Marques
'This Means the Promise
of Beauty and Fertility
For Thousands of Acres.'
King Kalakaua
Sealed August 1938
Board of Water Supply

Because of his aristocratic French background, one might expect him to have been a prominent Roman Catholic, but in Honolulu he became a leader in the Theosophist movement, defined as originating in the United States in 1875 and following chiefly Buddish and Brahmanic theories, especially of pantheistic evolution and reincarnation. He "organized a Theosophilcal Society in Honolulu, and in 1899 became secretary for the Australian section . . . and went to Australia from whence he was sent to India as a delegate. . . ." ¹¹

Doctor Marques has his name on a street in his own area.¹² He edited the Portuguese language newspaper *O Luso Hawaiiano* 1885-1888 and taught French at Punahou School. For Thrum's *Annals* of 1887 and 1811 he wrote two widely quoted accounts of the Portuguese in Hawai'i. The 1886 issue had a ten-page article, "Music in Hawaii Nei." It is learned and precise. Somewhat daringly for the time, it contained a brief description of the *hula*, a forbidden dance.

Altogether a remarkable man of Mānoa, Marques was described in the first page *Advertiser* obituary as "scientist, musician, linguist." Historian Ralph Kuykendall has 11 references to him. Many are concerned with another side of Doctor Marques. He was concerned about the growing influence of the Chinese immigrants. He "became an active leader in the anti-Chinese movement" and wrote numerous letters on this topic to the *Hawaiian Gazette* in 1885. In 1885, he "organized the Hawaiian Anti-Asiatic Union. In August of that year, he left for a year in Europe, returning in September 1889."¹³

Doctor Marques, at age 56, married Evelyn Mary Oliver on June 7, 1900. Mrs. Marques was the manager of the "Women's Exchange," which the *City Directory* of 1901 shows at "Beckwith nr Punahou"; that is, at the Marques home. (This is not the "Beckwith" of today in the College Hills area and is not noted in *Place Names of Hawaii*.) She was remembered in *Women of Hawaii* in 1938, the year before her death at 76.

Born in Canada in 1863, Evelyn Oliver had come to Hawai'i from Canada in 1889 as a publisher's representative. She soon became interested in providing a sales outlet and a source of income, for Hawaiian women's handicrafts. "This institution served a double purpose, it preserved the old arts and it enabled native women to profitably market their products."¹⁴ In 1899, her store was at 215 Merchant Street, which was also her residence. The 1905-6 *Directory* describes her business as "South Seas Curios, hats and calabashes." *Women of Hawaii* thought her noteworthy because of her joining the struggle for women's suffrage, as "an active worker in the Women's League of Voters of Hawaii. . . ."¹⁵

As with her husband, Mrs. Marques is also remembered by a

street name or two. Across from their home on Wilder Avenue is Artesian Street, commemorating the “pioneer artesian well.” East of Artesian is Evelyn Way, then Oliver Lane. Both first appear in the *City Directory* of 1914.¹⁶ And so for her last 25 years she lived across from street signs displaying her maiden names. Has any other woman of Hawai‘i been so honored? The obituaries on her husband note that during his last few years of ill health and partial incapacitation, Mrs. Marques became “the unofficial French consul for nine months, acting in his name.”

On March 16, 1929, the *Advertiser* reported, “A standing vote of sympathy from the territorial senate was extended yesterday to the widow of the late Auguste Jean Baptiste Marques when Senator Clarence H. Cooke offered a resolution honoring his memory.” This mentions his excellence in “music, literature, science and politics.”

Evelyn Oliver Marques is not in *Notable Women of Hawaii*. Odd. Also odd—Doctor Marques never appeared in any of the many *Men of Hawaii* volumes. Out of the mainstream? Theosophist? A royalist?

NOTES

¹ *HSB*, 14 Mar. 1929. This obituary notice began on the front page and had a large photo on page 3. A similar article had appeared in *HA* the same day.

² Edgar Knowlton, letter to author, 14 Mar. 1991. Professor Knowlton, a student and scholar of Portuguese, pointed me toward Marques and supplied leads.

³ These matters are discussed in: George A. Odgers, “Educational Legislation in Hawaii: 1845–1892,” master’s thesis, U of Hawaii, 1932; and George A. Odgers, “Education in Hawaii, 1820–1893,” diss., Stanford U, 1933.

⁴ *HSB*, 14 Mar. 1929. Some records refer to a birth place in Italy, but France seems more likely. A major source of information was from an interview with Doctor and Mrs. Marques by Fred Lockley, *HSB*, 15 Dec. 1928.

⁵ *HA*, 14 Mar. 1929; *HSB*, 15 Dec. 1928.

⁶ *HSB*, 14 Mar. 1929, reports him as arriving on Christmas Eve.

⁷ *HA* and *HSB*, 14 Mar. 1929.

⁸ HBC.

⁹ *HA* and *HSB*, 14 Mar. 1929.

¹⁰ Gordon Medcalf, *Hawaiian Royal Orders: Insignia, Classes, Regulations, Members* (Honolulu: Oceania Coin Co., 1963) 23, shows Marques as a “Knights Companion” in 1887.

¹¹ *HSB*, 14 Mar. 1929.

- ¹² Mary Kawena Pukui, Samuel H. Elbert, Esther T. Mookini, *Place Names of Hawaii* (Honolulu: U of Hawaii P, 1974) 169, hereinafter cited as Pukui, et al, *Place Names*.
- ¹³ Ralph S. Kuykendall, *The Hawaiian Kingdom*, vol. 3, *The Kalakaua Dynasty 1874-1893* (Honolulu: U of Hawaii P, 1967): 174-5, 178, 181, and 449.
- ¹⁴ *Women of Hawaii*, ed. George F. Nellist, vol. 2 (1929; Honolulu: PP, 1938) 197, hereinafter cited as Nellist, *Women of Hawaii*.
- ¹⁵ Nellist, *Women of Hawaii* 197.
- ¹⁶ Pukui, et al. *Place Names* 169. "Evelyn Way" does not appear, and "Oliver" is misidentified as referring to Oliver Emerson.
- ¹⁷ *HA*, 14 Mar. 1929.
- ¹⁸ *HA*, 14 Mar. 1929.