

The Kamehameha Statue

Jacob Adler

In the Hawaiian legislature of 1878, Walter Murray Gibson, then a freshman member for Lahaina, Maui, proposed a monument to the centennial of Hawaii's "discovery" by Captain James Cook. Gibson said in part: Kamehameha the Great "was among the first to greet the discoverer Cook on board his ship in 1778 . . . and this Hawaiian chief's great mind, though [he was] a mere youth then, well appreciated the mighty changes that must follow after the arrival of the white strangers."

After reviewing the hundred years since Cook, Gibson went on:

And is not this history at which we have glanced worthy of some commemoration? All nations keep their epochs and their eras. . . . By commemorating notable periods, nations renew as they review their national life.

. . . Some would appreciate a utilitarian monument, such as a prominent light-house; others, a building for instruction or a museum; and I highly appreciate the utilitarian view, yet I am inclined to favor a work of art. And what is the most notable event, and character, apart from discovery, in this century, for Hawaiians to commemorate? What else but the consolidation of the archipelago by the hero Kamehameha? The warrior chief of Kohala towers far above any other one of his race in all Oceanica. . . . Therefore . . . lift up your hero before the eyes of the people, not only in story, but in everlasting bronze.¹

The legislature appropriated \$10,000, and appointed a committee to choose the monument and carry out the work: Walter M. Gibson, chairman; Archibald S. Cleghorn, John M. Kapena, Simon K. Kaai, and Joseph Nawahi.² Soon the committee became largely a one-man show. Gibson went to the United States just a few days after the end of the legislative session. After talking with artists in New York City and Boston, he made an agreement with Thomas R. Gould, a well-known Boston sculptor.³

Possibly the first public notice that Gould had been chosen was a story in the *Boston Evening Transcript* of September 28, 1878. The notice ended with a Gibsonian touch: "It has been thought fitting that Boston, which first sent Christian teachers and ships of commerce to the Islands, should have the honor of furnishing this commemorative monument."⁴ Gould set right

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to work. The progress of the statue can be gleaned from excerpts of the correspondence.⁵

Gould to Gibson

Boston, September 30, 1878

I am advancing my study rapidly and improving it daily. I have increased the likeness, lightened the body, and raised the left hand higher up on the spear. He begins to look heroic. A statue is not made in a day.

Gould to Gibson

Boston, October 16, 1878

There stands the King finished, and ready for your inspection. I suppose it is a live, strong figure. . . . I keep it from all eyes but yours. When will you come?

Gould to Gibson

Boston, October 29, 1878

I have been refining and strengthening the forms of the King, and must put the figure in plaster on Friday November first, because, not only does clay crack and deteriorate . . . but I am summoned to Philadelphia . . . and must secure our King from danger by translating him into plaster before I go.

Gibson, in Boston on November 9, just missed Gould, who returned to the city on November 10. Before going back to the islands, Gibson appointed Edward M. Brewer, Hawaiian Consul, Boston, and James W. Austin, a former Honolulu resident, to act as agents for the monument committee.

Gould to Gibson

Boston, November 11, 1878

Now if the funds come and the first payment of \$2,500 is made, according to our verbal agreement, all is well. But how if they don't come? In that case I want you to stand in the gap. . . .

I have no reason to doubt your good faith; and I must believe that you will advance the sum named . . . before you go back, according to my claim and my need, and your honor.

Gibson to Gould

New York, November 11, 1878

I . . . trust that next mail will bring confirmation on the part of the rest of the committee of my preliminary agreement with you and also some funds. . . .

The study which you undertook . . . is—in my opinion—a good design . . . but the chief correction must be in the face, which although designed to represent an earlier period should conform somewhat more in likeness to the engraved portrait which you have had for copy.⁶

Gould to Gibson

Boston, November 14, 1878

I propose to make another separate head in exact resemblance to the print we saw together . . . and perhaps another study of the figure, photograph all three and send them to your address in the islands.

Gould to Gibson

Boston, December 4, 1878

In modelling the statue it will be very easy for me to lengthen the feather cape as you suggest, and to extend the waist cloth so as to cover the privates not as a clout but as a falling drapery. . . .

With the photographs you promise to send me. . . I should be fully furnished to undertake this most interesting work. . . . Accordingly . . . I have drawn up and signed a contract embodying I believe our mutual understanding . . . and enclose herein. Would it not be well to obtain the endorsement . . . even of the King himself? Commend me to His Majesty . . . and say to the King that my heart is in this work to make a noble statue of his ancestor.

In mid-December other members of the monument committee confirmed Gibson's arrangement with Gould to complete a bronze statue of "heroic size"

(about eight-and-a-half-feet tall) in twelve to fifteen months, for \$10,000. E. M. Brewer and J. W. Austin were confirmed as Boston agents. The cabinet council of the king also approved the arrangements.⁷

Gould to Gibson

Florence, Italy, January 28, 1879

Your letter of Dec. 21 is before me: also three photos of natives to assist in my study of the figure. . . .

