

Reminiscences of Hanalei Kauai

Historical Society Paper read April 27, 1917.
By Mrs. T. J. King

Hanalei being my birthplace, and where my first fifteen years were spent, my reminiscences will naturally be those of an early childhood.

I was born April 16, 1848 on the Hanalei Plantation at Limanui on the banks of the Hanalei river, where my father G. F. Wudenberg located about a year after he was married, and had built a small wooden house, and was planting coffee, and raising potatoes he had lived at Kuna prior to this where he was engaged in the cultivation of coffee also.

My mother came to Hanalei late in 1845 on a visit with her sister and brother-in-law, the Joseph Smiths from Tahiti, where she was born—she was the daughter of the Rev. Wm. Henry, one of a band of English Missionaries who were sent out to Tahiti by the London Missionary Society in 1796, and met and married father on December 12, 1845 at Kikiula where Mr. Rhodes lived and planted coffee.

A Romantic Wedding

Their wedding took place under an orange tree in front of the house that the Smiths occupied, Mr. Rowell of Waimea, Kauai, performing the ceremony. They rode on horse back to their home in Kuna, about two miles distant, in the evening, and were overtaken by a heavy rain. Mother fell from her horse during the ride and father loved to tell of finding her sitting in a mud puddle crying when he turned back to see why she was not following. The road was only a trail and they had to travel Indian file. Poor mother, what a brave woman she was. I often think of what her life must have been there far away from her own people. She went back to visit her mother in Sydney, Australia in her old age, and sleeps beside her and grandfather in a little church yard at Ryde on the Paramatta river.

The Simple Life

My earliest recollections are of gathering mulberries on the banks of the river with my sister Antoinette and our old nurse Pooouu, and staining my dress with the juice of the fruit. Mother used mulberries a great deal for puddings and pies and preserves.

My brother Fred was born at Limanui too in 1860. Mr. Abner Wilcox had loaned father a cow for his benefit and one of my vivid recollections was seeing her tied up and milked. She was a young black cow and was very wild and hard to manage. Mother said that she was glad if she got a quart of milk a day, or the bucket was not kicked over, and the baby had to be fed on Pia made with water only. Mother made the Pia herself from the arrow-root gathered in the hills across the river. She used an old Tahitian "Umete" to prepare it in, one that she had brought from Tahiti.

Looking for Franklin

In 1851, H. B. M. S. Enterprise an arctic discovery vessel commanded by Capt. Collinson called at Hanalei on her way to England from Alaska where she had been in search of tidings of Sir John Franklin the great arctic explorer. Some of her officers were under arrest for mutiny and were afterwards court-martialed in England. While in Hanalei getting supplies the Britishers were greatly entertained by the English and French residents there, the Rhodes and the Dudoits among others. Two of the Lieutenants Parks and Jago are remembered well by me for while at our house one afternoon to say "good bye" one of them stole a yellow curl from my head, and another took my sisters little blue silk bag which she was filling with black sand on the path way, and we always childishly hoped that they two were court-martialed.

Many Choice Flowers

Mr. and Mrs. Godphrey Rhodes lived at Kikiula while we lived at Limanui, and I remember going across the river in a canoe paddled by my mother to visit them with

her, always returning home laden with red cottage roses and heliotrope. Mrs. Rhodes had a beautiful garden and many flowers that we never see any more. She came from Australia and must have gotten her seeds from there. The orange red amaryllis which is so common on Kauai was first raised in Hanalei and grew in large quantities at Kikiula and the "Clitoria Tenata" vine with the dark blue flowers, sometimes called the butter-fly vine, which grew all over Mrs. Rhodes house, a small stone, two-roomed one, with a veranda facing the east was first planted there. It is a native of the East Indies. Mr. Thomas Brown brought many plants and flowers here also. He planted the Magnolia tree at Kikiula which survives there yet. It came from England. Its mate was planted at Wailua. Mrs. Brown was Mr. Rhodes sister. They came to settle in the islands and located with their family of four children at Wailua where I remember being taken with my sisters to visit them in 1852. We were carried across country in home-made cots of brown cotton, hung on poles between two Hawaiian, men who carried them on their shoulders and went on a jog trot. While crossing the Wailua river at the upper ford, my sister Anna and I got ducked in the water. The tide are high and the cot not water proof, but we were not hurt, only pretty well frightened. My recollections of the spot where we crossed was that it was very beautiful and I am sure that there were coffee trees growing there. Early every morning Alice Brown the only daughter, several years my senior, took me with her for a cold water plunge in a big green tub in a bath room of her mothers bed room, and on one occasion we stopped for a peep at Mr. and Mrs. Brown asleep in their big four poster bed. There was no net on the bed, I think that mosquitoes were scarce then. We tiptoed and climbed on a stool to get a good look, and for the first time in my four years of existence I saw a "night cap," and Mrs. Brown's sweet face wreathed in frills and lace. It is a picture that has always remained with me most vividly.

