

BARNES RIZNIK

From Barracks to Family Homes: A Social History of Labor Housing Reform on Hawai'i's Sugar Plantations

WHEN H. OTLEY BEYER visited Pu'unēnē on Maui in 1925, he observed that the policy of the Hawaiian Commercial Sugar Company was to build only one-family houses.

There are practically no double houses in any of the camps. The new housing program is well underway, though very few new or entirely rebuilt camps have as yet been completed . . . and in Camp #6 I saw some old barrack rooms. . . . Pasqual told me that when he came on to the plantation, in 1923, nearly all of the camps were made up of such barracks, in which men slept in stacks consisting of four or five bunks each.¹

Beyer, a management consultant for the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association (HSPA) from the University of Manila, was surveying individual plantation conditions as part of the HSPA's assessment of the plantations' commitment to building improved camp quarters.

The changes Beyer witnessed were uneven. At Kilauea Sugar Plantation Company on Kaua'i he discovered that "these Kilauea camps are about as poor as any I have seen elsewhere, and are much in the same class as those in Honokaa. The worst part of the camps is the lack of camp cleaning and sanitation." The plantation had built new

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houses in 1915, but a few years later the Territorial Board of Health condemned two of Kilauea's dilapidated barracks. These were taken down, and L. D. Larsen, the manager, wrote that "while we are in need of rather extensive improvements, we believe that this can be deferred until a more favorable financial condition will have been attained."²

These examples illustrate a wider process of change in Hawai'i's company-owned camps for workers. The evolution of housing as a requisite for all sugar employees showed adaptation and response to the serious need for improvement to help reduce turnover of the plantation workforce. By 1933, 11,000 of 17,000 sugar plantation dwellings in Hawai'i occupied by "employees other than skilled and staff employees" were of the one-family, reform-type houses.³

How was this housing program developed? The sugar industry's self-interested efforts in the Islands were led by the HSPA and its work in social welfare and industrial relations after 1910. The HSPA had changed over time. The membership organization had been founded in 1895 to represent the plantations, and its purpose was to arrange labor immigration. It branched out to establish an Experiment Station that applied research science to the growing and processing of sugar cane and to sponsor technological improvements. As plantations experienced strikes and labor turnover, the HSPA formed the Industrial Service Bureau in 1920.

Plantation housing reforms were influenced by complex concerns that were a product of "Social Progressivism," as some historians have called the early twentieth-century measures in the United States that contributed to improvements in industrial working conditions. As Carroll Pursell has put it, "One major stream of American Progressivism was that searching for social justice and humane institutions. Another was an effort to rationalize and manage society in the interests of stability and order."⁴ They included immigrant working-class ethnic groups, a demographic transition to married laborers, the expansion of Territorial Board of Health public health programs, reform activities of voluntary, social welfare organizations, and the paternalistic policies of the sugar industry itself. They linked the operators of plantations, discontented laborers, government sanitary engineers from the Board of Health, and upper- and middle-class people involved in voluntary welfare associations.

The history of plantation housing raises many questions about the social impact of industrialization in Hawai'i. Recent works have explored labor complaints about low plantation wages, crowded and unsanitary living conditions, and the outmigration of the workforce. There also has been emphasis on the concept of Americanization and the acculturation of the Japanese nisei generation in public schooling and religion, but there has been little explanation of the significance of plantation housing reform after 1920 and the paradoxical role of better housing in stabilizing the workforce and raising expectations for a twentieth-century American middle-class life.⁵

The influx of large immigrant populations to the United States mainland transformed every major city in the late nineteenth century, and campaigns for improved urban tenement housing as well as model company towns clearly provided the historical background for changes in Hawai'i's rural industrial housing. It has been said that, perhaps more than in any other Western nation, Americans have tried to solve economic and social problems through architecture. The pervasiveness of this reforming instinct, and the belief that the design of houses and communities can be consciously directed toward how people behave, is part of the story in Hawai'i. One is reminded of Gwendolyn Wright's generalization about industrial housing in the United States that "people whose lives were controlled by others had appropriate settings allocated to them. Several variations of industrial towns, designed by managers and professional planners, reflect their ideas about control over and amelioration of factory workers."⁶

Plantation housing must also be seen against the larger backdrop of the Industrial Revolution and the power of Western technology and agriculture to transform nineteenth-century, preindustrial, Hawaiian society. The transformation was as far-reaching as anywhere in the rest of the world 150 years ago: changes in the economic system; changes in the land system; changes in technology; and changes in the population, including Native Hawaiian depopulation and the arrival of ethnic groups from Asia, Europe, and America.

Western dominance in Hawai'i grew just as American and European industry was rising to world prominence, and sugar came to dominate economic, political, and social life in Hawai'i. Commercial cultivation, which began at Kōloa on Kaua'i in 1835, created needs for a larger supply of indentured, contract laborers and, later, free

Table 1. Changes in Hawai'i Plantation Workers' Housing and Camps, 1890-1960: Physical Aspects

	Pre-1900	1900-920	1920-940	1940-1960
Spatial Organization of Dwellings				
Representative house forms	Barracks; duplex	Barracks; duplex; first single family	duplex; single family U-shaped bachelor;	Single family
Arrangements of rooms in plan	Barracks: open bunkhouses for 50-60 workers; double houses; rooms side-by-side, one or two rooms deep	U-shaped bachelor; four-square	bedrooms in corners	Some L-shaped, three-bedrooms
Size of single houses	Less than 500 sq. ft.	500-600 sq. ft.	650-100 sq. ft.	850-1,000 sq. ft.
Numbers and types of windows	One per room; double hung; slider	One-two per room; double hung; slider	Two-three per room; double hung; slider	Two-three per room; double hung; slider
Kitchens	Separate	Separate and attached	Incorporated	Incorporated
Baths	Separate	Separate	Separate and incorporated	Incorporated
Wash Houses	Separate	Separate & attached	Separate and incorporated	Incorporated
Toilets	Separate privies	Separate privies	Separate and incorporated	Incorporated
Garages/carpports	None	None	Garages	Garages and carpports
Building Systems				
Single-wall construction	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Types of materials	Board and batten; shingles	Board and batten; shingles; metal roof; first concrete floors in utility rooms and outbuildings	Board and batten or tongue and groove; first canec; first hollow tile; shingles or metal roofs; concrete floors in outbuildings	Tongue and groove; canec; hollow tile; shingle; metal roof; cement pad
Builders	Plantation	Plantation	Plantation	Contractors and plantation

Water supply	Irrigation-ditch; catchment tanks	Irrigation-ditch; catchment tanks; piped to houses	Piped to houses
Sewage and waste disposal	Open sewage	Open sewage; some concrete ditches	Tile sewers; cesspools
Electricity	No	No	Yes
Design Characteristics of Dwellings			
Standardized construction plans	No	Yes—Board of Health	Yes—HSPA and others
Roofs	Gable; no overhanging eaves	Gable; hip; overhanging eaves	Hip; double hip; gable; overhanging eaves
Whitewash, paint, stain coverings	Whitewash	Paint and stain	Paint and stain
Siting	Camps in rows along roads and railroads	Camps in rows along roads and railroads; first village street grid	First subdivision layout; parks
Features Surrounding Dwellings			
Lot size	No separate lots	No separate lots; 3,750 sq. ft. lots	5,000–7,500 sq. ft. lots
Yards	No	Some	Yes
Roads	Unpaved	Unpaved	Paved

Table 2. Changes in Hawai'i Plantation Workers' Housing and Camps, 1890-1960: Social Aspects

	Pre-1900	1900-1920	1920-1940	1940-1960
Percentage of Single-Family Units on Plantations	Less than 10%	20%	66% (1925)	90%
Foodways	Hired cooks for bachelors	Family; hired cooks for bachelors	Family; hired cooks for bachelors	Family
Conditions Under Which Changes Took Place	Increased size of workforce	Demographic shifts; strikes; Board of Health circular and plans	Social reforms; HSPA Industrial Service Bureau reports and plans; strikes	Unionization and end of isolation; home ownership
Camp Ethnicity	Separate	Separate	Separate and mixed	Mixed
Perquisite-Plantation Tenants	Yes	Yes	Yes	Rental after 1947
Plantation Community Services	Some	Yes	Yes	Yes
Churches and temples	Some	Yes	Yes	Yes
Japanese language school	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ethnic clubs	Plantation dispensaries and hospitals; outside services: hospitals	Plantation dispensaries and hospitals; outside services: hospitals; TB sanatoria; public health nurses	Plantation dispensaries and hospitals; outside services: hospitals; TB sanatoria; public health nurses	Plantation dispensaries and hospitals; outside services: hospitals; TB sanatoria; public health nurses
Medical care	Plantation dispensaries and hospitals; outside services: hospitals	Plantation dispensaries and hospitals; outside services: hospitals; TB sanatoria; public health nurses	Plantation dispensaries and hospitals; outside services: hospitals; TB sanatoria; public health nurses	Plantation dispensaries and hospitals; outside services: hospitals; TB sanatoria; public health nurses
Birthing practices	Midwives; family	Midwives; family; plantation doctors and nurses	Midwives; family; plantation doctors and nurses	Plantation doctors and nurses; family
Stores/salesmen	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Plantation recreational facilities	No	No	Yes	Yes
Union	No	No	No	Yes

wage workers. The experience of the immigrant workers who were engaged in large-scale planting, irrigation, cultivation, harvesting and factory processing was discouraging in terms of wages and living conditions and led to labor turnover and protest. Housing and the social environment on plantations became more and more a critical industry issue in the early twentieth century.

