

Historic Sites Survey Report

PLACE OF REFUGE

HAWAII

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THE PLACE OF REFUGE AT HONAUNAU

I. Critical Analysis

A. Synopsis

The Place of Refuge, often erroneously called the City of Refuge, is located at Honaunau in the South Kona area of the Island of Hawaii. Established prior to 1700, it served as a sanctuary for the weak and the aged, the oppressed, the criminal, and the political or military fugitive. The royal tomb of Hale o Keawe, built about 1690 by Kanuha, a son of Keawe II, was connected with it, and housed the bones of Hawaiian royalty until 1829, when they were removed by order of Queens Kaahumanu and Kapiolani to a secret cave near Kaawaloa. They were later removed to Honolulu in 1858.

The movement to preserve this significant site of Hawaiian history goes back for over half a century, when in the late 1800's the property was acquired by the Bishop Estate. In 1902 it was partially restored with private funds by Mr. S. M. Damon, and further restoration work was done in 1919 by Dr. J. F. G. Stokes of the Bishop Museum of Honolulu. Now a county park, it has been proposed by the people of Hawaii that it be recognized as of national significance.

As a result of resolutions and actions of leading civic and patriotic organizations of Hawaii, the National Park Service was asked to investigate the Place of Refuge as a possibility for national monument or national historic site

status. Consequently, during September 18-19, 1949, an investigation of the area was made on the ground by officials of this Service. These included Mr. Hillory A. Tolson, Assistant Director; Mr. T. C. Vint, Chief of Development; Dr. Aubrey Neensham, Regional Historian, Region Four; Mr. Frank Oberhansley, Superintendent, Hawaii National Park; and Mr. Ignacio Castro, Assistant Superintendent, Hawaii National Park. After meeting with Mr. Lester Marks, Land Commissioner of the Territory of Hawaii, and members of the Kona Civic and Improvement Club on September 19, it was the concensus of these officials that the site merited full investigation as to its historical significance, and that every step should be taken to encourage its proper preservation, interpretation, and development.

The historical interest of the Place of Refuge centers around impressive stone structures, where all Hawaiians, regardless of their status, could find clemency and a haven. As such, it is representative of Hawaiian life before the arrival of the white man. It is also a part of the historical Kona Coast. It is difficult to separate any one part of Kona from another, historically. Certainly, the village of Honaunau, vestiges of which remain, and others like it have important historical backgrounds. Ancient trails, walls, battlegrounds, burial caves, heiaus (temples), and other Hawaiian structures, including "Hulihee," the summer palace of the later Kamehamehas at Kailua, are here in abundance.

The Kona Coast was also the scene of the first important impact between the cultures of the native Hawaiian and the white man. This is represented at Kealahou Bay, some four miles north of the Place of Refuge, where Captain James Cook, the discoverer of the Hawaiian Islands, met an untimely death at the hands of the Hawaiians in 1779. There, also, as represented by the first structures built by American missionaries in the 1820's, was where these cultures fused to become what we know as the Hawaii of today.

National recognition of the Place of Refuge would do more than preserve an interesting phase of Hawaiian history. By using this site as a focal point, an opportunity would be presented here to interpret the life of old Hawaii and the arrival of the white man. Taken now, proper steps of preservation, interpretation, and development would insure the appreciation and enjoyment of the area by this and future generations.

B. Description of the Site

Located at Honaunau on the west coast of the Island of Hawaii, the Place of Refuge is situated midway between the towns of Kailua on the north and Milolii on the south. A narrow paved road, about a mile in length, connects it with the Mamalahoe Highway, the main "belt road" which extends around the island. A similar road extends northward 3.8 miles to Napoopoo on Kealahou Bay. Hilo, the largest city on the island, is some 80 miles away on the eastern shore.