No word has yet come from Mr. Brewer, nor any of the photos you speak of as sent to his care for me. . . .

I hope the photos and funds will come soon for I want to begin the statue. Those photos ordered by His Majesty of a Hawaiian with the original feather cloak on, will be particularly valuable.

Gould to Gibson

Florence, February 23, 1879

[Gould "perplexed and disappointed" that first payment of \$2,500 has not been received.] Also that the photos of the Hawaiian with original feather cloak on . . . [have] been detained in Honolulu. . . . These delays delay the statue. . . . all agencies ready for the work, but no news comes to me, no contract, no money.

Gould to E. M. Brewer

Florence, April 23, 1879

I have received a joint letter from Mr. Austin and yourself . . . together with a contract in duplicate, a copy of the committee's instructions . . . and five photos, three of them being of a nude native Hawaiian, and the other two of a Hawaiian in the royal feather cloak and baldric, with helmet & spear, countersigned by the King.

Gould to Gibson

Florence, May 26, 1879

Enclosed a photo of my Kamehameha statue nearly finished in clay. This was taken under disadvantages. . . . The photograph has less energy and dignity of pose and action than the statue itself.

But [this] . . . will form a basis for your judgment & criticism, and those of the King, to whom please present my most respectful compliments and my earnest desire that he will add his comment to yours. . . . *Question: length and shape of spear?* [Gould also enclosed a design for the pedestal by his son Alfred, a student of architecture under the "best Florentine masters."]

Gibson to F. A. Schaefer⁸

Koele, Lanai, July 23, 1879

I enclose photo of Kamehameha statue in clay . . . and I beg that you will show the photo to gentlemen of the Committee. . . . [The artist] asks for instructions about the sandals. . . . I presume and hope that . . . the Committee will consult with His Majesty, and have the benefit of his valuable antiquarian observations. . . .

I think the artist has succeeded in producing a vigorous Hawaiian expression . . . strikingly resembling the portrait in work of Dumont D'Urville—Voyage Pittoresque.

. . .

The artist has copied closely the fine physique of [Robert] Hoapili [Baker] . . . and it presents a noble illustration and a correct type of superior Hawaiian manhood.⁹

Gould to Gibson

Boston, September 19, 1879

A letter comes from . . . John M. Kapena, Minister of Foreign Affairs, enclosing a copy of one from His Majesty to . . . S. K. Kaai, Minister of Finance. . . .

These relate to certain changes in the muscular development, arrangement of baldric, and to the feather malo. . . . A sketch by the King shows the point of spear and hints at other changes. These I understand to be the final instructions.

I . . . shall proceed to incorporate instructions in my statue immediately on my arrival in Florence the last of October.

Gould to Gibson

Florence, November 3, 1879

The October mail brought no funds. . . .

How can the statue be ready in the specified time unless money comes to pay for it stage by [stage] of its progress? . . . The figure looks grand as I come to it with fresh eyes; and it is a pity that . . . the terms of the contract should not be promptly fulfilled. I count on your sympathy and aid. I want the money now. We two are in the same boat, producers of a noble work.

Gould to Gibson

Florence, November 29, 1879

Today comes from Mr. Brewer the third installment of \$2,500. . . . The statue is now coming into plaster, on which I shall work during one strenuous and skillful month . . . then box and send to Paris by New Year's Day. . . .

You and I know that *you* were the prime mover and final victor in the fight for the statue. It is *our* statue, and shall be forever. For that term also count me your friend.

Gould to Gibson

Florence, January 12, 1880

You should have been here to see the figure packed . . . so that in the various dumpings and shiftings . . . the defended King might retain his integrity. The case was sent December 31 and should be in Paris by this time. . . . The bronze statue is promised for *May first*, by which time I shall expect the final installment of \$2,500.

Gould to Gibson

Florence, January 24, 1880

I sent you by mail 10th inst. 50 photos of Kamehameha [statue]. . . .

On the 20th I mailed 48 of the remaining photos, reserving two copies which I now enclose in case the light fingered gentry of the Italian Post should take a fancy to the pictures. . . .

I . . . repeat the hope that the May session of your legislature may vote the pedestal for Kamehameha, the tablets in bronze, and the statue of the other chief.