Actions like house-building are the realization of many conscious purposes. Analyzing the material realities of plantation habitation helps fix the meaning of change, as the evolution and development of reform played out in buildings. The material culture background of houses and camp facilities is compared in Table 1 and Table 2, which draw upon housing designs and standardized construction plans, preserved sugar plantation records, historical photographs, and surviving structures.⁷

TEMPORARY HOUSING FOR CONTRACT WORKERS

Foreign labor was imported by plantations beginning in the mid-nineteenth century when the reduced Native Hawaiian population could no longer meet the plantations' needs for a constant supply of cheap labor. Most plantation operators saw their workers as temporary workers who should lead restricted lives during their contracts.



FIG. 1. Barracks at Ewa Plantation. (Bishop Museum)

An increasing number of immigrant sugar laborers called for the construction of more housing after the Reciprocity Treaty with the United States in 1876, but the structures were haphazard and minimal and were considered part of the regulation and regimentation of working-class life. Housing was usually constructed of lumber imported from the Pacific Northwest, generally framed lightly and sided by a "single wall" of one-inch-by-ten-inch or one-inch-by-twelve-inch vertical boards and battens. There were two predominant building types: long, open bunkhouses called barracks and structures called double houses. A typical barracks might house fifty to sixty workers, who slept in cramped, multitiered bunks with four or five men stacked on top of each other, or some variation of this arrangement. An early Chinese worker said that his "first impression of the plantation camp was very sad." Where he had expected to see a roomy place, he found himself in a crowded camp house where workers slept in double-decker beds, twenty-four to each room.⁸

Single men or families shared rooms in the double houses, where they lived in side-by-side rooms sharing a common wall and either one or two rooms deep. Both the double houses and the barracks



FIG. 2. Double house at Ewa Plantation. (Bishop Museum)

either had detached kitchens or workers relied on makeshift stoves in their room. Sanitation was primitive. Matsu Kina, an Okinawan worker, described living on the Big Island:

The houses in the camp were made of one-by-twelve boards and we sprinkled lime over the boards. I don't know why we did that. Compared to today, the houses were worse than chicken coops. The toilets were also terrible. All the camp people went to the same toilet. You had to wait in line while the people sat. We didn't even have a place to wash clothes.⁹

Kiku Yoshida remembers that as late as 1916 in Waipahu on O'ahu the whole camp had one toilet. It was a long house shared by men, women, and children. The *Nippu Jiji* editor, Yasutaro Soga, wrote that at Waianae Plantation on O'ahu "the dwellings of the laborers were filthy and unsanitary." Sewage overflowed within the camp.¹⁰

There are numerous descriptions of bunkhouses. The structures, also known as Chinese long barracks, were sometimes connected. At Honoka'a on the Big Island "some of these structures are more than 200 feet long." As more contract laborers arrived from Japan, some of them married, many barracks were considered unsatisfactory. In 1899 Miki Saito, the Japanese consul in Hawai'i, wrote that at some plantations on Maui and the island of Hawai'i,

several hundred persons of both sexes are also mixed up and kept on one large square house without any partitions in it. Their sleeping bunks are long shelves of rough wooden boards, consisting of four stories. These shelves constitute the sleeping apartments of several hundred laborers in a single room. Each bottom shelf in every row is given to one married couple, the other three upper shelves being given to single men. The laborers have been obliged to live in such houses for a long term of three years, and after making frequent complaints to the managers, nothing new remains but to bring to the notice of the officers of the Immigration companies or to this consulate of the ill treatment they suffer from the plantations.

Housing conditions varied from plantation to plantation, according to Saito. At the Haiku Sugar Company and Kihei Plantation on Maui, he found several dwellings that he thought should be models

of housing density for other plantations. He described them as single twelve-foot-by-twenty-four-foot houses divided into two separate apartments. In each side lived either a couple with their children or three, at most four, unmarried workers. A nine-foot-by-sixteen-foot cook house was constructed at the middle front of every three such houses. Saito reported:

there is no reason why the other employers should not give comfortable quarters to their employees when the employers at Haiku and Kihei can do so, . . . as it is admitted that the laborers are the principal sources of their own prosperity, and as human beings these laborers should have fit places in which to live.¹¹

Even the double houses became crowded. Milton Murayama in his novel *Five Years on a Rock* describes his mother's arrival from Japan as a picture bride and her experiences in her husband's parents' camp house on Maui in 1915. Her first impression of the double houses in the camp was that living side-by-side in a four-by-six-meter space for each family "should be enough for us." "We're in the back," her husband told her. She replied to herself: "*It's strange*, I thought, entering from the rear." There was no veranda in the back, just steps to a screen door. She stepped up into the living quarters of her in-laws. A cotton sheet hung on a rope across the room. "What's that for?" she asked. This side is for us," her husband said. "*How awful*," she was going to say and she bemoaned the fact that "our space was now a mere four by three meters."¹²

In many rural Japanese villages in the early twentieth century, according to anthropologist John Embree, a newly married couple living in the household of a son's parents had a separate sleeping room of its own, kept private from other adults. As Murayama described everyday issei social life in crowded plantation quarters, with the in-law mothers and fathers usually in firm control, one can imagine that home life could be difficult for a newly arrived woman from Japan.¹³

Laborers from the Philippines, the newcomers on plantations after 1910, also experienced crowded conditions. As Filipinos became more numerous, they were often assigned to the least desirable hous-

ing on the plantation. Montague Lord, who came from Cebu to inspect housing conditions for Filipino workers, had been with Waialua Agricultural Company on O'ahu before being hired to work for the HSPA in the Philippines. Visiting the Hawaiian Sugar Company at Makaweli on Kaua'i for the HSPA, he

found in many instances six men to a single room 8x12 or 10x10, also two families crowded in a single room. Several men told me that they were going to send their families home in October on account of being overcrowded. If this should happen it will make our family recruiting in the Philippines more difficult than ever.¹⁴

Dennis Ogawa has written that "if life in Hawaii was to be more than temporary, the single men would need a family—the plantation worker's great thirst for common social bonds would be satisfied only through the humanness of familial relations."¹⁵ With the exception of plantation-operated medical dispensaries, only a few community services were encouraged. Plantations generally did view religion as a stabilizing influence, and Christian missionaries were encouraged to conduct their evangelical work among Chinese and, later, among Japanese and Korean laborers. Buddhism was accepted slowly by plantation operators as temples began to be built, a sign that Japanese immigrants in Hawai'i were no longer regarded as merely contracted transients.

The plantations faced many formidable realities in their need for a large supply of labor, one of the most important of which was that less than half of all issei Japanese who arrived in Hawai'i as laborers between 1885 and 1924 settled permanently in the Islands. Some migrated to the West Coast of the United States and many returned to Japan. Turnover continued as the Chinese, Portuguese, and Japanese populations on the plantations decreased. In 1902 Japanese workers made up 73.5 percent of the total plantation workforce, but this figure dropped to 38.3 percent in 1922 and 18.8 percent by 1932. Workers from the Philippines increased from 41 percent in 1922 to 69.9 percent in 1930, yet the plantations realized that out-migration was still a problem and that they needed to become more successful in managing their labor assets. The 1909 strike by Japa-

nese plantation labor brought the industry's turnover problem to a head. As the U.S. commissioner of labor observed, plantation life did not offer workers a viable career. "They are too much parts of a machine, and have too little control over many phases of their lives that are self-directed as a matter of course in democratically organized communities."¹⁶

A FIRST GENERATION OF SINGLE-FAMILY HOMES, 1910-1920

The single-family house best represented the physical expression of reform housing in Hawai'i. The new dwellings were built with greater room differentiation, more windows with larger openings to improve cross-ventilation, inset porches or covered lanais, and extended roof eaves, which permitted windows to be kept open in most kinds of weather. For the first time poured concrete, a long-wearing, fireproof, and easily maintained material, was introduced in the floor construction of some kitchens and wash houses. Most of the new houses were set apart on larger lots, many were enclosed by hedges or fences with yards for gardening, and they were connected to camp waterlines, providing a more hygienic water supply for food preparation, drinking, washing up, bathing, and laundry.

Some plantations began to build single-family homes for laborers before 1920, when the house-form became the standard recommended by the HSPA. Ewa Plantation, backed by owners Castle and Cooke, Ltd., built Pipeline Village in 1906 for Portuguese and Japanese workers. Although the houses had detached cooking facilities, each of the dwellings was built on a separate lot and was "enclosed by a fence and supplied with water." George Renton, Sr., the plantation manager, noted the turning point in Ewa's housing program when he wrote in 1900:

The labor question of this territory will not be settled until a large population of the houses of the workers, whether Anglo-Saxon or Latin or Asiatic, represent houses with families for the present well being of the workman and future supply and the well being of the Planter. The home, on a plantation has, apart from other considerations, its commercial value.¹⁷

In 1910 the Labor Committee of the HSPA sent a circular report to all plantations urging them to provide "better and more commodious quarters" to their workers:

We think that none of the plantations would suffer if they undertook to do a little of what is known as "welfare work among employees". Many of the plantations have done a great deal for their skilled men by providing club houses, baseball fields, tennis courts, swimming tanks, etc., but there has been very little done for the common unskilled laborer. On those plantations located away from towns, no opportunities for recreation or amusement are afforded, except what are given by passing Japanese shows. With very few exceptions all of the plantations could very well afford to go into this work and attempt to provide their laborers with recreation and amusement, as well as give them more comfortable and attractive quarters.