The Place of Refuge, which is south and west of the town of Honaunau, is a large semi-walled enclosure. In reality, it consists of two enclosures--the Place of Refuge proper, and a smaller enclosure to the east. The east and south walls of the Place of Refuge, constructed of pohoehoe lava, are 15 feet thick and 12 feet high and measure respectively 700 and 404 feet in length. The north side is open to the bay, and the west to the sea except for traces of ancient walls, which have been battered down by tidal waves.

Within the walled Place of Refuge are the remains of several structures, of which the Hale o Keawe, the Alealea Heiau, and the Akahipapa or Women's Heiau, all partially restored, are the most important. Traces of stone pavement, two stone idols, a konane stone (for the ancient game of checkers), a fisherman's stone, an astronomical stone, and two huge altar stones, one said to have been used for hiding under by Queen Kaahumanu and the other for ceremonial purposes by the chief, Keoua, can still be found near the Alealea Heiau.

Unlike the small hidden entrance in the wall west of the Akahipapa Heiau, the present open entrance to the Place of Refuge is at the northeast corner of the main enclosure, near the site of Hale o Keawe. This latter structure, no longer standing except for the stone platform on which it was built, was constructed of kauila wood. Its hardwood timbers were removed eastward in 1829 into what is now the smaller enclosure,

where it stood for many years in its reconstructed form as the Hale Kauila. Nothing remains of the Hale Kauila today, however. Two of King Kamehameha's fishponds only occupy the place of honor in the smaller enclosure. A pleasant bathing and boating beach, flanked by graceful palm trees, also lie within this area, all of which have made this a favorite gathering place for the local inhabitants, as well as for visitors. Brackish springs, which formed the basis of a water supply, are to be found in the cove nearby.

As mentioned above, there are many interesting and historically important sites near the City of Refuge. Honsunau, once the frequent residence of Hawaiian Kings, is composed primarily now of small houses and stores, the number of which has declined considerably during the last century. A mile to the south of Honaunau are burial caves which line the cliffs of the sea, as they do at Kealakekua Bay to the north. At the north side of Kealakekua Bay the site of the death of Captain Cook is marked by a large shaft of stone. The famous Hikiau Heiau (restored in 1917), where Cook participated in a native ceremony and had his observatory, is on the east side of the bay. Between Kealakekua Bay and Honaunau Bay is the battleground of Mokuohai, where, near Keei, mounds of lava mark the graves of Kamehameha I's warriors and enemies who fell in the battle of 1782. This battle resulted in the consolidation of Kamehameha's power over the Island of Hawaii.

The entire Kona Coast is marked by lava flows, largely from Mauna Loa. One of these forms the small peninsula upon which the Place of Refuge is built. Its pahoehoe lava was used for the rocks of the sanctuary, the quarrying of which is still evident. The dry-laying of these walls was of superior workmanship. Some of the stones, weighing more than two tons, were lifted to a height of over six feet, thus attesting to the labor needed to build the massive structures.

Whereas lava is the predominant characteristic at sea level, and the shore is not conducive to agriculture, this condition does not apply a mile inland. There the foliage is heavy, because of a more abundant rainfall and fertile, decomposed lava. Here was one of the best regions of Hawaiian agriculture. Ancient holdings are still marked by the walls of lava rock which lined their boundaries. How fertile this area can be is to be seen in the heavy crops of coffee, cotton, avocados, papayas, and other tropical crops which are grown here.

C. Identification of the Site and Related Areas

The Place of Refuge is adequately identified by Hawaiian tradition and historical evidence. The first white man to identify it fully was William Ellis, who in 1823 accompanied several representatives of the Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to the site. His account, made shortly after the sanctuary's decline, is most comprehensive and detailed.

Included with his description is a drawing of Hale o Keawe, the royal tomb. Members of Lord Byron's expedition of 1824-1825 also visited Honaunau and left a pictorial representation of Hale o Keawe. Later visitors have given various descriptions of the site, of which those of Thomas G. Thrum in 1907 and Rev. Albert S. Baker in 1921 are the most detailed.