On May 15, 1880, Gibson as chairman of the monument committee made a report to the legislature. The statue was finished, he said, and on its way to Honolulu. As he spoke, photographs of the final plaster cast were distributed among the legislators. They unanimously approved a motion that the photographs should be framed.¹⁰

The pictures caused some editorial comment on the un-Hawaiian aspects of the statue. For example, the *Advertiser* complained that the sandals were Grecian rather than Hawaiian and "detract from the fidelity to characteristic details so desirable in a national monument."¹¹ In reply to such criticism, and no doubt with one eye on the legislature, Gibson either wrote or inspired an article to the following effect:

The statue had been exhibited in Paris. Artists, diplomats, and eminent French citizens thronged to look at it, and took a new interest in the island kingdom that was commemorating its hero with a noble work of art. James Jackson Jarves, a former Hawaii resident and noted art critic, had expressed great admiration for the statue as a work of art and as an example of Hawaiian physique.

This was not a portrait statue, the article went on, but Gould had modelled the features after an engraved portrait of Kamehameha. At the request of the monument committee, he had modified the features to make the king seem about 45 years old. The artist had seen a model of the helmet in the Boston Museum of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

There he had also studied a Hawaiian spear and feather cloak. His Majesty King Kalakaua had furnished the artist with a photo of a Hawaiian wearing a long feather cloak and helmet. As to the sandals, the committee had asked the artist to modify the Hawaiian footwear and use his own taste in giving the sandals a more classic look.

The writer (Gibson?) supposed that the stance of the statue, with spear in left hand and right outstretched with open palm, showed the "successful warrior inviting the people . . . to accept the peace and order he had secured."¹²

The legislators passed a resolution that the monument committee remain in charge until the statue was finished and in position.¹³ They also included \$2,000 in the appropriation bill for "pedestal and incidentals for Kamehameha statue and railing around same."¹⁴ Among sites which had been mentioned were Kapiolani Park (where the annual Kamehameha Day horse-races were held); Thomas Square ("it needed improvement"); the Kanoa lot at the junction of Merchant and King streets ("too expensive"). Most of the legislators favored the front of Aliiolani Hale (the present Judiciary Building), and this site was approved.¹⁵

Robert Lishman, Honolulu architect and builder, was chosen to build the base for the statue. He broke ground on December 6, 1880. He was under pressure to get the job done, for the statue had left Bremen on August 21, 1880, by the bark *G. F. Haendel*, and was expected about mid-December.¹⁶

December passed and the New Year came, and still no statue. On February 22, 1881, came word that the *Haendel* had gone down November 15, 1880, off Stanley in the Falkland Islands. All the cargo had been lost.¹⁷

One might suspect that the residents of Kohala, Hawaii, had prayed the statue to the bottom of the sea. About the time it was lost, King Kalakaua was on a royal tour of the island of Hawaii. He made a speech in front of the Kohala Postoffice.

Mr. D. S. Hookano responded in Hawaiian to this effect: "We receive your words with joy. . . . Let me add another matter. May it please your Majesty . . . let us remember the Conqueror, Kamehameha I. . . . It is good that we should here raise a monument for him, as this is his birthplace. . . . I therefore subscribe towards a monument in Kohala \$100."¹⁸ No doubt the residents of the district knew all about the statue planned for Honolulu, and they were piqued to have been overlooked.

The statue had been insured for 50,000 marks (about \$12,000) with Gustave C. Melchers of Bremen through F. A. Schaefer of Honolulu. With the proceeds, a replica was ordered. Under a new agreement with Gould, the replica was to cost \$7,000. He was also to get \$4,500 for four bronze tablets, not less than 30 inches square, for the pedestal.¹⁹ These were to show incidents in the life of Kamehameha:

1. The young chief visiting Captain Cook aboard his ship.
2. The warrior warding off five spears hurled at him at once.
3. The conqueror reviewing his fleet of war canoes from a bluff at Kohala.

4. The era of peace under Kamehameha, assuring that old men, and women and children could repose safely on the highways (*Mamalahoe Kanawai*, "The Law of the Splintered Paddle").²⁰

Gould wrote Gibson in November, 1881: "At Paris, found the cast of His Majesty (Kamehameha I) a fresh and handsome cast in the hands of the founders [Barbedienne], and a promise from them to finish the work in May [1882]. I shall do my best to have both statue and tablets ready in that month for shipment."²¹

Just after starting work on the tablets Gould died suddenly in Florence on November 26, 1881. James Jackson Jarves, then an art critic for the *New York Times*, wrote from Florence that the well-known and much-esteemed sculptor of Boston had just returned to his large house and studio in the Poggio Imperiale. "With his fine literary taste," wrote Jarves, "his profession which he thoroughly enjoyed, and to which he was closely devoted, his pleasant circle of intellectual friends in his native city and his beautiful home here, few men had more that was solidly pleasurable to live for." Jarves called the Kamehameha statue Gould's "largest and most important commission."²²

Gibson wrote in the *Advertiser* obituary: "The artist, whom we had the honor to know personally, was a gentleman of most genial and courteous character, as well as an artist of high attainments. . . . [The Kamehameha statue] will be an inspiration to Hawaiians. Nationality and country will have a deeper significance for them, as they gaze upon the magnificent hero of this race."²³