The Labor Committee's suggestions were adapted from reforms by other American industries:

Once welfare work is undertaken by the plantations in the proper spirit, the work would grow of its own momentum. This has been the experience of all other large industries where welfare work has been undertaken. . . . In many places in the eastern part of the United States there are as many diverse classes of laborers as are found in these Islands, and magnificent results have been obtained in holding the laborers, but in preventing strikes.¹⁸

Another important connection with new housing and the treatment of laborers was a baby boom that occurred in Hawai'i during the first third of the twentieth century. The territorial population expanded at more than twice the national growth rate of the United States, and the central demographic fact in the increasing multiethnic population was the shift from a disproportionate number of unmarried males to a balanced gender population. The Japanese female population, for example, grew by as much as 500 percent between 1900 and 1930. Half of the women were picture brides of childbearing age, and they experienced both migration and pregnancy in a short time. On the plantations, newly married couples usu-

ally formed nuclear families, and they and their progeny needed larger living spaces and community services such as dispensaries, recreation facilities, and schools.¹⁹ Eileen Tamura has written of the changing demographics on the plantation that “Wives and families soon created complex communities, which in turn encouraged the establishment of institutions such as Buddhist temples and Japanese language schools. Japanese customs took root.”²⁰

The Territorial Board of Health and the Palama Settlement in Honolulu advocated the betterment of workers’ housing before 1920, and both played an active role by providing plantations with construction plans, building a model home, and drawing attention to health problems. In 1911 the government sent a letter to plantation operators outlining “a systematic and progressive campaign for the improvement of sanitary conditions.” The circular recommended that all houses “low to the ground be raised to have sufficient air space (2 ft.) or a cement floor put in” and that “buildings too close together be either torn down or removed.” A serious incident, the outbreak of dengue fever spread around camps by rats on the Honoka’a coast over a four-year period, prompted the Board’s campaign. Working with Chief Sanitary Inspector Donald Bowman in Hilo on the island of Hawai’i, at least one plantation, Pacific Sugar Mill at Kukuihaele, condemned and razed all of its oldest buildings and replaced them. The manager, August Ahrens, reported in 1912:

The arrival of Spaniards made necessary the erection of more houses for single families. When these people were comfortably lodged a very unpleasant outbreak of plague, in a camp near to Kukuihaele proper, occurred, and then we were forced to a more extensive clearing and condemning of old houses, so that at present hardly a single house remains that is more than six years old. Cement-floored kitchens, wash and bath houses with hot and cold water appliances have been erected, as well as cemented sewers. This work was made necessary not only from a sanitary point of view, but to meet the new and advanced requirements for better housing for all classes of plantation labor.²¹

In 1914, starting with plans for a washhouse, water closet, and plantation bath, the Board of Health office in Hilo distributed blueprints to plantations throughout the Islands. In 1917 it sent out plans for a

double house and kitchen for two families, and in 1918 it distributed a plan for a single-family house that featured a fireplace and tall smoke hood at the rear of the dwelling on a lanai next to the kitchen. The government's building plans were the first to be prepared for labor housing and sent to individual plantations.²²

Unsanitary and crowded housing for workers compounded the spread of infectious diseases, and Palama Settlement, the chief voluntary health organization in Honolulu, also took the lead by publicizing inadequate housing and related tuberculosis problems and the need for community education. The settlement house, working with the Board of Health's aggressive Anti-Tuberculosis campaign in 1912, presented a "Public Welfare Exhibit." Palama Settlement built a single-family, well-ventilated model cottage, and the exhibit contrasted it with housing conditions in Honolulu and on plantations. The Palama staff was supervised by James A. Rath, a social worker trained in Massachusetts, who showed the far-reaching influence of settlement houses on the mainland, employing a staff of district nurses and helping to shape family services.²³

The interrelated interests of the Board of Health and social welfare professionals in reform housing had a direct influence on individual plantations. Between 1917 and 1920, Grove Farm built 120 houses west of Lihu'e on Kaua'i in a single new camp for workers called Puhi Camp. George N. Wilcox, Grove Farm's owner, had been an organizer of the Planters' Labor & Supply Company in 1882. Along with Grove Farm's manager, Edward H. W. Broadbent, Wilcox kept Grove Farm in the forefront of improvements. The housing grew out of Wilcox's support of other social reforms. Two of Wilcox's nieces at Grove Farm, Elsie and Mabel Wilcox, were involved in social work, public health nursing, and politics. They were friends of the Palama Settlement's director, other social welfare leaders, and architects Clinton Ripley and Charles Dickey. In 1916 Mabel Wilcox and G. N. Wilcox spearheaded construction of the Kauai County TB Sanatorium, Samuel Mahelona Hospital, designed by Ripley.²⁴

Grove Farm's new housing at Puhi drew the attention of the HSPA. In 1917 the Experiment Station's associate agriculturalist, Robert S. Thurston, in an in-house memorandum, described the dwellings that became the standard for the industry in the 1920s.

The buildings being erected are of three types: (1) Two or three rooms in a row, all under an inverted V roof, without a kitchen. (2) Two rooms under the same kind of roof, but with a kitchen adjoining in the rear. (3) A three room bungalow [*sic*] with an adjoining kitchen in the rear. The first type is for bachelors; the second for a couple and one or two children; and the third for larger families. The kitchen floors are of concrete. The stove is built of concrete and cast iron and has a concrete smoke stack, thereby reducing to a minimum the chance of fire. Just outside the kitchen is a concrete floor about 4' x 5' on which a wash tub may be set. This floor drains into a concrete gutter which runs past and drains all the houses.

The buildings are of wood and are set out in 3 double rows, each row fronting on a street. Cross walks will be put in, making a double row of 8 buildings, or 16 buildings per block. Each building is set on a lot 50' x 75'. Running water is piped to each kitchen and an open concrete ditch is furnished for drainage from the kitchens. If the laborers wish to cultivate their gardens the plantation will furnish a team and plow with which to plow up the land.²⁵

FROM CAMPS TO VILLAGES: INDUSTRY-WIDE HOUSING CHANGES, 1919-1938

The decade following the 1909 strike had been profitable for plantations, but wages remained low and housing lacked uniformity despite labor disturbances, pressure from the Board of Health, and exemplary new housing for workers on plantations like Grove Farm. Plantation managers and the industry as a whole continued to support housing for every worker as both a perquisite and a fundamental element in controlling labor. "Welfare capitalism," as Edward Beechert has described it, encompassed a benevolent policy of community development on the one hand and control on the other. The plantations' behavior was a combination of conservative and innovative practice, and housing was part of rational social management.²⁶

The HSPA established a Social Welfare Bureau in 1919. It became one of more than five hundred industrial welfare departments in the United States and acted as a planning catalyst for individual plantations. The Bureau provided operators with detailed surveys of living conditions on their plantations conducted by an experienced social worker. It followed up by preparing and distributing sets of standard blueprints and bills of construction materials, demonstrating the

Association's role as a centralized organization. Over the next two decades it continued to put forward and monitor housing reforms by evaluating changes on plantations, revising architectural drawings, and providing town-planning leadership.

The immediate origins and initial activities of the Social Welfare Bureau can be traced in HSPA reports and recommendations. They are revealing of the philosophy of the committee and the character of the reforms:

After the Annual Meeting held in 1917, it was suggested that instead of the annual report on the Warehousing of Sugar, a subject which had been worn threadbare, a committee be appointed at the 1918 Meeting on Sanitation and Social Welfare. Mr. Adams, as Chairman of said committee, presented, at last year's executive session, a very comprehensive report, pointing out the importance of establishing a closer relationship between employer and employee, and showing how little was being done by our plantations compared with progressive mainland institutions.

Some of the findings of investigators have rudely awakened us to a realization that at least some of our plantation conditions are not as they should be, improvements have not progressed as rapidly as we thought, and the delinquency of one plantation endangers the labor status of all. Besides sound business reasons, there is the obligation that their standards of living and social conditions be such that their descendants will be qualified to become useful American citizens.

The only reason for mentioning what should be obvious, the conducting of welfare work through a committee of the H.S.P.A., is that there is still a tendency to scoff at social welfare work as a passing fad, an impression that its function is somewhat utopian, altogether visionary, and hence utterly impracticable,—an idea that the Director will act as a spy, that he will order impracticable changes and improvements, which in turn will entail unnecessary expense. Such conceptions are absolutely erroneous.²⁷

The report stated that the labor of the plantation had changed from the single to the married man, "with resultant families and problems," and that labor itself has evolved more rapidly than the improvement of social conditions. "In many respects we are behind the times when we ought to be abreast, and should be ahead," it concluded.

