Nahienaena, Hawaiian Princess

A chant for the princess,
For Nahienaena a name!
Chief among women!

Marjorie Sinclair

In old Hawaii the life of a princess of highest lineage was usually limited by the tabus which surrounded and separated her from others, by prescribed rituals, and by the awe with which she was regarded because of her sacred rank. Her days were, in a sense, arranged for her; she simply had to be. However, the brief life of the Princess Harriet Nahienaena—she died when she was only twenty-one—has a special dimension which lifts it above the routine stories of tabu chiefesses. She was caught in the clash of two streams of culture, the traditional Polynesian and nineteenth century western; she was the plaything of these forces, one focused in the chiefs and the other in the missionaries and merchants. Destined to struggle with the flaws of her own nature as well as with this cultural ferment which confused her, she acted out the short tragic drama of her life.

The only daughter of Kamehameha the Great and his tabu wife, Keopuolani, Nahienaena was born in 1815 during a period when Hawaii was changing rapidly. Her early childhood was spent in the old Hawaiian world; when she was six or seven years old, her mother’s zeal and the mission teachings thrust her into western ways. What do we know of her? Some meager facts about her life: where she went on occasion, what she did, a great deal about what she wore and about the ceremonials in which she appeared. We have some contemporary opinions about her from missionaries, businessmen, Hawaiians, naval officers, and others. We have very little of what she said or wrote.

Robert Dampier, the artist on H.M.S. Blonde when it returned from London with the bodies of Kamehameha II and his queen, painted the princess in her tenth year, a girl of regal stance, wearing a feather mantle on her shoulders, a coronet of feathers in her hair, and in her left hand a kahili, the feather emblem of her rank. Gazing directly at the viewer, her eyes are the eyes of a mature child. Her forehead is high, her mouth full, richly curved and sensuous. Dampier painted in the distant background a landscape which suggests old Lahaina: the low-lying plain, the grass houses, the clustering

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Marjorie Sinclair is an assistant professor of English at the University of Hawaii.
palms near the houses, and beyond, the blue sea in which a ship is anchored, perhaps the *Blonde*. Lahaina was then the setting of her life; later, Honolulu with its many influences would dominate. At the painting of the picture, her twelve-year-old brother, Kauikeaouli, was about to be proclaimed king, the king who would reign in Hawaii the longest of any historical monarch. His succession to the throne would strongly shape both the happiness and the tragedy of her life.

The people of the period, Hawaiian and western, recognized that her life would be subject to a tangle of forces. Hiram Bingham, the missionary, noted the fundamental contradiction.

... The missionaries and their wives earnestly desired to withdraw her (Nahienaena) from the scenes of heathen corruption, and throw around her daily the protecting shield of Christian families. But this could be accomplished only in part, as in that state of the nation she could not well be detached from the native community.

The Hawaiian historian Samuel Kamakau eloquently described the psychology of chiefs, who were surrounded by tabus to separate and elevate them above their people and who were served from infancy by those who exalted them continually. "... for the minds of chiefs run with their desires like a river whose course is directed into fresh channels with the rainfall." Abraham Fornander in his *Hawaiian Antiquities* records a chant to Nahienaena which reveals how chiefs were apotheosized.

Whence came they?

We two are from above, chiefs of noble, royal birth, The blossom of the chief's multitude is plucked. ... The world above where Nahienaena treads majestically. Nahienaena issues forth as chief of the rising sun.

"Two" in the second line refers to the princess and her brother, Kauikeaouli.

The first fact which we have about Nahienaena's life is that her mother refused to follow the custom of the period and surrender her baby daughter to the rearing of another chief. She wanted to keep the last of her children at her side. This decision tells us much about the mother's force of character and meant that Nahienaena was in the very center of the stage during the crucial period in 1819: the last illness and death of Kamehameha I, the assumption of the throne by Liholiho as Kamehameha II, and the abolition of the tabus. The princess was four years old when these great changes occurred. She shared in the traditional wailing when the great king died; she saw the mysterious coming and going of her mother and other chiefs in the performance of the funeral rites; she was present at the ceremony of her brother's accession when he wore a feather cloak over a British uniform of red and gold. During the coronation feast, she saw her powerful mother violate the ancient eating tabu which kept men and women apart at meals. When Keopuolani sent for her younger son to come into the women's eating hall, the king himself escorted Kauikeaouli to the presence of the queen mother.

*The illustrations given here are engravings of the Dampier paintings described in the text.*

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and watched as the two ate together. Liholiho, however, abstained at that time from the violation.\(^5\) Kamakau wrote that it was:

strange that Keopuolani should have desired free eating against her own interests and those of her children! She and they were looked upon by the people as gods with powers like fire, heat, light, not through any feeling of inferiority on their part but through long-cherished custom.\(^6\)

Keopuolani, with her discerning intelligence, recognized the good in the new forces brought to Hawaii by the foreigners; she may even have perceived that there were opportunities to achieve a greater chiefly power and goodness through the use of western ways. Whatever the explanation, she continued for the rest of her life to take important steps in breaking from the old ways and in urging her children to do so. After the missionaries arrived in 1820, she quickly saw the advantages of reading and writing; and she felt the power of the Christian religion. She entrusted the young prince and princess to training in letters by the missionaries. Liholiho, perhaps influenced by his mother, also saw the value of letters, and he insisted that the young prince, successor to the throne, attend lessons regularly at the home of the Thurstons, missionaries who in 1820 established a church and a school in Kailua. The king declared that “he [the prince] must have learning for his father and mother both—that it would fit him for governing the nation, and make him a wise and good king when old.” The princess probably shared some of this study with her brother, for she was five when she began to learn to read. Later she frequently recalled how much her mother valued the new learning, the *palapala*, and the new religion, the *pule*.

Toward the end of 1820, the decision was made to move the king’s official residence to Honolulu, and early in 1821 Liholiho, with his family, including Keopuolani, Kauikeaouli and Nahienaena, and the important chiefs established the seat of government on Oahu. During 1820–1823 there are few mentions of Keopuolani and her two younger children. By 1823 when the old queens’ health was failing, she had become seriously interested in the Christian religion. In the spring of that year, she established a residence away from Honolulu in a grove at the foot of Diamond Head; there she hoped to find a quiet place to restore her health and to hear the new gospel without interruption.

. . . She, at this time, expressed her earnest desire that her two children, the prince and princess, then able to read and write, might be well educated, and particularly that Nahienaena might be trained up in the habits of Christian and civilized females, like the wives of the missionaries.\(^8\)

In 1823, the records and letters begin to mention Nahienaena’s formal appearances on occasions of state. She was then seven or eight years old and shared equally with Kauikeaouli in the ceremonies. On April 24, Liholiho held the annual festival to celebrate his accession to the throne, one which lasted for several days. After the divine service on the first day, the princess was borne on an elaborately decorated carriage into the pavilion prepared for the feast. Following her was a colorful procession of *kahili* bearers and
retainers. When her carriage approached, the king rose and helped to pull it. Then he took the princess on his back, and seating her at the table next to the prince, Kauikeaouli, he announced, "This is my sister, the daughter of Kamehameha." Throughout the feast, the king's guests caressed her and indulged her whims. On the last day of the festival, the prince and princess in native dress of scarlet silk were carried in state "on a singular carriage, consisting of four neat, imported field bedsteads, lashed together side by side, and fantastically decorated with bark cloth, and a yellow figured moreen covering and drapery. . . ." Behind them marched Hoapili, their stepfather, and Kaikioewa, the prince's guardian, as servants of the royal pair.

On April 29, the princess made another formal appearance before the second company of missionaries when they were presented to the government. She entered the palace seated on the left shoulder of a large man, her feet resting on his arms which were folded across his chest. To steady herself, she circled his head with her right arm. She was dressed in the European fashion, in a black satin gown trimmed with gold lace, and she wore a black hat with feathers. Following her was a retinue of twenty children of her own age. Charles Stewart, the missionary, commented at the time that she was "a pretty and well-behaved child." At the end of May in 1823, Keopuolani decided to leave Waikiki and take up her residence in Lahaina, Maui. When she asked to have a missionary to accompany and instruct her, Charles Stewart and William Richards were assigned to the post. She took with her Nahienaena, Hoapili, the husband she had chosen after Kamehameha's death, and a large following of chiefs and retainers. On the day of departure, the king accompanied his mother to the brig Cleopatra's Barge, helped her on board, and tenderly assisted her to a comfortable place on her couch. He stayed on board the brig until it was fifteen miles at sea, then returned to Honolulu on a pilot boat.