Marshall S. Gould, sculptor-son of Thomas, took up the task of finishing the tablets. Actually, he had to start on them anew.²⁴ On December 1 he cabled J. W. Austin: "Bronze now casting, changes . . . according to Gibson's last letter. Rilievi well advanced."²⁵

On March 27, 1882, the British ship *Earl of Dalhousie* arrived in Honolulu Harbor, and word quickly got around that the Kamehameha statue was aboard. The replica? But that wasn't due for another four or five months. No, not the replica, the original. But that was supposedly at the bottom of the sea off the Falkland Islands. Gibson hurried aboard to find out for himself.

It was the original, and it was in fair condition. The right hand was broken off near the wrist, the spear was broken, and the feather cape had a hole in it. Gibson, as chairman of the monument committee, quickly struck a bargain for the statue. He paid Captain Jervis \$875.

The *Earl of Dalhousie*, carrying Portuguese immigrants to Hawaii from the Azores, had put in at the Falkland Islands for water. While walking around Port Stanley, Captain Jervis saw the statue in front of a store. At first he thought it was a "cigar-store Scotchman." He bought it and put it aboard his ship. His Portuguese passengers were awed and frightened by the appearance of the eight-and-a-half foot bronze statue, saying it was a god or demon. The captain had some trouble calming their superstitious fears.²⁶

"Joe the Statue Worshipper" renders homage to his idol.





We have a somewhat suspect account (more than thirty years after the event) of the loss and recovery of the original statue. In 1912 a Captain Josselyn of the bark *Nuuanu* claimed he had the following account from a Captain Radcliffe, port pilot at Stanley when the statue was lost in 1880.

Captain Radcliffe helped to save all the passengers when the *Haendel* went down on the reef with total loss of cargo. His account goes on:

Several months later a fisherman . . . sighted the remains of the lost ship's hull. . . . A diving crew was formed . . . with myself as leader. . . . I made a thorough investigation. . . . After stumbling over boxes and wreckage, I came across what seemed to be a large bronze statue. I hastily knocked away the case . . . and . . . the statue of some warrior blazed forth. . . I attached a line and the image was raised to the surface. We then took the statue to Port Stanley where we stood it on a grass plot on the lower road. We knew that it was the statue of King Kamehameha. . . For several months the statue stood like a guardian over our little port.²⁷

According to this account, the hand was broken off when the statue was loaded aboard the *Dalhousie*.

Gibson arranged to build a small shed around the statue near Aliiolani Hale and have it repaired.²⁸ There was some talk that it would be set up at Kohala, Kamehameha's reputed birthplace, or at Kailua, Kona, where he had a residence after his conquest of the islands.²⁹ The *Gazette* said in biting jest: "Lanai [site of Gibson's ranch] would certainly be an appropriate resting place."³⁰

In May, 1882, Gibson became King Kalakaua's prime minister. The statue itself had so far brought Gibson little glory. The centennial of Captain Cook had receded four years into the past. A pedestal, 10 feet high, stood empty in front of Aliiolani Hale. A damaged statue was being repaired under a nearby shed. But if it was too late to unveil the statue to the glory of Captain Cook, it could yet be unveiled to the glory of King Kalakaua. Plans were made to unveil the expected replica at the belated coronation of Kalakaua in February, 1883.

The British ship *Aberaman* arrived in Honolulu on January 31, 1883, less than two weeks before the coronation, bringing the replica, the bronze tablets, and a forearm for the damaged original statue. A four-horse team hauled the heavy cases to Aliiolani Hale. The unveiling was scheduled for February 12, but because of rain was postponed to noon, February 14.³¹ On that day, long before noon, a crowd began to gather around the statue, which was surrounded by a picket fence. Rain fell, a good omen, but by the time of the ceremony the skies cleared and "King's weather" prevailed.

An honor guard was drawn up on either side of the statue. The Royal Hawaiian Band was stationed near the entrance to Aliiolani Hale, and the gallery of that building was crowded with ladies. Distinguished guests and those taking part in the ceremony sat on a platform on the east side of the statue: King Kalakaua, Walter M. Gibson, other cabinet ministers, the president of the legislature, the consular and diplomatic corps, captains of warships in the harbor, and members of the Royal Order of Kamehameha I.

The original Gould statue in place at Kohala, Hawaii.

Kalakaua wore a military uniform decorated with the Knight Grand Cross of the order. Members of the legislature sat on benches in front of the statue.