In 1919 the Social Welfare Committee hired Clinton S. Childs to

conduct its extensive social survey of Hawaiian plantations. Childs came to the Islands with more than ten years of experience in social work on the mainland, including the position of welfare manager at E. A. Filene & Sons department store in Boston, a company with many progressive programs for its workers. He was joined a few months later on the HSPA staff by Donald Bowman, who left the Territorial Board of Health in Hilo to become director of the Bureau. A sanitary engineer and administrator, Bowman brought impressive familiarity with the plantations and the living conditions on them. He held his position through all phases of the reforms until his retirement in 1938.²⁸

The reports compiled by Childs were comprehensive accounts of workers' living conditions describing housing, sanitation, and other camp features. Unfortunately, most of the assessments prepared in 1919 and other records and photographs made by the Bureau were not preserved. A copy of Childs's revealing evaluation of Grove Farm, however, can be found in the historical papers at Grove Farm Homestead. Visiting the new Puhi Camp, he called the development "the most advanced construction in the way of camp houses." Childs was straightforward about different conditions he found. Grove Farm's other camps and houses were "very old and dilapidated." In the Aku-



FIG. 3. A row of single-family houses at Puhi Camp. (Grove Farm Homestead)

kui Camp, Childs saw large families living in only two rooms. At Malomalo, there was one Filipino family of mother, father, two children, and a newborn baby occupying two rooms, one of which was only a small addition built out of part of the lanai. He saw that at Puhī the sewage was disposed of by concrete surface ditch drainage, and open sewage ditches were flushed daily, but in Malomalo and Haleaka, the drainage was by dirt ditches and allowed to sink into the ground in the camp. Childs also commented on camp gardens at Grove Farm:

At the Puhī camp each house is provided with a small amount of ground immediately around it, on which quite a good deal of gardening is done, almost universally. In addition to this, a quite large tract of land has been set aside a little distance from the camp on the other side of the road. Each family is given a plot in this division and given water for the purpose of irrigation. These gardens have been very successful and supply a large part of the vegetable need of the families.²⁹

As for camp social life, Childs wrote that "no organized effort is being made in the way of recreation and amusement, excepting at Puhī Camp," where he noted a field for baseball and a newly built motion picture and meeting hall.

The Industrial Service Bureau, as it was now called, reported that draftsmen had prepared forty sets of different plan types. The plans and bills of materials provided to Grove Farm contained eight-by-ten-inch drawings and blueprints for two- and three-bedroom workers' houses; a house for single men; a boarding house; outbuildings; and concrete stoves. There were also plans included for a theater, a baseball diamond and bleachers, and a nursery where visiting public health nurses could conduct "well baby" clinics.

The HSPA design for a standard, rectangular, single-family house was similar to the dwellings built by Grove Farm a few years earlier. It was a four-room plan incorporating a kitchen. The plan featured separate bedrooms as families began to grow, and the improved kitchens emphasized the domestic role of women. The roofs had overhanging eaves that allowed windows to remain open during rains for better ventilation. It was said that such homes could be built by five carpenters in five days using the bill of materials "with inherent construction economies." In the floor plan of the "Cottage for One Family," the

living room size was twelve feet by twelve feet, the two bedrooms were ten feet by ten feet each, the kitchen seven feet by twelve feet, and the inset lanai five feet by twelve feet.³⁰

Bowman chose photographs of Grove Farm's Puhi Camp to illustrate his first article on housing in the HSPA quarterly publication,

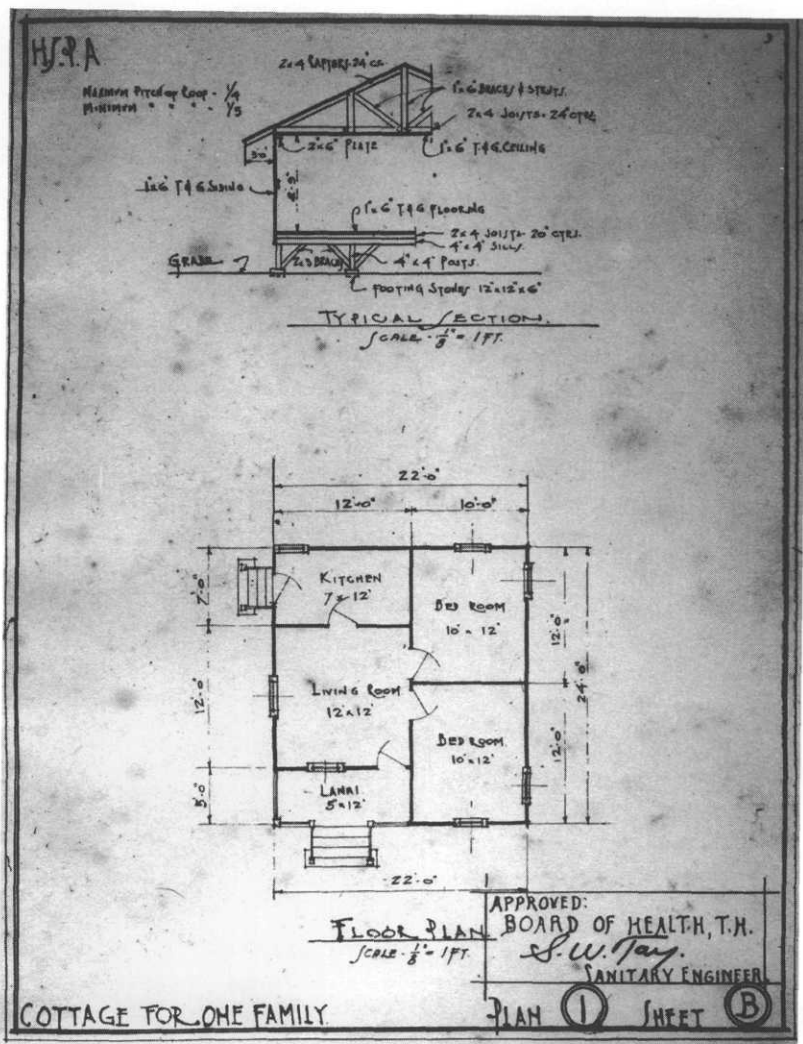


FIG. 4. Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association single-family house plan, 1920. (Grove Farm Homestead)

The Hawaiian Planters' Record, for April 1920. "We show an attractive, convenient bungalow in vogue on Kauai which has much to recommend it," Bowman wrote, noting that, "in the rear of the kitchen is a concrete wash floor surrounded by a concrete wall, the waste water being carried directly into an open concrete drain. This type of individual wash floor is much appreciated by the woman with small children, as she does not have to leave the little ones." Bowman's experience with plantation health conditions caused him to stress the importance of single-wall construction. He wrote that "the buildings should be so constructed as to make the handling of an epidemic of contagious or infectious disease easy. As an example, no double walls or other rat harbors should be permitted, thereby preventing to a large extent plague infection."³¹

In a circular letter to plantations in September 1920, Bowman stated that the Bureau had concluded that "enough of the small two-family houses exist to supply for some years to come the demands for housing couples with no children." The priority should be on single-family structures. "Do you realize that more dwellings are needed merely to house increasing families, and that replacing of the average barracks with six to eight single houses does not provide for the natural increase? Are you getting ahead with a building program or are you still losing ground?"³²

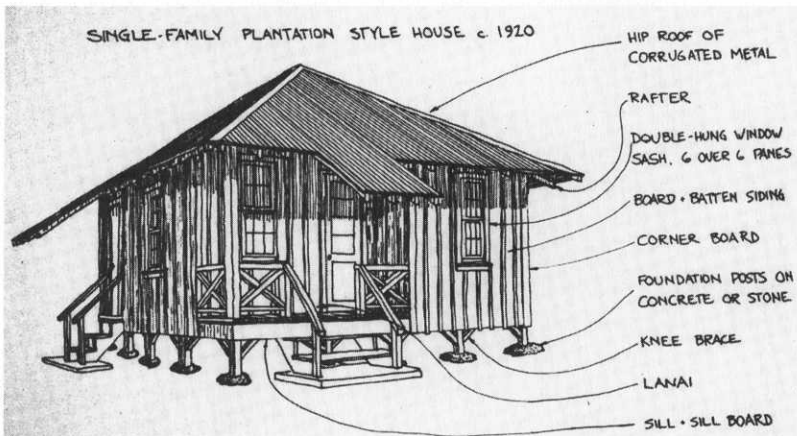


FIG. 5. Exterior drawing made from the 1920 HSPA single-family house plan. (Grove Farm Homestead)

Within five years, Bowman reported that camp improvements had shown remarkable progress. "Better types of houses, with adequate sanitary facilities and more healthful surroundings, are the rule," he wrote in *The Hawaiian Planters' Record*. "For several years now, the average expenditures for the construction and maintenance of camp dwellings have been over \$1,400,000 per year, while the amount expended for medical service and sanitation has been about \$640,000 a year."³³

The Industrial Service Bureau developed relationships with several nonprofit social-welfare organizations such as the Y.M.C.A. and the Alexander House Settlement Association on Maui, where Clinton Childs became director in 1921. At the First Territorial Conference on Social Work in Honolulu in 1921, Bowman presented the social elements of the program:

There is a consideration here that goes beyond the question of sanitation, sufficient air and window space. This is the relationships that result from improper assignments to the houses. Neither ethics or business can ever justify a condition where single men are housed in the same building with married men in rooms that are unceiled with just a board partition between them.³⁴

The Bureau's staff continued to visit individual plantations, advise them of planning, and encourage them to keep up with their building, sanitation, and recreation problems. Bowman surveyed Grove Farm sanitation conditions in 1923 and again the following year. He concluded that "sewerage is the one thing lacking to make these camps ideal from a health point of view." He was committed to privy and sewage improvements and used the *Record* to carry information and plans for such facilities as the "Kentucky Sanitary Privy," an early septic tank with a concrete tank vault and a tile drain.³⁵

In 1925 the HSPA retained the mainland industrial relations firm of Curtis, Fosdick, and Belknap to assess the sugar industry's management policies. The field research staff consisted of public welfare and personnel administrators Walter Krulsi, Mary Barnett Gilson, and George Keller. Otley Beyer from the University of Manila was part of this team. The Curtis, Fosdick, and Belknap study quantified housing conditions, plantation by plantation, based upon responses to an extensive questionnaire (see Table 3). Thirty-one HSPA member plan-

tations completed and returned the survey out of a total of approximately fifty plantations, some of which were not HSPA members. Most of the plantations not responding were apparently small in size and possibly lacked staff to compile the needed information about new houses, toilet facilities, baths, laundries, water and fuel supply, and financial investment in improvements.³⁶

As they evaluated returns, the consultants considered industrial housing standards on the mainland and were guided by the Association's policy that "the barracks type of building must go, that overcrowding must be relieved, that new construction should be limited to one-family houses with at least two bedrooms." The most significant finding was that by 1925 single-family homes represented two-thirds of all plantation housing units. On seven of the plantations with the largest number of workers (Olaa, Pioneer, HC&S, Maui Agriculture, Oahu Sugar, Ewa Plantation, and Waialua) 60 percent of houses were single-family homes. On more than half of all the plantations responding to the survey, the number of single-family houses outnumbered double houses and apartments for bachelors available in barracks and double houses.

The Curtis, Fosdick, and Belknap study provides the most detailed yardstick for measuring plantation housing reforms and cooperation by individual plantations with the Bureau's work. Furthermore, the study reached the conclusion that "the housing standards set up by the HSPA and fairly well observed on all plantations (in spots) are fully on a par, if not in advance of similar industrial housing developments anywhere in the world."³⁷ In contrast, many white Southern cotton mill workers at the time were provided with improved homes, as were other mainland industrial workers, but it is significant that, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics in 1920, company housing even in model towns was provided only to skilled workers.³⁸

The study made several recommendations. It suggested that the Bureau engage the services of a rural industrial housing architect and town planner to help meet plantation building campaign requirements of "well-laid out streets, sidewalks, sewers, lighting, location of stores, schools, churches, playgrounds and recreational centers, landscaping and gardening, the development of parkways and the variety and beauty of houses." Moreover, it advised that,

Table 3. Hawaii Sugar Planters' Association 1925 Survey of Plantation Population and Housing Facilities

Plantations	Population		Housing Units			Toilet Facilities						Baths		
	Popu- lation at last census	Labor force	Number of housing units (total)	One- family units with kitchen inside (laborers)	Separate family apartments with common kitchen (laborers)	Single men's apart- ments (laborers)	Houses with private toilets inside house	Houses with private toilets outside house	Houses with private toilets flushing to sewer or cesspool	Houses with common soil privies	"Ken- tucky" privies	Houses or toilets with private bath	Congre- gate baths supplied with hot water	
Island of Hawaii														
Olaa Sugar Co., Ltd.	3,012	2,138	711	215	157	285	1	13	31	—	258	119	45	11 ^b
Hilo Sugar Co.	2,369	899	326	60	266	—	3	28	295	—	—	15	—	10
Onomea Sugar Co.	2,651	1,145	418	221	165	90	13	—	94	49	167	31	—	—
Pepeekeo Sugar Co.	1,800	725	315	232	27	53	18	30	160	—	62	21	16	13
Honomu Sugar Co.	2,000	562	272	174	79	48	1	264	67	—	196	—	30	20
Hakalau Plan- tation Co.	4,500	834	399	306	34	23	—	17	70	90	96	20	—	17
Pauhau Sugar Plantation Co.	1,389	800	290	128	104	20	18	—	154	3	101	19	16	7
Kohala Sugar Co.	—	532	173	73	64	15	—	—	75	6	63	72	—	—
Hutchinson Sugar Plantation Co.	1,014	667	265	247	—	—	16	25	41	—	96	41	16	1
Hawaiian Agri- cultural Co.	—	1,141	462	241	47	118	1	29	19	5	126	26	—	27

Island of Maui

Pioneer Mill Co., Ltd.	—	2,428	726	82 ^a 423	23	111	11	29	77	29	66	54	81	126	8 ^b
Olowalu Co.	314	180	87	19	60	21	—	—	—	—	56	—	—	2	—1 ^b
Wailuku Sugar Co.	2,239	1,188	478	190	98	25	14	369	237	2	155	10	290	15	12(b)
Hawaiian Commercial & Sugar Co.	6,727	3,000	1,667	539	993	—	237	995	237	368	995	—	368	35	52
Maui Agricultural Co.	6,000	2,700	1,126	1,094	—	22	24	671	71	—	—	—	367	7	15

Island of Oahu

Honolulu Plantation Co.	3,642	1,876	564	[—	453	—]	55	1	56	24	—	—	35	—	5
Oahu Sugar Co., Ltd.	6,565	3,051	951	770	—	129	58	442	—	—	524	—	276	—	44
Ewa Plantation Co. ^d	5,000	2,090	959	719	137	237	77	882	497	106	272	189	150	14	7(b)
Waialua Agricultural Co., Ltd.	4,500	2,179	1,230	724	7	249	55	—	68	—	1,072	—	69	67	40
Kahuku Plantation Co.	—	781	418	346	11	36	—	322	—	—	9	—	29	44	2
Waimanalo Sugar Co.	1,026	599	210	154	32	134	14	—	79	—	29	—	14	10	2 ^b

Island of Kaua'i

Lihue Plantation Co., Ltd.(d)	3,430	1,762	693	324	158	432	—	127	88	29	262	88	232	21	44
Grove Farm Co., Ltd.	1,075	435	231	152	—	—	—	—	—	—	“All”	—	—	—	4 ^b

(continued)

Table 3. Hawaii Sugar Planters' Association 1925 Survey of Plantation Population and Housing Facilities (continued)

Plantations	Population		Housing Units				Toilet Facilities					Baths			
	Popu- lation at last census	Labor force	Number of housing units (total)	One- family units with kitchen inside (laborers)	Separate family apartments with common kitchen (laborers)	Single men's apart- ments (laborers)	Houses with private toilets inside house	Houses with private toilets outside house	Houses with private toilets flushing to sewer or cesspool	Flushing common toilets	Dry soil privies	"Ken- tucky" privies	Houses or toilets with private bath	Congre- gate baths supplied with hot water	
The Koloa Sugar Co.	—	1,057	484	168	41	166	2	16	—	32	247	—	66	24	6
McBryde Sugar Co., Ltd.	2,500	1,682	929	181 ^a 306	370	5	—	256	—	—	256	—	—	10	32 ^b
Hawaiian Sugar Co.	2,500	1,500	717	346	—	38	—	57	—	—	212	—	77	12	14 ^b
Kekeha Sugar Co., Ltd.	1,697	1,101	359	280	30	460	—	237	—	40	45	—	184	12	—
Kilauea Sugar Plantation Co.	1,200	—	481	200	80	82	45	114	93	—	—	—	—	—	—
Makee Sugar Co.	—	1,000	353	190	95	274	23	160	59	36	181	—	173	38	9
Total	67,150	38,533	16,013	8,986	3,080	3,034	755	5,063	2,475	819	5,546	341	3,008	560	31290 ^b

Source: Arthur H. Young, Report on Industrial Relations in the Hawaiian Sugar Industry Prepared for Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association, 3 vols. (New York: Curtis, Fosdick, and Belknap, 1926) II: 235-54. Replies to questionnaire prepared by field staff and issued by Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association.

^a With kitchens outside

^b Laborers supply fuel or labor for heating

^c Wood stoves

^d Eva includes Apokaa figures and Lihue includes Kipu

^e Showers

as a first step in this direction, the use of the word "camp" as a designation for the groups of homes in which plantation laborers are housed, should be abandoned and the "camp site" thought of and planned more nearly as the "home site" or village. The camps should be converted into organized villages. The villages should be named and every measure taken to stimulate and develop normal community interests.

The subject of the plantations' almost century-long practice of racial and ethnic social grouping in camps received the comment that "different nationalities often prefer to live mainly by themselves." As the study put it, "a certain amount of racial grouping may be desirable although the division of a village into hamlets according to nationality may result in clannishness and lack of community interest if not counteracted by proper community activities."