Lahaina, traditionally a favorite spot with the chiefs, was dramatically located on a gently rising plain between mountains and sea and had the advantage of a distinctly warm climate. Trees grew close to the water and clustered around the houses or in small groves, and the many fish ponds and taro fields mirrored the grasses and foliage. Songs of Lahaina, as well as accounts of early voyagers, tell of the luxuriant breadfruit trees, of the coconuts, bananas, and sugar cane. The surf rolled on the sandy, smooth beach in long uninterrupted combers. The mountains were cut with deep shadowy valleys nearly always rendered mysterious by the blue depth of color hovering in them.

Keopuolani promptly established herself and her daughter in separate residences. After consultation with the missionaries, she selected land for their station and ordered houses to be constructed. Stewart and Richards established a church in a temporary structure and schools exclusively for royalty in the residences of each of the chiefs, including those of both Keopuolani and Nahienaena. In this early period the chiefs preferred to keep the learning for themselves.
The princess and her mother spent warm peaceful days in the study of letters and religion, interrupted occasionally when people came to celebrate their affection for the tabu chiefesses by dancing and singing. Usually a great crowd assembled to watch. One afternoon two ten-year-old girls, wearing yellow tapa arranged in thick folds from the waist to the knee, their heads and necks wreathed in leis of leaves and flowers, danced before Keopuolani and Nahienaena. The musicians, six men seated on the ground, beat rhythms on large calabashes and chanted the *meles* for the dance. Stewart writes that “the motions of the dance were slow and graceful, and, in this instance, free from indelicacy of action; and the song, or rather recitative, accompanied by much gesticulation, was dignified and harmonious in its numbers. The theme of the whole, was the character and praises of the queen and princess, who were compared to everything sublime in nature, exalted as gods.” At sunset, Keopuolani stopped the entertainment, and Stewart held evening prayer in the presence of about 2,000 people.\(^1\)

The tranquility of the Lahaina days was interrupted by the arrival of Liholiho on June 23. Although Honolulu was now his official residence, he was a restless king who moved from island to island during his short reign. When he arrived in Lahaina, Princess Nahienaena and one of his queens went to the beach to greet him; after embracing them, he hastened to the residence of his mother, and holding her face in his hands, gazed affectionately at her, then kissed her twice.\(^1\)

During his visit, the king took possession of Keopuolani's residence while the queen moved temporarily to the household of Nahienaena. He spent his days drinking, dancing and feasting. When his mother reproved him for such a display, he said, “You study too much—it is not good; you are old, and it is well for you to study a little only.” Keopuolani replied that she was indeed old but for that very reason she must study harder to learn before she died. Then he asked her to return to their former custom, to abandon missionary ways and drink a little rum with him. She replied that the new teachings were good, that “... never will I take my dark heart again.”\(^15\)

The king, however, continued to indulge himself in rum and song. Before he left Lahaina, an incident recorded by Stewart, gives a glimpse of Liholiho’s fluctuations between his desires and the “new system.” On July 1, a large noisy crowd of chiefs and others were enjoying dancing and music performed by eighteen girls and seven men. When the missionaries came to call, the dancing lasted a few minutes longer; then in spite of the obvious desire of the people for the entertainment to continue, the king, Nahienaena, the queens and other chiefs went to the lanai of the princess' house for prayer.\(^16\) The young princess thus lived at the center of a puzzling life: alternation between dance and music and observance of prayer intensified by a concern for the state of the soul. On the one hand, she saw the dignity, the force and determination of the Queen-Mother; on the other the gaiety and dissipation of her brother, the King.

The Queen-Mother had settled in Lahaina for her health. In September 1823 she became seriously ill, and the chiefs, according to the custom, began
to gather at her bedside. On September 4, Stewart called on the queen; he found fifty chiefs and their retainers all weeping aloud and wailing. By September 9, the high chiefs had come from all the islands; when Stewart answered their summons, he found them sitting close to the bedside, weeping, and going up from time to time to grasp the hands of the dying woman or to listen to her faint words. At her pillow, keeping watch and weeping were the king and his favorite wife; the prince and princess; Hoapili, the queen's husband; Kaahumanu, the kuhina-nui; and Kalanimoku, the prime minister. For the next several days all remained with Keopuolani, listening to her whispered "aloha" or "maikai, maikai" and attending to her requests. Nahienaena, with her brother the prince, kept an almost constant vigil, weeping and occasionally wailing.17

On September 16, the day of her death, Keopuolani was at last granted her most ardent wish: she was baptized by Mr. Ellis, a visiting English missionary. During the final days of her illness, she had reaffirmed her belief in God, her love of Christ, and her conviction that the gods of Hawaii were false. Expressing concern for her two young children, the prince and princess, she commended them to the care of the chiefs for moral guidance and to the instruction of the mission. Her thoughts were concentrated on the state of her soul and on the hope that her children too would some day accept the church and escape the "everlasting fire."18

From the moment of her death, the children wept, the chiefs mourned, and the commoners wailed in the old fashion. There was little of the old violence, however, the knocking out of teeth or sexual extravagance. Keopuolani had commanded that the ancient funeral customs be abolished at her death.19 The wailing, however, was not suppressed. An old print shows the grass house in which Keopuolani died with the Hawaiian flag lowered to half mast. A crowd of commoners, some standing and some kneeling, their arms flung up, are wailing. Separated from them in an open space are Hoapili; Kamamalu, the favorite wife of Liholiho; and others of the great chiefs. The young prince and princess are seated on the shoulders of their attendants; the two have their heads thrown back and their mouths open for wailing. The prince's arms are high in the air as he thrusts his grief toward the skies.

Though the commoners were turbulent upon the first announcement of the queen's death, the king's orders put a stop to their outburst, and on the day after her death they remained quiet in accordance with her wishes. On September 18, Mr. Ellis conducted a religious ceremony in a grove of trees near her residence. For the funeral procession, her body was covered with a rich pall borne by the five queens of Liholiho and by Liliha, the wife of Boki, a high chief. The bells tolled, guns were fired, and six hundred people marched to honor the late queen.20

After Keopuolani's death, Nahienaena was placed in the care of Hoapili, her mother's husband and governor of Maui, and of the two missionary teachers, Richards and Stewart, to whom she was already devoted. She continued to reside at Lahaina. In accordance with Hawaiian custom, Hoapili soon remarried. Nahienaena's mother had been the first chief to be baptized;
her stepfather became the first chief to be married in a Christian ceremony. Richards conducted the service which united Hoapili to Kalakua, one of Kamehameha's former queens.  

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For many reasons, Liholiho had long hoped to visit England: he wanted to meet the king and to gain information about politics and commerce, and he yearned to satisfy his curiosity about the world beyond the Pacific. His mother's death freed him from an important obligation. Designating Kauikeaouli as his successor and Kaahumanu as regent, he and Queen Kamamalu embarked for London on November 27, 1823. The king's departure brought Kauikeaouli and Nahienaena into much greater prominence; they were now the chiefs of highest rank in the kingdom. For this reason and because of the closeness of their ages, they were constantly linked in ceremony and in the minds of the people. Men spoke of them in the same breath as the young prince and princess. They continued, however, to live at Lahaina, studying their letters and religion and enjoying the devotion and praise of their people.

Early in 1824, the chiefs decided to share the palapala with the people, especially with their attendants. This decision increased the demand for books printed in Hawaiian and increased the schools and the number of students in each. On February 2, Stewart made one of his many visits to the chiefs and found the queens and the princess writing at their desks. Around them, seated on mats, their attendants were also busily engaged in copying on slates and working in their spelling books.  

By midyear Nahienaena was regularly studying English in addition to her own language. The school established at her house and over which she and Hoapili presided increased its enrollment to 270 children. Her example as a pupil was promptly imitated; it attracted students not only to her school but to the others as well. When her attention lagged, as it did in the late autumn of 1824, the number of students in the schools also diminished. The young chiefess set the fashion, as royalty does.