Nearby historic sites are also well-authenticated. The village of Honaunau, marked well on old maps of Hawaii, is an ancient site which is still occupied. Ellis and others describe this, as well as the Battlefield of Mokuohai near Keei, and the sites of Kealakekua Bay. Captain Cook's deathplace and the Hikiau Heiau there were identified by Captain George Vancouver in 1792, and later by Ellis and Lord Byron. Lt. Charles Wilkes of the United States Exploring Expedition in 1840 also visited the site, as did Mark Twain in 1866. A monument maintained by the Cook Monument Trust marks the site of Cook's death, as do markers at Hikiau Heiau. At this latter place is one erected to the memory of Henry Opukahaia, one of the first Hawaiians to visit the east coast of the United States. As a result of his visit to Connecticut, the first American missionaries were sent to Hawaii in 1820. Another marker at this site is erected to John Young and Isaac Davis, who were among the first white men to settle in the Hawaiian Islands. They, who had come to Kealakekua Bay in 1790, became close

advisers of Kamehameha I, and were greatly responsible for the success of his conquest of the Hawaiian Islands.

D. Historical Narrative and Bibliography

A Place of Sanctity

The date of the establishment of the Place of Refuge at Honaunau is uncertain. Its importance, however, dates from the construction there of the Hale o Keawe about 1690 by Kanuha, a son of Keawe II, for the safe-keeping of the deified bones of his father and those of his descendents. So great was the sanctity of Hale o Keawe that it remained undisturbed for nearly ten years after the abolition of idolatry and the general destruction of idol temples in 1819.

Hale o Keawe's sanctity to the Hawaiians is further illustrated by W. D. Alexander, who, writing in the Journal of the Polynesian Society, says:

At the setting of every post and the placing of every rafter, and at the thatching of every wa (or intervening space), a human sacrifice had been offered. Human sacrifices had also been offered for each chief whose remains were deposited there, at each stage of the process of consecration, viz., at the removal of the flesh, at the putting up of the bones, at the putting on of the tapa, at the winding on of the sennit, etc.^{1/}

By 1800, some 23 chiefs of royal rank had been interred at Hale o Keawe. Their bones, removed in 1829 in two coffins

^{1/} W. D. Alexander, "The Hale o Keawe at Honaunau, Hawaii," in Journal of the Polynesian Society, III, 160.

by order of Queens Kapiolani and Kaahumanu, the wives of Kamehameha I, were interred for a time in a secret cave at Kaawaloa, near Kealakekua Bay, from which they were taken by Kamehameha V to Honolulu in 1858 aboard the British sloop-of-war, Vixen. Consigned to the governor, Kekuanaoa, they were later interred in the Royal Mausoleum in Nuuanu on the night of October 5, 1865. The names of the chiefs whose bones were removed included: coffin No. 1 - Keohokuma, Okua, Umi-oopa, Keawe-Lulaole, Kaleioku, Kalaimamahu, Kaoleioku, Keawe-aka peleaumoku, Kuaialii, Kaaloa, and Lonoikolii; and coffin No. 2 - Keawe, Kumokoa, Lonoikahaupu, Hakike, Kekoamano, Keawe-akanuha, Niule, Kowainiulani, Lonoamoana, Lonohonuakini, Ahaula, and Okanaloaikaiwilewa.^{2/}

The history of the Place of Refuge at Honaunau was indelibly tied up with that of Hale o Keawe. Where the royal tomb was located, it is not surprising that a place of sanctuary should be recognized, where all subjects of the king could find a haven and clemency. That this place of refuge was important is to be seen in its size--at times it held hundreds of people within its walls. Only one other "puuhonua" or place of refuge is known to have existed on the Island of Hawaii. This, at Waipio, appears to have been not as important as that at Honaunau, probably because of the latter's location on the populous Kona Coast, which was the native home of the Kamehamehas.

^{2/} Alexander, "The Hale o Keawe at Honaunau, Hawaii," 161.