From today's perspective, the practice of housing workers by racial and ethnic group is often seen as a management policy to "divide and rule." Dorothy O. Hazama and Jane Komeiji have written that "planters deliberately kept the racial groups apart to keep each group in its place in the plantation hierarchy and to promote competition."³⁹ Others have concluded that this practice was not a conscious policy of labor control, and that within camps there were sections for each ethnic group for cultural support and language reasons. Ronald Takaki has written of Hawaiian plantations, "in the camps immigrant laborers created working class communities for themselves—places to raise families, play, worship, and transplant their cultures from the old country to Hawaii."⁴⁰ Ucebeo Malapit, who became Grove Farm's industrial relations officer in 1933 and who lived in Puhi Camp, stated that there were Filipinos, Japanese, Koreans, and a few Portuguese at Puhi and that housing was integrated by 1930. "There were barriers starting with language and barriers against intermarriage until World War II, but the negative vibes, prejudice against Filipinos, gradually diminished," Malapit said.⁴¹

Not until 1935 did the HSPA act on the recommendation that it hire a professional architect and planner. Theodore A. Vierra was a Hawai'i draftsman who received a certificate from the Harvard School of Architecture in 1929. He worked for six years in the Boston offices of Coolidge, Shepley, Bulfinch & Abbott before returning to Hawai'i and joining the Association staff. Vierra prepared master plans and

designs for plantation gymnasiums, club houses, swimming pools, and offices. In an interview Vierra said, "The standard of thinking changed. There were more progressive-thinking managers." Vierra upgraded the 1920 plans and made new drawings for single-family houses, plans that incorporated toilets, showers, and laundries in the dwelling and featured additional windows. In 1937 the HSPA Waipi'o substation of the Experiment Station on the Big Island built several houses to test various kinds of new materials and precut lumber from a local planing mill ready to assemble. Canec, a Hawaiian-made product manufactured from bagasse, was used for its insulating value in ceilings, partitions and even exterior walls.⁴²

By the 1930s professional Honolulu architects were designing for plantations. One of them probably designed the plan for the Ewa Plantation Tenney Village single-family house in 1936. It incorporated

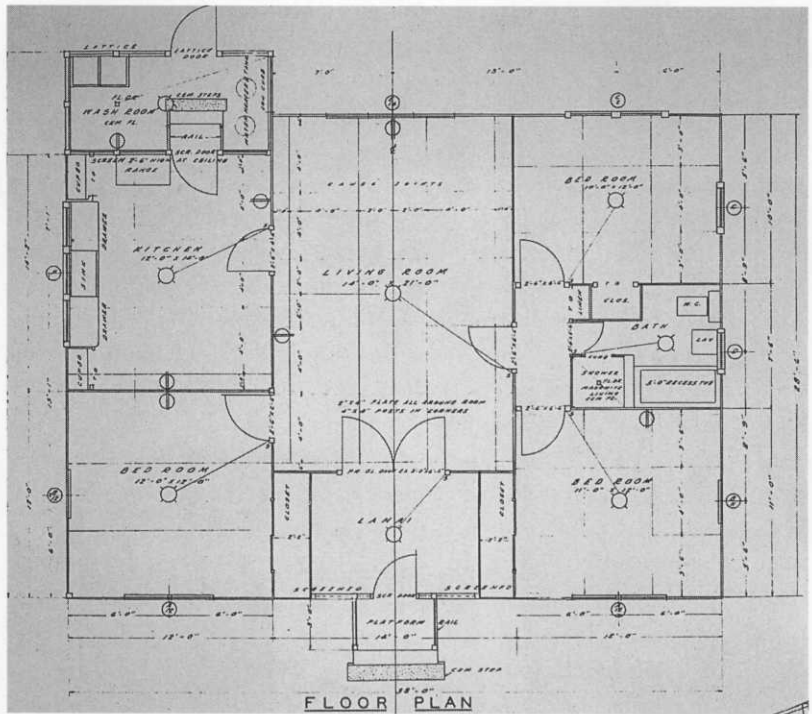


FIG. 6. Floor plan of the Tenney Village single-family house, 1936. (Grove Farm Homestead)

toilets, shower, and laundry in the dwelling. That design reflected the architect's interest in vernacular nineteenth-century Hawaiian buildings with high, sloped, double-hipped roofs. The Tenney Village houses had fourteen-foot-by-twenty-one-foot living rooms that opened on a screened front lanai and featured large, sliding triple windows at the rear for excellent cross ventilation and three bedrooms placed at the corners. One cottage was set aside as a completely furnished model for workers. The Tenney house type was built on several other Castle & Cooke plantations. Renton reported that eighty-two houses were being built at Ewa.

The family dwellings are all of the three-bedroom construction with the Hawaiian type roof, and are varied in color and so placed on their respective lots as to avoid any appearance of formal regimentation. Each house has a complete lanai, large living room and convenient kitchen, and is equipped with all modern plumbing and service facilities. Upon completion, the entire new village will be landscaped as a unit. An assortment of fruit trees will be planted in each yard, while flowering trees and ornamental plants will be located along the streets



FIG. 7. Exterior view of the Tenney Village single-family house. (Bishop Museum)

and face a wide hard surface road, service roads being provided at the side or rear. At Ewa, fruit trees such as Piri mango, avocado, solo papaya and lime trees were set out by the plantation.⁴³

Charles Dickey was responsible for the design of several plantation hospitals, including the G. N. Wilcox Memorial Hospital in Lihu'e, an independent general hospital built in 1938 that was supported by three plantations. Hart Wood, Dickey's sometime partner, was associated with plantations because of Dickey and Wood's architectural work for Castle and Cooke, Ltd. Wood designed the administration building for Ewa Plantation, and Vierra and several other architects prepared building and landscape plans for Ewa's manager, George F. Renton, Jr., in 1936–1937.⁴⁴

The new architectural designs were the epitome of twentieth-century prewar designs of labor housing and other facilities. The concept of these versions of single-family working-class dwellings was not different from earlier examples, but the openness of the designs was accomplished in a way that was sympathetic with the Island environment. Architectural work for plantations was recognized in a 1938 issue of *California Arts and Architecture*, which carried an article by Hart Wood about his design and plot plan for a group of skilled-worker houses at Kekaha Sugar Company on Kaua'i. That same year the Honolulu Academy of Arts sponsored, with the HSPA, an exhibition organized by Bowman and Vierra. Thirteen architects and landscape architects showed their designs in the show, titled "Recent Architectural Development on Plantations." Exhibited work included company hospitals, administration buildings, community centers, park strips, store buildings, bachelor housing, and single-family homes for workers.⁴⁵

Ewa Plantation celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 1940 with a carnival and a parade—plantation reform housing was represented by means of a parade float. It carried three male laborers dressed in field and shop clothes and five women and girls dressed in old-style fieldwork garb and modern jeans and shirts. They stood and sat between scaled-down float models of an old camp double house and the new Tenney Village house.⁴⁶

The social aspects of changes in plantation workers' housing and

camps are charted in Table 1 and Table 2, and the historical evidence shows that housing and other physical improvements contributed to the stabilization of the workforce. Immigrant labor was available to plantations in the 1920s, and in the aftermath of the 1924 Filipino strike, remedies proposed by the Curtis, Fosdick, and Belknap study took the form of better training for supervisors, medical coverage for the lowest paid workers, and the housing and sanitation reforms described in this article. Stabilization of labor on the plantations was actually assisted by the Depression, when few alternative urban, employment opportunities were available in Hawai'i. The increasing number of "citizen employees"—locally born laborers—increased from 15.9 percent in 1930 to 31.4 percent by 1936, dramatically reducing the uncertainty of immigrant labor supply. Speaking in 1937 of plantation expenditures for housing and other physical social improvements, including recreational development, Castle and

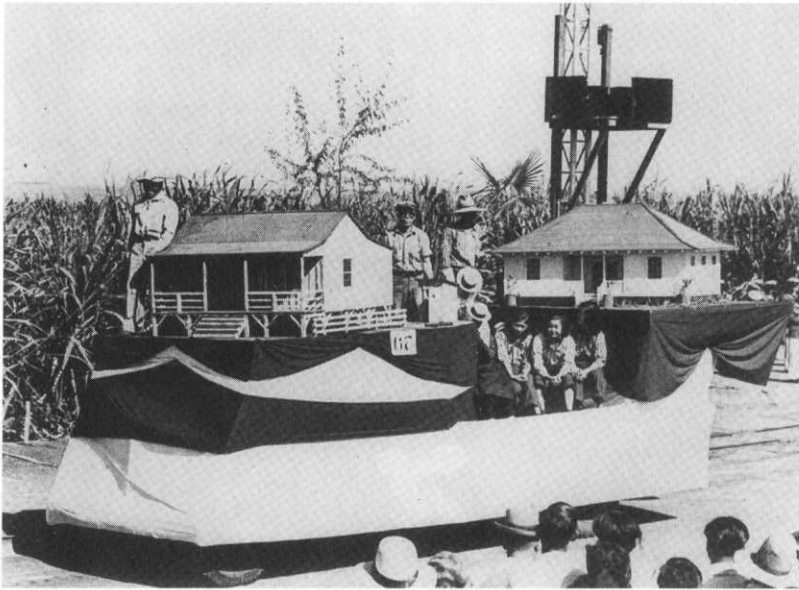


FIG. 8. This float took part in the parade when Ewa Plantation celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 1940. (From *Paradise of the Pacific* magazine, courtesy Grove Farm Homestead)

Cooke, Ltd., president Frank C. Atherton said, "All this has been done to attract Island-born young men back to the plantations. It is partly a desire to make plantation life more desirable for local labor."⁴⁷

INDIVIDUAL HOMEOWNERSHIP, 1947-1960

The shortage of building materials in the Islands after Pearl Harbor "abruptly terminated the home building program for the plantation workers," wrote W. J. Maze of C. Brewer and Company in 1944. Individual homeownership by plantation labor did not become widespread following World War II, even after unionization of the industry by the International Longshoreman's and Warehouseman's Union (ILWU) in 1946.