The statue was veiled with a Royal Standard and a Hawaiian flag. At the stroke of noon Gibson arose and made some introductory remarks: "As chairman of the monument committee, it is now my pleasing duty to declare the statue ready for presentation and to invite Your Majesty to unveil it." John M. Kapena, a member of the committee, translated these remarks into Hawaiian. The king then pulled a wire to separate the flags. The crowd cheered, signal flags were hoisted atop Aliiolani Hale, and a battery on the waterfront fired a salvo. The Royal Hawaiian Band struck up *Hawaii Pono*.

Gibson spoke in praise of Kamehameha I:

In Kotzebue's narrative of his visit to these isles [he writes]. . . . 'Kamehameha ought to have a statue erected to his memory.' The prophetic saying of Kotzebue is accomplished this day. This hero must ever be the most striking figure in the history of these islands. He was a hero of a type which elevates a nation. . . . What a marvel was his conquest and organization of these islands.

The encounter of Kamehameha with Cook was, no doubt, a determining influence in the future career of the Conqueror. . . . Though bold, skillful, and successful as a warrior, Kamehameha loved peace. . . . The pre-eminent result of his victories was 'that old men and women and children were safe reposing in the highway.' This traditional saying is illustrated in one of the tablets which adorn the pedestal of the statue.

Again, behold him . . . when he stands on the bluff at Kohala [reviewing his fleet of war canoes], as represented in one of these tablets. . . .

May the race of the great hero be preserved. May the Hawaiians be roused to a devotion to the nationality founded by the Conqueror.³²

Loud and prolonged cheering followed the speech. Kapena then spoke in Hawaiian. After the ceremony the king went at once to the palace because of another engagement. About 300 of the guests at the unveiling moved into Aliiolani Hale to have lunch. U.S. Minister Resident Rollin M. Daggett proposed a toast to Kamehameha I. Kapena proposed a toast to Kalakaua. "All went well until one of the King's Ministers [S. K. Kaai], preferring gin and poi to champagne and salad, and finding that neither had been provided, became so noisy over his disappointment that the company thought it advisable to adjourn." Next day his resignation was accepted.³³

Apart from this incident, Hawaiians took great pride and interest in the statue. They lingered around it for hours after the dedication ceremony, and all day the following Sunday. Some chanted or sang in soft tones.³⁴

As for the original statue which had been repaired, the Governess of Hawaii, Princess Kekaulike, asked a committee to consider various sites on the island of Hawaii. The committee recommended a central point in the Kohala district on a rise of Ainakea, "near the Government road, and almost equidistant from the Star Mill and that of Kohala Plantation."³⁵

Plans were made to unveil the Kohala statue in May, 1883. Gibson wrote to the Kohala monument committee: "I trust the statue will be in your district, the birthplace of the hero represented, what its duplicate is in the capital, an incentive to patriotic feeling and purpose."³⁶ The cabinet council voted \$1,000

for a military guard of honor at the ceremony.³⁷ Gibson shipped the statue to Mahukona, Hawaii, on May 1 by the *Likeli*. The honor guard of 118 men under Major Kinimaka went by the same ship. Among them were 25 men of the Household Guard under Robert Hoapili Baker. He would doubtless take special pride in the unveiling of a physique modelled on his own.³⁸

King Kalakaua arrived at Mahukona on Sunday morning, May 6, by the Russian warship *Nayezdnik*, Captain Kalogueras. Minister of the Interior John E. Bush and Henry Berger's Royal Hawaiian Band accompanied the king. He disembarked to full honors. The warship fired a royal salute, and the yards were manned.

The royal party went to Kohala by special train. After reaching the Star Mill station they rode horseback to the residence of G. P. Kamauoha, where they were to stay. Over 200 persons trailed behind the party, and spectators all along the way cheered loudly. As the king passed the honor guard's encampment, Major Kinimaka bellowed "present arms!"

Next day, Monday, May 7, the Royal Hawaiian Band enlivened the neighborhood from time to time with stirring music. In the evening they presented a musical program at the Dramatic Hall, with solos by a Mr. Michiels, "the celebrated cornetist." The band also played dance music, Berger presiding at the piano, and impromptu dancing continued until midnight.

Tuesday opened to the music of the ever-present band near His Majesty's quarters. At 1 p.m. a throng of Hawaiian men and women trailed the band to the site of the statue, arriving well before 3 p.m., the time set for the unveiling.³⁹

James G. Hayselden and a crew of workmen from Honolulu had completed the base of the statue just the day before, and the concrete was not quite dry. So the statue had been hoisted into position by a crane and left suspended by a rope sling under the arms ending in a hook above the helmet. The statue was enshrouded to hide all this as much as possible.⁴⁰

The king arrived at 2:30 p.m. sharp, accompanied by Princess Kekaulike, Captain Kalogueras, and eight Russian officers in full dress. Kalakaua wore the uniform of an Austrian military officer. The honor guard stood at the northern and eastern sides of the statue. Good weather prevailed, not planters' weather but king's weather again. After a prayer by the Reverend E. Bond, the band played. His Majesty asked Princess Kekaulike to unveil the statue. She pulled the cord.⁴¹ The statue and the crane and sling were revealed, and some people got the impression of a gallows. King Kamehameha was virtually being hanged in effigy.⁴²