An interesting document preserved and obviously influenced by the missionaries, a journal kept by a Society Islander named Toteta, gives evidence of the princess' growing religious devotion during 1824 and 1825. Toteta probably understood better than the missionaries the pressures imposed on Nahienaena. He wrote that chiefs and friends gathered about her in an attempt to take her back to "her old sports and plays, and to the pleasures of this world," that they sometimes spoke angrily against the word of God. Alarm on account of her former sins, the young chiefess, however, steadfastly turned her mind to the word of God; at one time she had called that word burdensome, "a thing to make me sick." Toteta reported that her modesty and humility grew. "She does not wish to be exalted by men. She desires to cast off entirely the rehearsing of names; for her rejoicing is not now in names or titles." The "rehearsing of names" refers to the genealogical chants and the meles in praise of the young princess. Though it was probably easy for her to
give up the old gods—they were overthrown when she was only four—the chants were a part of her life. She had heard them from birth, chants glorifying her, meles telling of ancestors and the legends of her people, songs telling of love. In the last months of her mother’s life, the two had sat in the grove at Lahaina and listened to songs praising them as tabu chiefesses. She would love all her life the beauty of sound in Hawaiian words, the rhythms of the language, the secret allusions and meanings of the chants. Once, in the grip of religious enthusiasm, she declared that she wanted to cast off the rehearsing of names; yet she was never able to do this.

Early in 1825 Nahienaena attended a prayer meeting for women. On this occasion she was asked by one of the chiefesses why she had come to the meeting. She answered, “You have always told me to be strong, to cast off the old way, and to walk in the straight path. Your husband has always told me so too; and I remember the words of my mother Keopuolani. She told me it was a good thing to love God and Jesus Christ... She told me not to walk with bad companions.”26 On another occasion, the princess forbade those who could not read hymns to enter her house. At other times her religious enthusiasm was accompanied by exaggerated actions, symptoms of a growing state of anxiety and tension. Once at midnight, she knocked at Richards’ door to ask for a lamp to go to the church. When he inquired why she wanted to go, she responded that she had heard noises and felt there were wicked people in the house of the Lord. Richards later inquired of her attendants about this action and learned that she often went to the church at midnight to pray.27

She grew in piety, but the growth was erratic; and constantly—almost as a counterweight—there was continuous public adulation and a harking back to the past. David Malo, the Hawaiian scholar and a devout Christian convert, commented that perhaps the people came in large numbers to the religious meetings to see the chiefs in their splendor rather than to worship. The princess, usually dressed in velvet or satin, was seated on a large chair upholstered in red or green and had an attendant bearing a kahili and maids of honor grouped about her. She carried herself with dignity and an awareness of the significance of her royal role. “For a child of only eight years, she acts the princess royal with no inconsiderable effect.”28 Her elegance at the sombre Puritan meetings expressed the two dominant forces that were shaping her life.

There exists a record of how Nahienaena and Kauikeouli commemorated the first anniversary of their mother’s death in September 1824. Within the same grove in which Keopuolani’s funeral service had been conducted, a mahogany table was set with china and glass for thirty persons. At each end of the table stood sofas covered with purple cloth for the princess and her brother, and the ever-present kahilis nodded in the gentle wind. Surrounding the grove, groups of performers danced and sang, and people gathered in the thousands to watch. The procession, which wound its way from the fort at Lahaina to the grove, was led by Kinau, then one of Liholiho’s queens (a half-sister of the King) and the prince and princess. Kinau was swathed in a tapa
pa’u of so many layers that she could not move without the help of an attendant on either arm. Other attendants walked before and after her, carrying the ends of this tremendous skirt. The prince wore a purple suit, and next to him a young chiefess danced and sang. Behind him came Nahienaena seated on a litter covered with a hundred thicknesses of tapa. She wore native dress. The litter, borne by several chiefs, was sheltered from the sun by Chinese damask umbrellas. The princess “was thus carried from the fort to the grove several different times, after slight alterations in her dress and attendants, while the air rung with the shouts of the multitude and with song in her praise.”

In the following month, October of 1824, Nahienaena had a brief lapse from her profession of the Christian religion. She traveled south of Lahaina to a village on her lands to sacrifice to the old gods. An explanation for this departure from Christian faith is presented in an appendix to Byron’s Voyage:

. . . According to the custom of disposing of the old clothes of the chiefs, the princess had several boxes of garments she had thrown out from Lahaina and secretly buried in the sea. It was reported that one dress had been stolen with a design of praying her to death, from the power it would give the sorcerer over her life. The consequence was, that her ignorant attendants prevailed on her to sacrifice to her old gods, to escape the evil. For this purpose she went to a village eight miles from Lahaina (which was said to be too much under the influence of Jehovah to secure success in the rite) under pretext of visiting her plantations in that neighborhood, and sacrificed to the gods of her fathers.

As her mentor and spiritual adviser, Richards often discussed moral problems with Nahienaena. On one occasion he records that she spoke with regret of the sins she had committed, one of them being the sacrifice to the old gods. She also recalled, as she often did, her mother’s counsel to follow in the path of Christ. In turn he urged her to cultivate modesty, pointing out that this virtue was especially desirable in a woman; he explained that in the eyes of God there is no difference between chief and commoner. Her response to the plea for humility is recorded and gives us direct access to her feelings: it tells us how much she loved (for this had been the very essence of her life) the power and glory and adulation; and the extent to which this feeling was in conflict with the remembered wishes of her mother and the teachings of her Christian mentors. She began by saying, “I am exceedingly afraid of the feather pa’u that is making for me.” But she added, “It is a thing to lift up one’s heart.” The yellow feather skirt, nine yards long, was being made for her to wear upon Liholiho’s return from London.

The voyage of Liholiho and Kamamalu to England was one of the strangest ever undertaken by royalty to a centre of empire. The king simply made a bargain with Captain Starbuck of the British whaler, L’Aigle, to transport them to England. The English government knew nothing of their coming.
On the day of embarkation, the queen, deeply moved, lingered on shore, wailing. Throwing her hands up she chanted:

O heaven! O earth!
O mountains and sea!
O commoners and people!
Farewell to you all
O soil, farewell!
A land for which my father suffered
Farewell,
O burden that my father strived for.
We two are leaving your labors. . . .

It was indeed to be a final farewell. Their majesties arrived in London in May, 1824, unexpected royal visitors. When the Foreign Office learned of their presence hurried arrangements were made for them to stay at Osborn's Hotel and to be entertained as suited their rank. They were now in a city thronged with pale-skinned people, where the streets were lined endlessly with fine buildings; the city was shaped in part by a river, not by a sandy or lava shore. The sounds were those of carriage traffic, not the surf or the wind whipping coconut fronds. The rooms did not have the faintly dusty, dry and sweetish odor of the thatched house but rather contained mingled scents of polished wood, carpets, upholstery, and staleness. They found European clothes constraining, and though they wore them to the receptions and the theatre, they sat comfortably robed in bed gowns in the hotel rooms and played whist with dirty cards they had brought from Hawaii.

The Times records that on May 31 a reception for the king and queen was held by Secretary Canning at Gloucester Lodge, attended by 200 people, including the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, the Duke of Wellington, the cabinet ministers, and the diplomatic corps. On later occasions, the royal pair visited the theatres, saw Westminster Abbey, and observed a balloon-ascension. The high point of their stay was to be the audience with King George IV scheduled for June 21. By that time, however, the entire Hawaiian party was ill with measles. Kamamalu's illness was complicated by an infection of the lungs, and she died on July 8. Liholiho, deeply depressed by the death of his favorite wife, felt that it was foreordained that he too should die. The end came for him on July 14.

It took eight months for news of the royal deaths to reach Honolulu. Two letters written by Nahienaena on the death of King Liholiho have been recorded. One, dated Lahaina, April 7, 1825, was addressed to Kaahumanu, the Regent, and to Kalanimoku, the Prime Minister, expressing sympathy and asking that now that her elder brother was dead they act as parents to her and her brother. The last part of the letter was addressed to Kauikeaouli:

And where art thou, my brother? The Lord of us [Liholiho] will never return—he is dead! But the word of our true Lord remains, and let us regard it. Listen thou to the word of our eternal Lord.