Opportunities for individual ownership of new houses were provided in 1947 by Castle and Cooke at Kohala Sugar Company on the Big Island and at Waialua Plantation on O'ahu. Alexander and Baldwin's Kahului New Town housing subdivision on Maui was started in 1949 for Hawaiian Commercial Sugar Company's workers, who were offered new homes to buy in the order in which they applied. The subdivision was designed by St. Louis, Missouri, city planners Bartholomew & Associates and used non-sugar-growing acreage. Lots in the "Dream City" at Kahului were 9,275 square feet, and the houses built between 1950 and 1953 were a new HSPA Industrial Service Bureau design by Vierra and his head draftsman, Mata Kimura. Vierra named their design the "All Hawaii" house, and it was constructed with many variations. The houses, measuring between 800 and 1,000 square feet, were built on a concrete slab with asphalt tile flooring and featured hollow-tile walls. They contained three bedrooms, living and dining room, kitchen, toilet, bath, and laundry, similar to postwar mainland middle-class subdivisions. Carports were optional additions. Similar houses from Vierra's design, built of wood with wooden floors, were constructed for sale to workers at Waialua, McBryde Plantation's 'Ele'ele subdivision, and American Factors' Lihue Plantation on Kaua'i. Prices of house and lot ranged from \$6,000 to \$7,500.⁴⁸

By 1953 fewer than 10 percent of the more than sixteen thousand dwellings on plantations were owned by individual workers, however. In the 1946 union contract, management and labor had agreed to

end housing as a perquisite and to treat employees as rent-paying tenants for the first time. From the union's perspective, the philosophy behind the elimination of the housing perquisite was to get rid of plantation paternalism and to increase control by workers over conditions of their employment. The monthly house rents were kept low based upon the assessed value of the dwelling. Ah Quon McElrath, a longtime staff member of the ILWU in Honolulu, recalled that "under the circumstances, one can understand why home ownership was not then a major item on the union's agenda." There was little or no discussion at the time about the feasibility of rehabilitating and selling existing homes to union members. McElrath said that the ILWU believed that most of the buildings were too old, some did not have indoor plumbing, and most would require extensive renovations.⁴⁹

Low rents for plantation houses remained at the 1946 strike settlement rates for many years and served as a disincentive for homeownership, as did satisfaction with the well-established social, communal relationship in plantation camps and villages. Furthermore, many plantations were unable to sell land for housing lots because they leased acreage for sugar growing, and some plantations simply chose not to sell any of their property to individuals for homes as land values appreciated on all the islands after statehood in 1959.

CONCLUSIONS

In 1936 as Lihue Plantation on Kaua'i continued its program of building more plantation-owned, single-family houses for workers a canvas of the women living in the houses asked what changes they would like made if they had an opportunity to build a similar house for the same cost. The majority of the women said that they preferred sacrificing the lanai for a larger living-room space. The new houses were built with a larger interior and without an inset lanai. That an individual plantation asked for the input of the women in designing its houses was an example of the responsiveness of Lihue Plantation and American Factors to the changing social and economic status of the workforce.

The dwellings and camps built by sugar plantations in Hawai'i during the first four decades of the twentieth century helped manage-

ment stabilize its workforce and improved the lives of the Chinese, Japanese, Portuguese, Korean, and Filipino groups that worked for the plantations. The most significant physical and social change was from barracks and double houses to single-family residences to accommodate married couples and families in healthy new quarters. The housing reforms introduced after 1910 were paralleled by the construction of churches, temples, Japanese language schools, ethnic clubs, and other services that turned isolated camps into company-built communities.

From the perspective of social history, plantation workers in these communities tried to create private lives and preserve traditional cultural values. Day-to-day camp life, as Takaki has observed, became part of the transition and accommodation of immigrant labor to industrial work and social life. Despite toilsome lives, the common identifications of laborers on plantations—their language, foodways, gardens, music, names, and family life—were not taken away from them, and workers' attitudes toward plantation communities were not wholly negative.

From the perspective of owners and managers of large-scale agricultural production units, economic stability and growth was the major reason to implement the new housing and community service programs. The reform process affected both management and labor: individual plantation operators gradually changed their ideas of industrial management and labor eventually received better living conditions.

However, the pace and comprehensiveness of housing reform shows the influence and power of other interests. What has been uncovered is a pattern of complex, inner connections. Within the broad bounds of the political process, reform proposals designed to help working families live well and raise their children were influenced by government and voluntary welfare organizations and institutions in Hawai'i. Public health programs were a deliberate challenge to plantations to tackle their problems of sanitation, the spread of infectious diseases like tuberculosis, and the unequal distribution of maternal and child health care. At the same time, voluntary welfare groups and social service professional championed plantation housing reforms.

The HSPA reached out to both groups—public health and social services—to staff the Industrial Services Bureau in 1919, and it later recruited an architect planner to design other improvements. Thus, a handful of experienced people helped to conceive and administer far-reaching reforms in the Islands on an industry-wide basis.

Due to cooperation by individual plantations, the HSPA improvements were successful for both economic and social reasons, and it is significant that the authority of the HSPA as an industrial membership organization and the special circumstances of sugar's economic dominance in Hawai'i, unlike many other American industries, produced a positive industry-wide response.⁵⁰

In postwar Hawai'i power relationships changed. Economic and political realities included industry relations with the ILWU rank and file and mandatory local and state government requirements for housing infrastructure. Following statehood, the power sugar had once held over the Islands steadily diminished, and the cost of land and building increased as the sugar industry and landowners explored new opportunities in urbanization and resort development. Plantation-provided workers' housing became a thing of the past.

NOTES

An earlier version of this paper, "Sugar Plantation Housing Reform in Hawaii," was presented at the Forty-Eighth Annual Meeting of the Society of Architectural Historians in April 1995 at Seattle, Washington.

¹ H. Otley Beyer, HSPA Industrial Relations Survey, 1925, vol. III, 88–9, Hawaii Agriculture Research Center Library. Field notes.

² Beyer, Survey, V: 124–25; Seventeenth Annual Report of the Kilauea Sugar Plantation Company, 1915: 5; Twentieth Annual Report of the Kilauea Sugar Plantation Company, 1918: 5.

³ *Annual Report of Committee on Industrial Relations, HSPA for the Year Ending September 30, 1933* 8.

⁴ Carroll Pursell, *The Machine in America: A Social History of Technology* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins U P, 1995) 204. For a discussion of reform coalitions and the settlement house movement, see Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Consequences of Social Policy in the United States* (Cambridge: Belknap P of Harvard U P, 1992) 1–62, 340–54; see also Peter N. Stearns, "Introduction: Social History and Its Evolution," *Expanding the Past: A Reader in Social History* (New York: New York U P, 1988) 4–16.

⁵ A notable exception has been Edward Beechert's labor history, *Working in*

Hawaii: A Labor History (Honolulu: U of Hawai'i P, 1985). See also Ronald Takaki, *Pau Hana: Plantation Life and Labor in Hawaii* (Honolulu: U of Hawai'i P, 1983); Eileen H. Tamura, *Americanization, Acculturation and Ethnic Identity: The Nisei Generation in Hawaii* (Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1994). For bibliographies of the architectural development of plantation housing in Hawai'i, see William B. O'Neal, ed., *The American Association of Architectural Bibliographies: Papers Vol. VIII, 1971* (Charlottesville: U P of Virginia, 1972); Spencer Mason Architects, "Schematic Design Report: Hawaii's Plantation Village," April 30, 1990.