But this sour note was soon drowned out. The crowd cheered. The *Nayezdnik*, at a signal from shore, fired a royal salute. The band played *Hawaii Pono*. Mr. J. Kekipi gave an address in Hawaiian. Admiring Hawaiians placed many wreaths and leis at the foot of the statue. At the end of the ceremony the king took special pains to congratulate Hayselden for completing the base under difficulties in so short a time. Many spectators remained behind to admire the statue, and it was past sunset before everyone had gone.⁴³

So the original statue ended up where Kohala residents felt it rightfully belonged. And in the end, with two statues, Gibson had earned much political glory among the Hawaiians. His original proposal had been a masterpiece of politics. The centennial of Captain Cook had caused hardly a ripple in Hawaiian waters. But Hawaiians were delighted with the proposal for a Kamehameha statue, and foreign residents could not gracefully oppose it. Gibson had ingratiated himself with King Kalakaua by making one unveiling a part of the coronation week. The second unveiling had brought to the Kohala district the most festive days in many a year.⁴⁴

Of events since the Honolulu and Kohala statues were unveiled, three seem worth noting:

1. The death in 1932 of "Joe the Statue Worshipper."
2. The beheading in 1967 of the royal (Brazilian) palms around the Honolulu statue.
3. The acceptance of a replica of the Honolulu statue for the National Statuary Hall collection of the U.S. Capitol.

Jose de Medeiros, 1880?-1932, popularly known as "Joe the Statue Worshipper," kept an almost daily vigil in front of the Honolulu statue for about 35 years. In tattered clothes he would shuffle back and forth in front of the South Iolani Palace gate. Sometimes he would cross the street to stare fixedly at the statue and go through various obeisances.

Once a reporter asked him if he liked to see Kamehameha every day, and he answered: "He step down some day. Then I see him."

Joe became a familiar sight to townspeople, many of whom gave him gifts of clothes or food or cigars. Former Mayor John H. Wilson remembered seeing him in front of the statue as early as 1896. By 1930 Joe was missing from his usual post, and it turned out he was sick. He died in July, 1932.

How account for his strange behavior? As a child of two, Joe came to Honolulu in 1882 with his Portuguese immigrant parents on the *Earl of Dalhousie*, the same ship that brought the damaged original statue. He may have been influenced by the awed superstition of the immigrants toward it, or by remarks of his parents.⁴⁵

On the morning of February 3, 1967, Judiciary Building employees arrived at work to find that the seven royal (Brazilian) palms around the statue had been beheaded. A prankster giving the name of the French existentialist writer Albert Camus, and posing as a State official, had "contracted" with a Samoan tree-trimming company to cut the palms down.

Some persons viewed the prank as a desperate effort to protest a Honolulu City Council decision to remove the century-old Keeaumoku street banyan tree to widen the street.⁴⁶

The prank had a useful ending. It was decided that the statue showed to better advantage without the trees. The State contracted to remove the stumps; to remodel the roadway around the statue to make it circular and to

center the statue; and to plant new grass and install a sprinkler system and floodlights.⁴⁷

With statehood in 1959 Hawaii became entitled to two statues in the Statuary Hall collection of the U.S. Capitol.⁴⁸ Much discussion took place as to who of the State's eminent deceased "citizens" (the word citizen has been loosely interpreted in accepting statues for the hall) should be represented. Most often mentioned were Kamehameha the First and Father Damien (Joseph Damien De Veuster, 1840–1889), the leper priest of Molokai.

Daniel K. Inouye, then a member from Hawaii of the U.S. House of Representatives, on January 13, 1960, proposed a statue of Kamehameha. (It is not claimed that this was the first such proposal.) U.S. Senator Oren E. Long, Hawaii, supported this proposal in a speech a couple of months later.⁴⁹

The Hawaiian Legislature in 1965 established a Statuary Hall Commission and in the same year approved the selection of Father Damien for the first statue.⁵⁰ Proposals for Kamehameha I failed to pass at that time, but in 1967 the king was chosen for the second statue, this to be a copy of the one in front of the Judiciary Building.⁵¹ Honolulu artist Jean Charlot, among others, was severely critical of the artistic merits of that statue.⁵²

The Statuary Hall Commission made a contract with Ortho R. Fairbanks and Clarence P. Curtis to reproduce the statue.⁵³ The commission also made plans to unveil the Kamehameha and Father Damien statues in Washington, D.C. Unveiling ceremonies were set for April 15, 1969, in the rotunda of the Capitol. U.S. Senator Daniel K. Inouye, chairman of Hawaii's congressional delegation for the unveiling, presided. (Ample attention was given to both statues, but we are here mainly concerned with Kamehameha.) A number of "firsts" for the Statuary Hall collection were established:

1. The Kamehameha statue is the largest in the entire collection of 90 statues.⁵⁴
2. Never before had the sound of a conch shell heralded an unveiling.
3. Never before had there been a procession of tabu stick and kahili bearers, and a chanter (Kaupena Wong).
4. Never before had statues been adorned with leis—among them red carnation, maile, and kika.
5. Never before had the statue of a king been presented.