I pray to God: let us both pray, that Jehovah may cause us to be good through Jesus Christ, the Deliverer from sin, the eternal Lord. Be not deaf to me: it would be an evil thing; but listen to my advice.

Love to you, O Kauikeaouli, my brother! Dead is our king at Lonadona; dead also is the sister of us, Kamehamalu.
The two letters were written on gilt-edged paper and sealed in wax, and if we can believe Stewart, the translator, they were entirely the work of the little girl.

The bodies of the king and queen were brought from England on H.M.S. *Blonde* under the command of Lord Byron, a cousin of the English poet. When the ship reached Lahaina on May 4, 1825, the princess, Richards and Hoapili paced up and down the beach, waiting for the landing party. As it approached, Hoapili seated himself on a chair in the sand, while Richards, with the princess leaning at his side, stood at the chief's left. The people, gathered in large numbers, thronged across the entire beach and began to wail. When the landing party touched the shore and started to walk up the sand, a passage was opened through the people for them to approach the chiefs. Hoapili rose from his chair, and with a great roar of wailing held out his arms to Liliha, his daughter. The princess, in her turn, sprang from Richards' side and ran to Liliha's arms; meanwhile the chiefs, led by Hoapili in an ancient custom, knelt down and rubbed their faces in the sand. The wailing mounted, drowning out the noise of the sea until Richards became concerned over the possibility of violence in the midst of this display of grief for the dead monarchs. He suggested to Nahienaena that they pray to Jehovah in the hope that a religious ceremony would diminish the surge of feeling and curb the rising confusion. She passed the suggestion to Boki and mats were spread for prayer. This simple action brought quiet to the crowd.

When the *Blonde* sailed for Honolulu, Kauikeaouli, Nahienaena, and other chiefs were on board. On May 7 the formal reception for Lord Byron was held in the capital city. The chiefs had planned that Nahienaena wear the magnificent feather *pa'u* which earlier she had told Richards she feared. They wanted her dressed in the ancient way of her country, feather leis around her head and neck and the feather skirt draped from waist to knee. Because such a costume meant that she would be naked to the waist, she was deeply troubled and refused to wear it. She fled to the missionaries, who calmed her, but she did not return to the place of the reception until just in time to take her seat.

In the audience chamber, Nahienaena and Kauikeaouli sat on a Chinese sofa elevated on a platform. Both were dressed in black; around the princess was arranged the feather *pa'u*. On each side of the sofa stood the chiefs in the order of their rank, and behind were four state *kahili*. During the formalities, Lord Byron expressed the sympathy of the King of England, then presented a large number of gifts to the *ali'i*. Later prayers were said and refreshments of biscuits, fruit and wine were served.

On May 11, the funeral of Liholiho and Kamamalu was held. The coffins were brought in a procession of barges from the *Blonde* and then were carried in a solemn cortege from the fort to the church. Twenty *kahili* bearers dressed in black, some with handsome feather cloaks over the black, led the way; following them were the sailors of the *Blonde* and the band playing a funeral march; the missionaries walked next with the chaplain and surgeon of the ship. The royal coffins, covered in crimson velvet, were placed on two cars with black canopies; and each was drawn by forty chiefs. In the place of honor
behind the coffins marched the prince in a Windsor uniform supported by Mr. Charlton, the British consul, and the princess in black supported by Lord Byron. Following the royal pair, the chiefs were arranged according to rank, and behind them came the merchants and seacaptains.

On June 6 a national council was held, attended by the high chiefs, Lord Byron, the missionaries and merchants. Kauikeaouli was unanimously proclaimed king, but he was to be placed under the guardianship of Kalanimoku and was to be instructed by the missionaries in reading, writing, and religion. Kaahumanu would continue as regent.

On this occasion, the young king spoke in response to the decisions of his elders: "Where are you, chiefs, guardians, commoners, I greet you. Hear what I say! My kingdom I give to God. The righteous chief shall be my chief, the children of the commoners who do right shall be my people, my kingdom shall be one of letters.

A month later in a speech to the missionaries, Nahienaena echoed some of her brother's thought and emphasized her religious feeling.

... I am revealing to you my thoughts. My heart yearns for God, and I feel that I am indebted to Him because He gave his Son to die to save sinners of this world, and his blessed blood was shed to cleanse my sins of body and soul.

My heart is yearning to trust in Jesus, my Lord and Savior. I pray God to turn all the commoners and chiefs to Him. This has been my constant prayer, that God bless our kingdom, and that the nation as a whole be purified so that the devil may be without power over this nation.

Kamakau pointed out that, significantly, she put the commoners before the chiefs.

The problem of a suitable marriage for Nahienaena had been in the minds of the chiefs from the time of her childhood. Before she was ten years old, a possible union between her and her brother was discussed. The purpose of such brother-sister marriages was to concentrate the royal blood so that the issue would have the highest possible rank. Queen Keopuolani had been the issue of a brother-sister marriage, a naha mating of ni'auipi'o chiefs; her parents had had the same mother but different fathers, both descended from the chiefly lines of Maui and Hawaii.

The queen outranked her husband, Kamehameha the Great. Liholiho had half-sisters among his five wives. It was to be expected that the missionaries would disapprove of such a marriage for their little princess on both religious and biological grounds. The problem, however, was not only an ethical or biological one, or even the necessity of breeding future royalty. The two children, Nahienaena and Kauikeaouli, had been brought up together; they had been paired from the time of the princess' birth, and a great devotion existed between them. It was a cultural and psychological reality that in Hawaii royal brothers and sisters were often very close to each other. Such attachments appear in many of the old legends and chants. Kamakau wrote that sisters "were especially devoted to their brothers and brothers to their sisters...[that] brothers chanted
verses composed in honor of their sisters and sisters of their brothers as a
sign of their devotion.”

In 1824, the chiefs gathered to confer about the propriety of a union be-
tween Nahienaena and Kauikeaouli. They consulted the missionaries, who
pointed out that such a marriage was forbidden in the eyes of God, and that
furthermore such a union often produced weak and sickly children. The
chiefs countered with the argument that the issue of the marriage would have
the highest rank in the kingdom; that furthermore there were no two persons
of suitable rank for the prince and princess, and it was important to keep the
royal blood uncontaminated. Elisha Loomis, one of the men with whom the
chiefs consulted, wrote:

It is well known here that the prince and princess for a considerable time past have
lived in a state of incest. This would appear extraordinary in America, as the prince
is but ten years of age and the princess less than seven or eight. It should be remember-
ed, however, that persons arrive at the age of puberty here much sooner than in a
colder climate. Chastity is not a recommendation; the sexes associating without
restraint almost from infancy.

As the young king and his sister grew into maturity, the devotion between
them deepened and intensified. An incident in 1826 reveals the tender quality
of the attachment. Kauikeaouli, with Levi Chamberlain as his instructor, came
to Lahaina late in 1825. On February 10, 1826, he left again for Honolulu,
and the two young people took leave of each other on board ship. Chamberlain
described the poignant moment. Nahienaena sat on the railing of the ship,
remaining very quiet; from time to time, however, she gazed at Kauikeaouli,
tears brimming in her eyes. “When she came to her brother neither of them
seemed inclined to speak nor encounter each other’s eyes, but her eyes could
no longer retain their redundant waters.” The king too had tears in his eyes.
Finally Nahienaena jumped down into a canoe waiting alongside the ship and
throwing herself into the arms of one of her attendants, hid her face and wept.
The king walked away as if he wanted to conceal his feelings.

The religious influence of the mission continued to spread in spite of the
fact that the growing merchant class protested against its puritanical restric-
tions. Finally, Kaahumanu—kuhinanui and regent—who had not easily been
dissuaded from the traditional customs of her people, embraced the new
faith. Once she had professed herself a Christian, she was an ardent advocate
of the puritan God and morality; and she brought her influence to bear upon
Nahienaena and Kauikeaouli, admonishing them to receive the Christian
attitudes in their hearts.