- ⁶ Gwendolyn Wright, *Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1983) xvi.
- ⁷ The author wishes to thank the following persons who helped work out some of the ideas of this paper and shaped its organization: Edward Beechert, Richard Candee, and Pat Griffin. Ann Marsteller, Hawaii Agriculture Research Center Library; Spencer Leineweber and Ann Yoklavich, Spencer Mason Architects; Don Hibbard, State Historic Preservation Division; Robert Schleck, Grove Farm Homestead; Michael Faye, Kikiaola Land Co. Ltd.; Barbara Roberson, Kaua'i Historical Society; and DeSoto Brown, Bishop Museum Archives gave generous library assistance. Leland Roth thoughtfully commented on the version of the paper presented to the Society of Architectural Historians, and Jane Silverman suggested several important changes.
- ⁸ Charles S. Judd, "Plantation Health," *Hawaii Medical Journal* 41, no. 4 (1982): 116.
- ⁹ Ethnic Studies Oral History Project, *Uchinanchu: A History of Okinawans in Hawaii* (Honolulu: U of Hawai'i P, 1981) 442.
- ¹⁰ Lani Nedbalek, *Waipahu* (Mililani: Wonder Press, 1984) 22; Tamura, *Americanization, Acculturation and Ethnic Identity* 12.
- ¹¹ Miki Saito, Circular Letter to the Agents of the Japanese Emigration Companies, Honolulu, Sept. 18, 1899. Grove Farm Homestead.
- ¹² Milton Murayama, *Five Years on a Rock* (Honolulu: U of Hawai'i P, 1994) 28-9.
- ¹³ John E. Embree, *Suya Mura: A Japanese Village* (London: U of London, 1939) 89-94.
- ¹⁴ Montague Lord to E. D. Tenney, Report to HSPA Labor Bureau, July 21, 1916. Grove Farm Homestead; *HA* June 27, 1945.
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- ¹⁶ Andrew W. Lind, *Hawaii's People* (Honolulu: U of Hawai'i P, 1980) 82, table 10; Beechert, *Working in Hawaii* 175-6.
- ¹⁷ Penny Pagliaro, "Ewa Plantation: An Historical Survey, 1890 to 1940," University of Hawai'i-Mānoa Historic Preservation Program, 1987: 9.
- ¹⁸ HSPA Labor Committee Report, Sept. 24, 1910. Grove Farm Homestead.
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- ²¹ Territorial Board of Health, letter to E. H. W. Broadbent, July 20, 1911. Grove Farm Homestead; *Pacific Sugar Mill Manager's Report*, Feb. 1, 1912: 3.
- ²² Kilauea Plantation Records, Drawer 3, Folder 10, Territorial Board of Health plans, 1914–1918, Kaua'i Historical Society; Spencer Mason Architects, "Inventory and Evaluation Report of Pacific Sugar Mill/Honokaa Sugar Company's Buildings at Kukuihaele" (May 1991) 27.
- ²³ Riznik and Smith, "Wilikoki, Kauka Wahine," C3-10-12.
- ²⁴ Margaret R. O'Leary, *Register of the Grove Farm Plantation Records and Papers of George N. Wilcox, Samuel W. Wilcox, Emma L. Wilcox, Elsie H. Wilcox and Mabel I. Wilcox* (Lihu'e: Grove Farm Homestead, 1982) 7–29.
- ²⁵ Robert S. Thurston, diary notes, July 11, 1917. Grove Farm Plantation Project File, Hawaii Agriculture Research Center Library; *The Garden Island*, July 3, 1917; HA Aug. 7, 1963.
- ²⁶ Beechert, *Working in Hawaii* 192–5; 246–7.
- ²⁷ HSPA Report Submitted by Social Welfare Committee, Dec. 10, 1919. Grove Farm Homestead; Wright, *Building the Dream* 178. See also *The Hawaiian Planters' Record* XVI, No. 6 (June 1917): 379–96, for discussion of camp gardens and food production during World War I.
- ²⁸ "Donald S. Bowman" and "Clinton S. Child" in George F. Nellist, *Men of Hawaii* (Honolulu, 1935) 99, 135.
- ²⁹ C. S. Childs, Report on Welfare Investigation, Grove Farm Plantation, Kaua'i, Nov. 26, 1919. Grove Farm Homestead.
- ³⁰ HSPA Industrial Service Bureau building plans, 1920, binder. Grove Farm Homestead.
- ³¹ Donald S. Bowman, "Housing the Plantation Worker," *The Hawaiian Planters' Record* XXII, No. 4 (April 1920): 202–3. Although an understanding of the tradition of building using single-wall and vertical-board construction lacks a full study, Michael Ann Williams, "Pride and Prejudice: The Appalachian Boxed House in Southwestern North Carolina," *Winterthur Portfolio*, 25, No. 1 (1990) is one of a group of regional vernacular architecture studies that point to a range of vertical-board uses widespread in the United States. Hisao Goto, Kazuki Sinoto, and Alexander Spoehr in "Craft History and the Merging of Tool Traditions: Carpenters of Japanese Ancestry in Hawaii," *HJH* 17 (1983): 166–7 seem to claim too much for Japanese plantation carpenters in the introduction of single-wall construction in Hawai'i. More plausible is their discussion of the Japanese method of building single-wall houses from the roof down, an efficient and inexpensive techniques adapted by plantations. Gordon Tyau's research on this method was reported in *Historic Hawaii News*, March 1982.
- ³² Donald S. Bowman, Industrial Service Bureau Circular Letter No. 4, Subject: Unit Housing, Sept. 15, 1920. Grove Farm Homestead.
- ³³ Donald S. Bowman, "Camp Improvements," *The Hawaiian Planters' Record* XXX, No. 1 (January 1926): 105–6.

- ³⁴ *Industrial Service Section of the First Territorial Conference of Social Work Held in Honolulu, April 23 to 29, 1921* (Honolulu: HSPA, 1921) 29–30; *Report of the Director, Industrial Service Bureau, HSPA, for the Year, 1920* (Honolulu, 1921) 15–16. Other Industrial Service Bureau staff served as intermediaries with supervisors, workers and plantation nurses, but research is lacking about their role in helping make the improvements possible.
- ³⁵ Donald S. Bowman, Report on Sanitation, Grove Farm Plantation, Feb. 10, 1923; Report on Sanitation, Grove Farm Plantation, Feb. 19, 1924. Grove Farm Homestead; "The Kentucky Sanitary Privy," *The Hawaiian Planters' Record* XIII, No. 6 (December 1920): 317–26.
- ³⁶ Arthur H. Young, *Report on Industrial Relations in the Hawaiian Sugar Industry Prepared for Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association*, vol. II (New York: Curtis, Fosdick & Belknap) 235–54; Administrators of Field Research Staff, HSPA ms., Hawaii Agriculture Research Center Library. An unidentified or generic plantation community map showing Filipino, Japanese, Portuguese, and Puerto Rican camps around a sugar factory and service buildings appeared in Andrew Lind, *An Island Community: Ecological Succession in Hawaii* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1938) fig. 21.
- ³⁷ Young, *Report on Industrial Relations* 249.
- ³⁸ Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, James Leloudis, Robert Korstad, Mary Murphy, Lu Ann Jones, and Christopher Daly, *Like a Family: The Making of a Southern Cotton Mill World* (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1987) chap. 3; Wright, *Building the Dream* 186.
- ³⁹ Dorothy O. Hazama and Jane O. Komeiji, *Okage Sama De: The Japanese in Hawaii, 1885–1995* (Honolulu: Bess Press, 1986) 32–3; Lawrence H. Fuchs, *Hawaii Pono: A Social History* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1961) 115.
- ⁴⁰ Takaki, *Pau Hana* 93–4, 98; Beechert, *Working in Hawaii* 234–5; Lind, *An Island Community* 308–9.
- ⁴¹ Ucebeo Malapit, interviewed by author with Ruben Alcantara, Koloa, May 20, 1977. Grove Farm Homestead.
- ⁴² *HA* Nov. 7, 1954; Theodore A. Vierra, interviewed by Edward Beechert, June 6, 1974. Courtesy of Edward Beechert; *HSB* Oct. 10, 1936, Dec. 3, 1938. HSPA plans for single-family house, 1935. Grove Farm Homestead.
- ⁴³ Pagliaro, "Ewa Plantation," 16; *HSB* Sept. 9, 1936; *HA* Jan. 26, 1937; plans, Design W-2, 3-bedroom cottage, Ewa Plantation Co., Engineering Dept., 1938. Grove Farm Homestead.
- ⁴⁴ J. Meredith Neil, "The Architecture of C. W. Dickey in Hawaii," *HJH* 9 (1975): 101–12; *HA* Nov. 20, 1938.
- ⁴⁵ Hart Wood, "Community Housing for Skilled Help in Kakaha [*sic*], Kauai, Hawaii," *California Arts and Architecture* 53 (1938); Inward Loan Accession Book, 83–4, Nov. 1, 1938, Honolulu Academy of Arts.
- ⁴⁶ Bailey S. Marshall, "Fifty Hawaiian Years of Ewa Sugar," *PP* (March 1940): 2–5; 12.

- ⁴⁷ John E. Reinecke, *The Filipino Piecemeal Sugar Strike of 1924-1925* (Honolulu: Social Science Research Institute, U of Hawai'i, 1996) 131-38. Postscript by Edward Beechert; Beechert, *Working in Hawaii* 253; *HA* Dec. 1, 1937. The subject of plantation labor mobility and turnover calls for additional study. Is it possible to learn how long individuals lived on a plantation?
- ⁴⁸ W. J. Maze, "Post-War Plantation Homes," *Hawaii Farm & Home* (August 1944) n.p. *Maui News* July 30, 1949; *HSB* July 31, 1953.
- ⁴⁹ *HA* Sept. 12, 1953; Ah Quon McElrath, letter to author, Sept. 13, 1995.
- ⁵⁰ *HSB* May 14, 1936; Richard M. Candee, *Atlantic Heights: A World War I Shipbuilder's Community*, Publication Seven (Portsmouth: Portsmouth Marine Society, 1985) 51-61. The sugar plantations' response was not unique and was similar to reform housing programs of U.S. shipbuilders during World War I, but it was something typically not found in other American industries of the period.