Louis A. Lopez, Chairman of the Hawaiian Statuary Hall Commission, made welcoming remarks. He said that the statues of a Polynesian king and a missionary priest were the best gifts that Hawaii could offer the nation. Mrs. Gladys Brandt, Principal of the Kamehameha School for Girls, spoke of the king and explained the Hawaiian ceremonies. Catherine Cavaco and Daniel Hano, students at the Kamehameha Schools, unveiled the statue. More than a dozen students from the schools sang "Hole Waimea," a name song for the king. Myron B. Thompson, Hawaii's Administrative Director, representing Governor John A. Burns, presented the statues, and Senate majority leader Mike Mansfield, Montana, accepted them for the Congress. He said that the two remarkable men typified the diversity of the Fiftieth State.⁵⁵

NOTES

- ¹ HAA for 1879, pp. 24-27.
- ² PCA, Aug. 3, 10, 1878; HG, Aug. 7, 1878; Hawaii, *Session Laws*, 1878, p. 59.
- ³ Thomas Ridgeway Gould (1818-1881), a Boston businessman who turned to sculpture as a profession after business reverses during the Civil War. He quickly gained fame and success in his new career. In 1868 he opened a studio in Florence, Italy. Among other works, he did a bust of Emerson for the Harvard Library. Critics praised his work during his lifetime, but his reputation has since declined. *Dictionary of American Biography*, IV (New York, 1931), 456-457.
- ⁴ Cited in PCA, Nov. 9, 1878.
- ⁵ All letters, unless otherwise indicated, are in "Documents re Kamehameha Statue," FO & Ex.
- ⁶ The portrait of Kamehameha was in Dumont D'Urville's *Voyage Pittoresque* (opposite p. 446 of vol. I, in the Paris edition of 1834). Gibson said this was a copy of an original portrait in the hands of C. R. Bishop; but Jean Charlot, an authority on portraits of Kamehameha, calls the one in *Voyage Pittoresque* "a copy of a copy of a copy." HSB, May 10, 1967, C1-1.
- ⁷ Commemorative Monument Committee to S. G. Wilder, ID, Dec. 14, 1878; CCM, 1874-1891, Dec. 18, 1878.
- ⁸ Schaefer was a Honolulu businessman who helped Gibson coordinate matters relating to the statue. Schaefer also took care of shipping and insurance.
- ⁹ Robert Hoapili Baker was a close friend and aide of King David Kalakaua, whom he somewhat resembled. For Baker obituary, see *Evening Bulletin*, April 5, 1900; PCA, April 6, 1900.
Gibson mentions only "Hoapili," and it is not likely that he is mistaken in this because he knew him well. But at least eight photographs were sent, and they almost certainly included also photographs of John T. Baker, half-brother of Hoapili. This is the opinion of the present writer, on the basis of conversations with Honolulu artists Jean Charlot and Joseph Feher. See obituaries of John T. Baker, HSB, Sept. 7, 1921, and HA, Sept. 8, 1921.
- ¹⁰ "Report of the Monument Committee to the Legislative Assembly," May 15, 1880, AH; PCA, May 22, 1880.
- ¹¹ PCA, May 22, 1880.
- ¹² PCA, May 29, 1880.
- ¹³ PCA Supp., Aug. 14, 1880.
- ¹⁴ Hawaii, *Session Laws*, 1880, p. 66.
- ¹⁵ HG Supp., May 26, 1880; PCA, Oct. 9, 1880.
- ¹⁶ PCA, Oct. 9, Dec. 11, 1880.
- ¹⁷ PCA, Feb. 26, 1881; on loss of *Haendel*, private letter W. H. Thompson, Colonial Secretary, Stanley, Falkland Islands, to Jacob Adler, Feb. 11, 1969, contains extract of court of inquiry on Nov. 29, 1880.
- ¹⁸ PCA, Dec. 11, 1880.
- ¹⁹ James W. Austin to Gustave C. Melchers, July 23, 1881, with copy of amended contract, IDM, 1881.
- ²⁰ PCA, May 19, 1882, "Report of the Commemorative Monument Committee." On *Mamalahoe Kanawai*, see Ralph S. Kuykendall, *The Hawaiian Kingdom, 1778-1854* (Honolulu, 1947), pp. 33-34, and references there cited.