The climax of Nahienaena’s religious experience was her admission into
the church in January, 1827. At the time, Kalanimoku, seriously ill, had
decided to return to Kailua, Kona, for his last days. On the way from Honolulu,
he stopped at Lahaina, and during his stay, Nahienaena with some of her
friends and attendants was baptized and received the Lord’s Supper. She
took the name, Harriet, which her mother had chosen in tribute to the friend-
ship of Mrs. Stewart, the missionary’s wife. Kalanimoku stated that he was
deeply happy to see that his “daughter” was respecting the words of her
mother, Keopuolani. Charles Stewart, her devoted teacher, was not present on this occasion; because of the illness of his wife he had left Hawaii in 1825. William Richards was now the princess' mentor at the mission.

In June, 1827, Nahienaena, a full member of the Lahaina congregation, accompanied Richards on a tour of the schools around the island of Maui. The royal progress was a traditional custom of chiefs who traveled to see their people and lands and to receive gifts and adulation. Such a progress combined with a tour of mission schools was a happy conjunction: the very presence of their princess brought the people together where they could observe at first hand her knowledge of the palapala and the pule. The royal example stimulated interest in the schools and churches. Furthermore, her presence made the trip comfortable for the missionaries because of the gifts and hospitality, the largess bestowed upon a princess.

Now that Nahienaena was growing into young womanhood, influences other than those of the chiefs and the mission began to touch her, in particular her association with American and British merchants and their wives. Nahienaena, who had been told by the missionaries not to sing and dance, not to engage in frivolous pastimes, was now receiving education in card-playing, dancing, drinking, and music. Hiram Bingham tells of an incident which might have been her first experience with cards. She and her brother were invited to tea by a British resident. When a card game was suggested, she asked her native teacher, Robert Haia, if it would be all right for her to play. "He could not assure her it would be right, and she declined playing. Poor Robert, being suspected of not favoring the game, was severely beaten by the host. The princess and her brother ran away, and hastened to the house of a high chief, who reproved them for leaving their teacher in trouble."49

There came a time (in 1828) when the continual admonitions of the native and mission teachers produced in Nahienaena a state of weariness and irritation. She grew weary with the necessity of examining the state of her soul; she resented the proscriptions against the delights of dance, music and cards. Now that she was physically mature and emotionally capable of a strong sexual attachment, she grew increasingly volatile in nature, fluctuating painfully between Puritan decorum on the one hand and a prodigal chiefess's defiance on the other. She wanted to obey the last wishes of her mother and to follow the religious and moral training of Richards; at the same time she yearned to enjoy parties and to accept the praise and caresses which came to her because she was a princess.

In 1828 Nahienaena again joined Richards on a tour of Maui to inspect schools. And again she played her double part as an aliʻi beloved of the people and as an example to the commoner of the results of mission teaching. At each step she addressed the gathered people in a dignified and impressive manner. In Kaupo, she said:

Formerly we (the chiefs) were the terror of the country—when visiting your district—we should have perhaps have bidden you erect an heiau and after being worn out with this labour, we should have sacrificed you in it. Now we bring you the palapala—the word of God—why should you fear it?49

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Much of her life was thus played on a series of stages: sometimes it was a platform heaped with perfumed tapa or Chinese brocades, sometimes a plain thatched schoolhouse or church, sometimes a green mountainside marked with dark streams of lava, and, now that she was mature, the drawingrooms of wealthy merchants and the palace of her brother, the king.

In December, 1828, she was called to Honolulu because of Kauikeaouli's poor health, an illness caused in large part by a life of drunkenness and dissipation. Both she and Richards were apprehensive about the trip, and when they talked of it together, she wept. It would mean a separation from her teacher's steadying influence just at the moment when she needed it to help her to control her growing confusion. At times she saw very clearly the division in her nature and was frightened by the strength of the conflicting impulses. So deep was Richards' concern over the trip that he wrote Chamberlain, the mission's business agent, and asked him to call on the princess every day. Richards had another reason to worry. In August two young men had come to him with a report that certain men of the princess' retinue had gone to the king to urge him to take his sister as wife. Though the men had been insistent, the messengers said the king had refused. The very fact that both Nahienaena and Richards were troubled indicated that she had already yielded to influences considered undesirable by the mission.

Honolulu at this time was a cluster of grass houses sprawling along the shoreline. The streets, skimpily shaded by coconut palms, were alternately dusty or muddy. Interrupting the intermittent traffic of pedestrians and horsemen was an occasional open vehicle in which a chief or chiefess traveled. Kauikeaouli's palace was a group of grass houses surrounded by a tall fence. The houses were usually one large room opening to the outside by a door through each of the four walls; they were furnished with sofas, chairs, tables and chests imported from China or Europe. The king, however, preferred native mats on the floor for his informal moments.

Shortly after the princess' arrival in Honolulu, Chamberlain called on her at the king's house. The king was reclining on a mat on the floor, and Nahienaena sat next to him. In the shadowy background were attendants and a kahili bearer. Chamberlain asked about the king's health and was assured that his majesty had recovered. After some moments of friendly talk, he rose to take his leave, and the princess startled him by announcing that she would accompany him back to his house. Later she called at the Binghams' and remained through the evening. She may have been seized with some feeling of uneasiness or guilt as she talked with the good friend of her mentor, Richards, and for this reason left the presence of her brother, the king.

During Nahienaena's visit in Honolulu and afterwards, the gossip spread that she and her brother were living together. Chamberlain, disturbed when he heard this, went to Opia, a chiefess, to enquire whether or not the king was planning to marry his sister; she replied that although some of the people favored such a marriage, the chiefs did not approve. When he asked about the princess' behavior during her visit to Honolulu, the chiefess said that it was very good. Pressing Opia further, Chamberlain asked how the king and
princess slept at night. Opiia replied that while they reclined on the same mat in the daytime, at night they slept apart, that she herself and other women slept between them.

However, the talk of the king's marrying his sister persisted, encouraged by the fact that the two were more frequently together and also by the desires of some Hawaiians in the court circle to bring about such a marriage to assure the succession of the monarchy. In June, 1829, the princess again went from Lahaina to Honolulu and was met by Boki, governor of Oahu, who had been drinking. He told her that she should marry her brother, that if they had a child, he would be the rightful heir to the kingdom. At this time Boki and Kaahumanu were involved in a quarrel over the succession, and Boki was anxious that one of Kaahumanu's candidates not become heir-apparent.

In Bingham's writing, there is an implication that perhaps even Kaahumanu looked with favor upon a royal marriage. Bingham writes of the dedication of Kawaiahao Church on July 3, 1829:

After the sermon and dedicatory prayer, the princess, whom Kaahumanu regarded as the future partner of the throne, . . . in a very dignified and impressive manner, acknowledged the supremacy of God, the King of Heaven, over them all, and their duty to give Him the homage of their hearts, and exhorted the people to remember and regard what her brother had said.

What Bingham meant by the word, "partner" is unclear. Did he mean Nahienaena as a possible kuhina-nui, or did he mean that Kaahumanu believed the girl should become wife to the king? In some contemporary reports and statements there is both contradiction and a calculated vagueness about who did and who did not want a royal marriage. The mission, of course, stood firmly against it. There seems to have been no doubt that the two were very much attached to each other, and that on many occasions they openly gave evidence of this love.

At the dedication of Kawaiahao, Nahienaena shared equally in honor with Kauikeaouli. The king and his sister were seated on a litter some three fathoms long and a fathom and a half wide with a heavily padded seat draped with fancy tapas soaked in perfumed waters, and covered with the feather cloak named Halakea-o-I'ahu (white pandanus of I'ahu). Harriet was in front, and the king wearing a gold-trimmed suit and a feather cloak was seated farther back. Boki and all the other chiefs of rank carried the litter on their shoulders while Kaahumanu, Kinau, and the other high chiefesses held up the edges of the trailing tapas.

After this ceremony, Nahienaena returned to Maui, where she remained most of August and September, 1829; during these two months her mission teachers observed the fluctuations of her behavior and became increasingly worried about the Honolulu influences.

In October, the U.S.S. Vincennes paid a visit to Hawaii, and Nahienaena was reunited with her old teacher, Charles Stewart, now a chaplain in the U.S. Navy. At the time the Vincennes reached Honolulu, the princess was in Lahaina. Stewart was anxious to visit his old home on Maui, and when he expressed this desire to Kaahumanu, she arranged for him to use her pilot
boat."