Return to Hanalei

We left Hanalei sometime in 1853 and went to Honolulu to live but returned again in two years time, Mr. Willie having bought the coffee interests there and given father the management of the place. We went down on the little sloop "Sally" with Captain Fountain. There were only two bunks in the tiny cabin so we youngsters had to lie on the mattress on the floor. My sister Mary was born in town and was a baby a year old only, at this time, fortunately the trip was not longer than twelve hours. The "Sally" was a fine sailer, but we were glad to get on shore and went up to Mr. Kellett's house at Lanihuli to stay until Mr. Rhodes was ready to give my father possession of the manager's house. Mr. Kellett was the pilot at Hanalei harbor, and came to the islands in 1825.

He was an Englishman, a sailor and always reminded us of old "Masterman Ready" of Capt. Marryatts story of that name, a wonderfully interesting tale of a ship wreck and a cast away family on an island in the Indian Ocean. He had a rather bent figure, was very spare, and had long white hair which hung in curly waves on his shoulders and he walked with his feet well turned out, as was the style of a man-o'-wars-man in those days. He had a Hawaiian wife and a family of two daughters Mary and Betty and five sons. The youngest and last survivor of the family, Paalua, died recently in Honolulu at the age of sixty-five years.

The Historic Princeville House
When we moved to Kikiula after

the Rhode's left in 1855 father added a wooden clap board structure to the stone house, which they had built and lived in, and put on a top story and had it lathed and plastered by a man named Joseph Hayward, a mason and plasterer. He plastered the end of the stone part which extended to the front veranda to imitate the wooden clap boards on the new part of the house, and made a very good job of it. A man by the name of Lawton did the wooden part of the work. The house was painted white and the roof red, as were all the buildings that were shingled on the place. The red material was the clay found in the hills near by, which wore well when mixed with a little lime to make it stick. Water was led into the yard and both rooms at this time from a spring in the ravine back of the house, by means of bamboo troughs. Father had a tin lined box placed on the roof over the bath room with a purchase for letting water down through a perforated tin for a shower. A ladder led to the roof and daily it was the yard man's job to keep it filled with water by bucket.

Floral Beauty of Hanalei

Father planted a Castilian rose hedge along the side of the garden next to the road, which was a grand sight when covered with its sweet scented pink flowers and was one of the things Hanalei was famous for, together with its fields of coffee in bloom—the white starry blossoms looking like snow on the drooping branches, and delighting the eye for nearly a mile along the river bank.

Our servants were all Hawaiians with the exception of Goka a Chinese steward, who was a superior man and afterwards married a Hawaiian wife, and kept a store on the hill near Lanihuli.

An Old Timer Widely Gifted

One of the well known old timers in Hanalei was old Charley Griffiths—an old sea faring man who came to the islands with the Thomas Browns and lived at Wailua until they went away in 1854. He came to Kikiula in 1855 and entered father's employ on the plantation as general utility man. He did everything on the place that a mechanic was needed for. He made furniture and Juliet Rice has a little koa rocking chair that he made for my sister Lina when she was a little girl. He made

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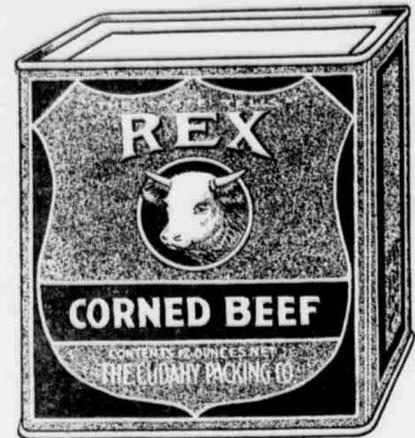
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Childish Social Outings

It was one of our greatest pleasures to visit at the mission, and quite a gala day when we went to spend the day with either the Wilcox's or the Johnson's. Being rowed in our boat as far as Titcombs landing and walking the other mile when we were too big to be carried. At the Wilcox's it was our delight to have a ride with the boys Sam and Luther on their land turtle, and climb trees with them. They had a fine garden, and some of the best and most delicious figs I have ever tasted either on the islands or in California. They had a very nice white guava too which was a treat to us as we had none at our place, although we had the best Hawaiian peaches and lots of strawberries. There were two large bearing alligator pear trees in our garden, but we did not care for the fruit. Once I saw a cat eating one that had fallen on the ground. She evidently knew what was good.

A Great Comet

In 1858, sometime in October a great comet, Donati's appeared in the heavens. It was a very large and brilliant one. I was ten years old then, and recollect it distinctly. It was of such size that when its head was near the western horizon the extremity of the tail reached nearly to the Zenith. We had many fine views of it from the plantation house which commands a splendid view of the valley below and the sky above.

(Continued in next issue.)

BORN

April 24th, to Mr. and Mrs. Q. C. Ching, of Eleele, Kauai, a daughter, Lorraine.

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