- ²¹ Cited in PCA, Dec. 31, 1881.
- ²² *New York Times*, Dec. 25, 1881, "American Art in Italy."
- ²³ PCA, Dec. 31, 1881.
- ²⁴ Rebecca S. Gould (widow of Thomas R. Gould) to Walter M. Gibson, May 27, 1883, "Documents re Kamehameha Statue," FO & Ex.
- ²⁵ Cited in PCA, Dec. 31, 1881.
- ²⁶ HG, Mar. 29, April 5, 1882; DB, Mar. 29, 1882; PCA, April 1, 1882; IDM, voucher no. 2148, Mar. 29, 1882.
- ²⁷ PCA, July 27, 1912.
- ²⁸ HG, May 3, 1882.
- ²⁹ PCA, April 1, 1882.
- ³⁰ HG, Mar. 29, 1882.
- ³¹ PCA, Feb. 3, 10, 1883; HG, Feb. 21, 1883.
- ³² PCA, Feb. 15, 1883.
- ³³ *Saturday Press*, Feb. 17, 1883; DB, Feb. 16, 1883; HG, Feb. 21, 1883. See also: *Coronation of their majesties, the king and queen of the Hawaiian Islands . . . and unveiling of the statue of Kamehameha I*, (Honolulu, 1883) (pamphlet based on PCA account); and *The Coronation of King Kalakaua . . . and unveiling ceremonies of the statue of Kamehameha I . . .* (Honolulu, 1883) (pamphlet based on HG account).
- ³⁴ PCA, Feb. 19, 1883; but the *Saturday Press*, with its usual contempt for things Hawaiian, called the statue "an ideal barbaric hero" and "a daily center of attraction for a gathering of Hawaiian gazers." Issue of Feb. 24, 1883.
- ³⁵ PCA, Mar. 31, 1883.
- ³⁶ PP, Nov. 1945, p. 7.
- ³⁷ CCM, 1874-1891, April 15, 1883.
- ³⁸ PCA, May 5, 1883.
- ³⁹ PCA, May 12, 1883.
- ⁴⁰ HG Supp., May 16, 1883.
- ⁴¹ PCA, May 12, 1883.
- ⁴² HG, May 16, 1883.
- ⁴³ PCA, May 12, 1883. The base of the Kohala statue had no bronze tablets.
- ⁴⁴ There is plenty of evidence in the contemporary Honolulu newspapers that some foreign residents had a contemptuous attitude toward the Kamehameha statue and toward other expressions of Hawaiian nationalism. Consider the following, cited in DB, June 21, 1884, from the Finance Committee Report to the 1884 Legislature: "The people paid for the rabble of soldiers who went to Kohala to see Kamehameha's statue stood on end, the sum of \$943, which account was never audited or approved."
- ⁴⁵ HAA for 1900, "Honolulu Street Characters," pp. 121-122; PCA, Oct. 4, 1903; HA, Apr. 30, 1925, Mar. 28, 1926, Dec. 9, 1928, Dec. 27, 1930, Mar. 29, 1931, July 4, 1932.
- ⁴⁶ HA, Feb. 4, 9, March 3, 1967; HSB, Feb. 3, 4, 7, 10, 11, 22, 1967; Sunday HSB & HA, Feb. 5, 1967.
- ⁴⁷ HA, Apr. 13, 30, July 28, 1967; HSB, Mar. 14, Apr. 13, July 3, 1967.

- ⁴⁸ 40 USC Sec. 187, 1864. The old meeting place of the House of Representatives became Statuary Hall in 1864. Since 1933, because of weight and space problems, only one statue from each state goes into the hall itself. The other goes to another part of the Capitol. But all the statues are considered part of the Statuary Hall collection.
- ⁴⁹ HSB, Jan. 19, 1960; *Congr. Record*, Senate, vol. 106, no. 52, March 21, 1960.
- ⁵⁰ Acts 53 and 197, *Session Laws*, 1965.
- ⁵¹ Act 133, *Session Laws*, 1967.
- ⁵² HSB, Apr. 12, May 10, 1967.
- ⁵³ Contract, March 1, 1968, Hawaii Statuary Hall Commission files.
- ⁵⁴ J. George Stewart, Architect of the Capitol, to Jacob Adler, May 9, 1969.
- ⁵⁵ HA, Apr. 15, 1969; HSB, Apr. 15, 16, 1969. For excellent general information about Kamehameha and the statue, see the Hawaii Statuary Hall Commission's *The King Kamehameha Memorial Statue*, Honolulu, 1969. (Written by Donald D. Mitchell.) About June 1, 1969, the statue was moved from the rotunda to its permanent position in Statuary Hall. HSB, July 2, 1969.