On October 20, he reached Lahaina and was warmly greeted by Richards, the princess, and his friends among the chiefs.

During the few days that Stewart was in Lahaina, Nahienaena often had tears in her eyes. When Mrs. Richards asked her why, she replied: "It is thoughts of Mrs. Stewart—it is sorrow, it is pain, to think how coldly I loved her when here, and how little I then regarded her instructions and her advice. I am dead (or overcome) with shame." Though her words may have been somewhat enhanced by Stewart and others, they still show a remarkable sensitivity toward others and an awareness of the complexity of emotion in herself. Stewart’s description of the change in the girl from 1825 to 1829 gives important clues not only to her physical development but also to her character.

The change in her personal appearance, since 1825, is even greater than that noticed in her brother, the king. We left her at that time, you recollect, a slender and delicate child of ten; but now—though little more than fourteen—she is a tall and full grown woman, with a form en bon point. The rapidity of her growth has been such, that she seems scarce accustomed, herself, to the change in her size; and has lost as much in the gracefulness of movement, for which she was so remarkable, as she has in the elegance of her figure. The uncommon brilliancy and life of her eye, however, the intelligence, amiability, and playfulness of her expression, and her fine teeth, remain unchanged; and are advantages, that render her, personally, agreeable and interesting.

When Stewart returned to Honolulu from Lahaina, the princess, Hoapili, and other chiefs went with him. His account of the stay in Letters 13 through 19 of *Visit to the South Seas* is frequently focused on the princess and her actions. He was continually impressed by her dignity, intelligence and manners; he even comments frequently on the appropriateness and attractiveness of her dress. When Captain Finch waited on her and the other windward chiefs, the princess wore a straw-colored satin dress and had her hair arranged with combs. When she visited the *Vincennes* to return the Captain’s call, Stewart was worried that she might choose an unsuitable costume. But as she came over the side of the ship, he was delighted to see her becomingly arrayed in “an elegant walking dress of purple silk velvet, made in London, richly trimmed with satin and velvet of the same color . . . with a bonnet of salmon-colored silk, white silk stockings, and black satin shoes.”

When the work of the schools was put on display in the large chapel for the benefit of the officers of the *Vincennes*, the chiefs added to the entertainment by dressing themselves in the old style and arranging the *kahilis* which designated their chieftainship. The princess, at the center of this display, sat on a platform which had been elevated four feet and was covered with many layers of fine tapa hanging in graceful folds to the floor. Over a black satin dress with long sleeves and high neck, she wore a feather cape of black, red, and yellow and her magnificent yellow feather *pa‘u*. The other chiefs sat in elevated chairs, or stood around her dais in accordance with their rank. When Captain Finch bowed to Nahienaena, she removed the feather cloak from her shoulders and sent it by a young chief to him as a gift. He immediately put it on. When the ceremony was concluded, the chiefesses left the chapel.
carried on their chairs or platforms. In the place of honor at the end of the procession, the king and his suite marched, and after him the princess was borne on her throne. Stewart expressed his romantic excitement at this display: "For she who was thus borne aloft, surrounded by all the glory of her rank and the gaze of ten thousand eyes, was the joy of the people and the delight of the whole nation."

In late October or early November, Stewart was to learn the darker rumors about his cherished princess. During a dinner party at the residence of an American, the conversation turned to the character of the king. Captain Finch asked about the selection of a consort, and the host replied that the king and princess were deeply attached to each other and that they and the chiefs wanted a marriage to take place between them. The marriage, however, had been prevented by the missionaries. The host added that the ceremony might just as well have taken place because the king and princess were living together. Stewart was both shocked at this gossip and disturbed by what he considered to be a breach of courtesy by the host, who knew of his close association with the princess. He learned later that the same story had been circulated among the officers of the Vincennes.

The spread of this rumour in Honolulu and especially among the American visitors so disturbed the chiefs that they included a reference to it in a letter they addressed to Captain Finch in the hope that he could right certain wrongs perpetrated by foreigners resident in Hawaii. They protested against the circulation of the "false and evil report . . . concerning the princess Harieta." (The letter in the Navy Department Archives states that the report accuses the princess of being "a lewd and incestuous woman.")

Though Stewart either could not believe or preferred not to believe the charge of incest against Nahienaena, he did understand the difficulties and temptations of her situation. "The princess, for so youthful a professor of religion, is placed in circumstances highly inauspicious to the continuance of that brightness and spirituality of Christian character which she has, thus far, so clearly exhibited—if not hazardous, even to the purity essential to the existence of true piety."

In his book, Stewart gives other pictures of the princess which indicate the gay social life she lived on Oahu. There was a visit to the country home of Boki up Nuuanu Valley. The princess, mounted on a black horse, worse a black dress, a mantle of scarlet satin, and a white silk hat ornamented with flowers. The king, mounted on a gray, rode by the side of his sister. At the country home in the fresh woods, they ate baked fish, roast pig, chicken, salads, and drank Madeira, claret and muscadine wines. Another occasion described is the farewell dinner which the king gave to Captain Finch before the departure of the Vincennes. Nahienaena, now a young woman of fashion, as well as a chiefess and a pupil of the missionaries, attended, wearing a white satin gown embroidered in gold and a toque of crimson and white gauze. Again an abundance of foods and wines were served.

Before the Vincennes left, Nahienaena wrote a letter for Harriet Stewart, from whom she had received her baptismal name, and who had been like a
mother to her during 1823–1825. One paragraph reveals how well the princess understood the two poles between which she moved, the one of Christian piety and the other the fashionable world around her.

My mind is often on passing trifles, but by no means with that intensity of feeling and strong desire with which, I think, my soul is fixed on the ways of piety. I truly feel that my supreme wish is after holiness: but still I perceive that a single day by no means passes without sin. One day my thoughts are fixed on God; another day I am ensnared: and thus it is continually.66

When the Vincennes left Honolulu at the end of November, it carried Nahienaena, Hoapili and others home to Lahaina, and there she again said goodbye to her old teacher and friend, Charles Stewart.

The year 1829 marked a significant increase in her restless traveling between Lahaina and Honolulu. Lahaina usually meant the tranquility of study with William Richards, of attention to her school and her religious duties, of the constant remembrance of Keopuolani and her dying wishes. Honolulu, on the other hand, offered her the delights of the court circle and association with the merchant class. She must have begun to feel that the true significance of her life lay in Honolulu and all that it symbolized, not in quiet Lahaina where the mission spirit dominated. Lahaina, however, had its ambiguity. It was "famous as the land of chiefs, 'Lahaina of the breadfruit leaves' as the old saying was."67 Furthermore, the grave of her mother was there, her mother who had bequeathed her the responsibilities that now divided her life.

In 1830, the pressures and conflicts seem to have increased so much that Nahienaena had periods of guilt and terror. In October, 1830, she took up residence with Richards, fitting out a room in his home for herself, and she took about half of her meals with his family. Richards was happy to have her close and earnestly endeavored to "save her." "While she lives like a Christian we have a powerful hold on the King, but should she fall, to human appearance she carries her brother and consequently the nation with her."68

During the autumn of 1831, reports began to accumulate of Nahienaena's drinking. In October she made a public acknowledgement of the crime of drunkenness which she stated had occurred on September 18.69 Her repentance seemed genuine, and she wept openly after the confession. But apparently she soon resumed, for in November she was suspended from communion at church. In December she was restored to good standing.70

While the princess struggled between self-indulgence and piety, Kauikeaouli's court was becoming increasingly dissolute. The young king was often drunk with the many companions who encouraged his vices. In 1832 Kaahumanu's death deprived the king of the kuhina-nui's powerful, restraining influence, her continual concern for the general good, and her desire that he earnestly attend to the duties and obligations of the throne. Kamakau reported that after Kaahumanu's death, the king "turned to sinful pleasures as is the way of chiefs, whose thoughts turn where flow their desires."71 Nahienaena,
though partly caught up in revelry, worried about the extremity of her brother's behavior. Several times she tried to get him to go to Lahaina, where he would be away from the influences of Honolulu.

After a small political skirmish, Kinau, older half-sister of the king, was appointed *kuhina-nui* to succeed Kaahumanu. Early in 1833 she refused to sanction the purchase of a brig which the king very much wanted; she argued that the finances of the kingdom were shaky. In his anger Kauikeaouli plunged even more deeply into his dissolute course. In March he sent a crier through the streets to proclaim that all laws, except those pertaining to theft and murder, were abrogated. The people quickly followed their monarch in drunkenness, adultery, gambling; and there was a renewal of the old games, sports, and dances. Led by its king, the nation was defying the restraints of mission teaching and the encroachment of western ways.

The reports of the king's behavior and of his quarrel with Kinau disturbed Nahienaena greatly. She addressed letters to him urging him to mend his ways. Finally, in June, 1833, a council of the nation was called, and Nahienaena together with other chiefs went to Honolulu "to decide on the king's prerogatives." Late in June the princess and chiefs tried to get the king to go to Lahaina. He finally yielded. On the night of the sailing, Nahienaena and Kauikeaouli strolled down to the boat hand in hand. Once the princess reached up and put her arm around her brother's neck in affectionate gratitude that he was coming with her. When they reached the house of Mr. French, a merchant, the king excused himself and entered. He slipped out a back door and did not return. Nahienaena, weeping, boarded the ship and returned to Maui.

In Lahaina, Nahienaena's behavior, however, continued to be unpredictable: she neglected religious meetings, was occasionally intoxicated, surrounded herself with companions from the court world in Honolulu. Then suddenly she would repent and offer herself as an example of piety. Nevertheless, she found it increasingly difficult to control herself. In January, 1834, she could no longer bear to be separated from her brother. When Hoapili planned to go to Honolulu, she begged to go with him. This stay, lasting for several months, brought to a climax the tragedy of her life.

The first Sunday in January was customarily a period of communion at the Mission: the day preceding it was devoted to fasting and prayer. Hoapili decided that he and the princess should wait over to share in this religious experience. Nahienaena spent most of the day of fast at Richards' house, during which the missionary talked and prayed with her in a sense of great urgency, almost as if it might be the last time. The princess, responsive as usual to his pressure, wept on and off throughout the day, and he wrote that he hoped they were the tears of a Christian. After the day of communion and on the evening before sailing, Hoapili sent for Richards to discuss with Nahienaena a suitable marriage for her. The girl stated that she preferred
Leleiohoku, son of Kalanimoku, a boy some years younger than herself, and this choice was agreeable to the chief and the missionary. She said that she hoped to return to Lahaina, where Richards could perform the wedding ceremony. The next morning, January 7, she and Hoapili left Maui; before the sailing, she walked on the beach with Richards, took his hand affectionately and said that she would not be gone long. She alluded also to the wedding plans arranged on the previous evening.  

From Honolulu, Nahienaena wrote Richards in the months of January, February, and April. She went to tea at Mr. Chamberlain’s and seemed to be conducting herself with modesty and dignity and with a concern for her religious life. In late February, she made a royal progress around the island of Oahu, accompanied by Dr. Judd. During part of the tour, she was joined by the king, whose behavior continued to be drunken and debauched. Dr. Judd wrote Chamberlain of an unfortunate incident in which Kaukeaouli, drunk, pursued a young woman, just returned from swimming. This made the mission doctor decide that he must remain close to the princess and attend her throughout the tour; however, in early April he was called back to Honolulu on a medical case. We have no further knowledge of what happened. However, on April 26, Nahienaena returned to Honolulu.  

Throughout June and July the princess was continually with her brother. They enjoyed the extravagances of their royal prerogatives; they defied the will of both the mission and the chiefs. In late July the news, long feared, about Nahienaena and Kaukeaouli, was announced. A crier was sent through the streets to proclaim their union. At four in the morning, John II arrived to tell William Richards at Lahaina the unhappy news. He said that the chiefs close to her had remonstrated but that the princess had stubbornly refused to listen and had driven them away. The king on his side ordered the royal guard to patrol his house. As pressure continued, the king and his sister threatened to go to Waianae to be as far away as possible from their tormentors.  

Richards was so seriously disturbed that he wrote Nahienaena a letter from her mother’s tomb. He sent it by a messenger sufficiently prominent to gain access to the princess. On the evening the messenger called, she was listening with a large group of people to the chanting of legends. She dismissed the company to receive the emissary, tore open the seal, read the first few lines, and began to sob. It was many minutes before she was sufficiently in control of her emotions to finish the letter. Throughout the rest of the evening, she spoke with her visitor; she expressed shame; she lamented the destruction of her soul. Finally she was quiet enough to write an answer to Richards. She confessed her guilt. At the same time she asked him not to come to Oahu to take her back to Lahaina. Richards wrote several letters pleading with her and appealing to her religious scruples. She answered none of them.  

Nahienaena thus defied the people she respected and loved, both Hawaiian and American, and this aggravated and deepened her feeling of guilt and shame. It also deepened the rift in her life. She had been reared to value education, modesty, religious piety, and to be concerned for her soul. She was, at the
same time, a chiefess, warm-hearted, willful, passionate. Furthermore, she could not free herself from the lifelong attachment to her brother, grounded in the ancient ways of her race. It was true that the tabus had been overthrown, yet their psychological force persisted. All their lives Nahienaena and Kauikeaouli had been set apart from others; they had also been kept together.

After this brief union which was not recognized, Nahienaena seems to have lost much of the power to direct herself; indeed, she had placed herself on the course of self-destruction. The injunctions of her mother; the advice and guidance of the great chiefs, Kaahumanu, Kalanimoku, Hoapili, Kinau; the training of her devoted teachers, Richards and Stewart, were pushed aside. She wanted to indulge herself, to use her inherited powers, to pursue the physical pleasures which her young body craved. She shared in the rebellion of her people against the restraints of the mission; she longed for a return to the old Hawaiian ways.

In January of 1835, she returned with a large company of friends and retainers to her home in Lahaina. Richards was away; he was spending six weeks at the Wailuku mission station. She attended religious meetings conducted by Rev. Lorrin Andrews, and, in her new contrariness, she disturbed the congregation by talking or by leaving early. Once she laughed loudly as the text of the sermon was announced: “God is love.” When the sermon was about two-thirds finished, she rose, adjusted her pa’u, and walked out.

She was lonely in Lahaina: many people had begun to avoid her because her behavior was not in harmony with the atmosphere of her home and because the mission disapproved. In an effort to win the people back, she conducted herself with cordiality and warmth. Often she rode on horseback to visit the high school at Lahainaluna. On one occasion, she arrived while the students were thatching their workshop. She stopped on her horse, talked with them, laughed, kissed their wives.

In addition to the missionaries, David Malo, the Hawaiian scholar, and other prominent Hawaiians purposely remained cool in an attempt to turn the common people away from their chiefess. However, she continued to drink, smoke, play cards; she listened to the old music and watched the hula. Because the church forbade such activities, her membership in it was seriously jeopardized by her behavior. In February, 1835, the mission threatened her with excommunication. She begged for a stay, and after it was granted, returned home to burn her cards and forbid wine in her household.

Twice during his six-weeks residence in Wailuku, Richards came to Lahaina expressly to see Nahienaena. On the first occasion, he addressed her a note from his study to say that if she would abandon her wicked ways he would again become her teacher. Her reply, however, did not satisfy him; she called at his home to plead her case, but he remained in his chamber. Then he returned to Wailuku without seeing her. On the second visit he came with a letter of excommunication. She wrote a note begging that the letter not be read. Richards agreed and arranged a meeting to discuss her religious and
ethical behavior. She was given a stay. In February, 1835, he wrote: "Her conscience and her judgment are wholly on the side of religion and she trembles at the thought of being utterly severed from the church. Since that time rum, cards, hula and other crimes have disappeared, but she has an unclean heart. . . ." People continued to turn away from her, admirers no longer crowded her house, and she saw only the guests whom she had brought with her from Honolulu. "The countenance of hundreds as they pass her show that they consider the crown to have fallen from her head."82

In March and April of 1835, the princess was on the island of Hawaii, probably to visit her fiance, Leleiohoku, and to make final arrangements for her marriage. But the "unclean heart" prevailed. She was drinking again, playing cards, listening to the old chants. On her return to Lahaina her excommunication was inevitable. Her good conduct had lasted only a month or six weeks at most. On May 23, the church vote took place. At that hour she was drinking aboard a vessel in the harbor of Lahaina. On May 25, the letter of excommunication was read in the church, and David Malo brought it to her.83

No records exist of the way in which Nahienaena received the news. The missionaries who otherwise chronicled many of the dramatic moments of her life were not present to chronicle this one. We may surmise that the excommunication was a frightening severance from the powerful image of her mother, from her powerful friend Richards, from the memorable days of her childhood when she had listened to the chants and talked of Jesus and God and her soul. By the same token the church in effect abandoned her to her drunkenness and dissipation, for by now she was incapable of self-denial and that asceticism which the missionaries demanded. For Richards her defection represented a painful failure. She could no longer be a child of God, and he had been genuinely devoted to her.

In September, 1835, because of the king's illness, a vessel was sent to Lahaina to bring the princess to Honolulu. Leleiohoku, her intended husband, and Hoapiliwahine attended her.84 By November, however, she was back on Maui, and on November 25, Nahienaena and Leleiohoku were married in Waine'e Church, the ceremony performed by Richards. In January, 1836, the princess removed her residence to Wailuku.85

The last year of her life was one of illness, confusion and dejection. She was excommunicated; the moments of gaiety with her brother were fewer; the perversities and extravagances of her own nature separated her from people. She was a young woman who loved to be admired, cherished, and caressed. Yet often she alienated others by such thoughtless actions as delaying the sailing of packets, or making rude and arrogant gestures. She continued to fluctuate between periods of defiance and periods of quietness and modesty. During her stay at Wailuku, early in 1836, she appeared at first "as though madness was in her heart." Whenever she went to religious meeting, she whispered and laughed. Then suddenly she changed and listened carefully. She attended school regularly on Wednesdays and created a school in her own household.86 She apparently suffered from moods of deep depression;
and finally in her pain she asked Rev. Armstrong, the missionary at Wailuku, to see her. He misunderstood her need; he interpreted her request in the light of his training, which had taught him to find concrete evidence of her religious sincerity. He believed that he must remain aloof from her until he could be satisfied with the sincerity of her repentance and religious devotion; this had to be displayed through proper behavior. Consequently he advised those of her servants who were church members, to be faithful to their mistress but to keep their distance, not even to eat or talk with her. He further asked them to tell her of his instructions. They reported that she took his strictures in a kindly mood but that hearing of them she wept. Her overtures to Armstrong failing, she tried other ways to court the mission: sending for books or pens and paper; in return she gave presents of fish. Armstrong sensed her deep human need for communication with others, and he regarded her with pity, if not tenderness. “Thus you see how it is with this poor unhappy chief, once the idol of this nation.”

Toward the middle of the year, Nahienaena went from Wailuku to her Lahaina home, at which time the king came from Honolulu. The brother and sister again took up a life of revelry. They drank together; the king was often drunk. For a month or two in the companionship of her brother, she had periods of escape from the darkness and madness of her heart. At the end of August, the king and the princess with Hoapili sailed to Honolulu. Nahienaena was pregnant and nearing the end of her term.

The chiefs wanted her to be in Honolulu where Kinau had built her a special house, Ka-hale-kauila, in which who was to await the birth of her child; one day he might to be king of the realm. The infant, a son, was born on September 17 and lived but a few hours.

The princess continued to be gravely ill after childbirth. The chiefs, deeply worried, sent for Dr. Judd to come from Lahaina to attend her. Chamberlain called on her in early November and found her quite low. He talked with her and urged repentance, but because of her feverish state, it was difficult to know how much she could understand. On December 24, the Sandwich Island Gazette reported that she continued to be in a serious condition [of health] and that the king was in a “state of great anxiety on account of her illness.” Nahienaena survived only a few more days; she died on December 30.

Mrs. Laura Fish Judd, who was at her bedside, reported that the princess said, “There is no mercy for an apostate. I am one. I have crucified the Lord afresh.” Mrs. Judd comforted her by saying that Jesus forgave the repentant. Nahienaena made a final effort to plead for mercy before she died.

The king was in despair over his sister’s death, and “he wailed aloud reciting the story of her birth and how he alone was left (of these two) to rule the kingdom. Chiefs and commoners lamented for the chiefess whose children they had hoped to see carry on the line of ruling chiefs.” For some time Kauikeaulii had been going through a period of dissipation and drunkenness
and had not applied himself to the implications and obligations of his position. The death of his sister shocked him so much that he began to take stock.

Nahienaena's coffin, draped in her beautiful feather pa'u and guarded by the great kahilis of state, remained in the king's house for several weeks. It seemed as if Kauikeaouli could not part from her; she had been his wife as well as his sister. In burying the princess, he would be burying part of himself; the throne was incomplete without her. So the king decided to take a consort; only then would he be able to assume the responsibilities which he had neglected. He married on February 14, 1837, and shortly afterwards took his sister's body to Lahaina for burial. Kamakau writes:

. . . the king thought of the country whose people he loved, of the laws which had been made for it, and he began seriously to consider for himself the Christian teaching. He recalled how Maui was a land noted for abiding by the laws; where both chiefs and commoners worshiped God and were obedient to Keopuolani's command to observe the laws and pray to God; . . . and he hesitated to carry the remains of his sister back to the land where people were so loved by her, while he himself was so imperfect in his observance of the law. They would wonder at him because of the laws he had made for the protection of the race. On February 14, 1837, therefore, King Kauikeaouli, Kamehameha III, was married with great ceremony to Kalama Kapakuhaili. . . .

After the marriage, he escorted his sister's remains on board a warship fitted out to carry her in state to the tomb of their mother. In Lahaina a royal roadway was constructed from the shore to the place of burial, and the funeral was celebrated in pomp with a fine procession. "This last funeral and service of prayer concluded the weeping and lamentation of the chiefs and people of Maui for their beloved princess. As for Kauikeaouli, such was his love and regret for his sister that he continued to live on Maui for eight years. . . . He made the day of his sister's death a public holiday, ordered guns to be fired from the government forts from Hawaii to Kauai, and gave big feasts every year in its celebration."

Nahienaena's death thus had a great sobering effect on Kauikeaouli. He would become one of Hawaii's most distinguished monarchs: he brought about the great reforms which laid the foundation of modern Hawaii; he demonstrated a concern for his people; he was not afraid to confront and adapt the ways of western culture for his kingdom. From the time of his sister's death, even during the long period of mourning in Lahaina, he applied himself with greater concern to the tasks he had earlier neglected.
NOTES

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4 Kamakau, 260.
6 Kamakau, 261.
7 Lucy G. Thurston, *Life and Times of Mrs. Lucy G. Thurston* (Ann Arbor, 1882), 42.
8 Bingham, 183.
10 Charles S. Stewart, *A Residence in the Sandwich Islands* (Boston, 1839), 81.
11 Bingham, 190; Stewart 134.
12 Stewart, 136–137.
19 Bingham, 194–196.
20 Stewart, 173.
23 Missionary Letters from the Sandwich Island Mission to ABCFM, 1819–1837, 8 vols., typescript. Hereafter referred to as ML. II, 709a, Richards, June 1, 1824. HMCS.
28 MH, XXI, 280.
30 MH, XXII, 39.
31 *Voyage of H.M.S. Blonde to the Sandwich Islands in the Years 1824–1825, Captain the Right Hon. Lord Byron, Commander* (London, 1826), 246–247.
32 MH, XXII, 149.
33 Kamakau, 256–257.
34 For the story of Liholiho and Kamamalu in London, I am indebted to Alfred Frankenstein’s *The Royal Visitors* (Portland, 1963).
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80 Andrews Letter Book, 57-59, HMCS.
81 Records of the Church at Lahaina, Feb. 5, 1835, 13-14, HMCS.
82 ML, VI, 1655-1656, Richards, Feb. 17, 1835.
83 Records of the Church at Lahaina, April 18, 1835, 14-15, HMCS.
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86 ML, VIII, 2301–2302, Armstrong, May 5, 1836, HMCS.
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89 SIG, Sept. 17, 1836.
90 Laura Fish Judd, Honolulu, Sketches of the Life Social, Political, and Religious in the Hawaiian Islands from 1828 to 1861 (Honolulu, 1928), 48.
91 Kamakau, Ruling Chiefs, 341.
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93 Ibid., 342.