The Rise of Kamehameha I

The Place of Refuge at Honaunau assumed considerable importance during the rise to power of Kamehameha I, who was also known as Kamehameha the Great. The first evidence of this is to be seen in the events connected with the death in 1782 of Kalaniopuu, who had been king of Hawaii at the time of Captain Cook's visit and death at Kealakekua Bay in 1779. After the bones of Kalaniopuu had been prepared for deposition at Hale o Keawe, his son, the young king, Kiwalao, called on Kamehameha, who had been designated to the second place of the kingdom. The next day, after the funeral ceremonies were finished, Kiwalao appeared on a platform adjoining the Hale o Keawe, where he declared the last will and testament of his father. This confirmed the decisions of a council held earlier at Waipio. However, it did not suit the chiefs of Kona, primarily because the lion's share of lands was given to Keawe-mauhili and his favorites of Hilo.^{3/}

Among other dissidents was Keoua, the half-brother of Kiwalao, who had been largely neglected in the above proceedings. After flying into a rage, he armed his retainers and went to Keomo, where he cut down the coconut trees. This

^{3/} W. B. Alexander, A Brief History of the Hawaiian People, 109-120, summarizes these events and those that follow. It is not known whether the bones of Kalaniopuu were moved to Honolulu in 1858.

constituted a declaration of war. He then went to the village of Keei, about a mile north of Honaunau, where he and his followers killed several of Kamehameha's people. Their bodies were then taken to Honaunau, where they were offered in sacrifice to Kiwalao, the new king. By this act Kiwalao was burdened with the responsibility of the war. After skirmishing for several days, the Battle of Mokuohai was fought. During the battle the Place of Refuge at Honaunau was crowded with men, women, and children of both groups. Thus was demonstrated anew the ancient purpose of the sanctuary, where a haven was provided for the weak and aged during a time of war.

The Battle of Mokuohai, fought near Keei, resulted in a complete victory for Kamehameha and his forces. Kiwalao was killed and his warriors routed. Keoua escaped in his canoe to Kau, where the people for a time acknowledged him as the successor to his brother. The effect of the battle resulted in the increased power of Kamehameha, however. By his marriage in 1785 to Kaahumanu, the daughter of the Kona chief, Keeaumoku, he further consolidated his control over the Island of Hawaii.

The coming of the White Man

After Cook's death at Kealakekua Bay in 1779, an increasing number of white men visited the Hawaiian Islands as whalers, traders, explorers, and later as missionaries

and permanent settlers. The Kona Coast became a center of their activities, largely because of the activities there of Kamehameha I. Portlock, Dixon, and La Perouse in 1786, Douglass in 1788, and Metcalf in 1789 appeared at Kealahou Bay during the decade after Cook's death. Isaac Davis and John Young were among the first white settlers in the area, when they were detained by Kamehameha in 1790 from Douglass' ship, the Eleanor. Both of these men, raised to the rank of chief and given lands, became valuable counsellors to the king. Largely through their advice, and with the help of muskets, cannon, and ammunition supplied by visiting sea captains, the power of Kamehameha was extended over all of the Hawaiian Islands.

Kamehameha's full power over the Island of Hawaii was brought about in 1791 with the assassination of Keoua by Keeaumoku. Shortly, thereafter, Captain George Vancouver visited the islands in 1792, 1793, and 1794. On the arrival of Vancouver's vessels, the Discovery and the Chatham, on February 21, 1793, at Kealahou Bay, he was visited by Kamehameha and Kaahumanu, his favorite wife. Dressed in his feather cloak and helmet, and accompanied by 11 double canoes, Kamehameha was the personification of Hawaiian royalty as we know it.

During Vancouver's visit to Kealahou Bay in 1793, the first cattle were introduced to the Hawaiian Islands from

California. A third visit of Vancouver in January 1794 resulted in the introduction of more cattle, sheep, and goats. While staying at Kealahakua Bay for six weeks, Vancouver placed Hawaii under the protection of Great Britain on February 25, 1794. In addition to his other blessings, the English explorer was able to bring about the reconciliation of Kamehameha and Kaahumanu, who had quarreled. The Place of Refuge at Honaunau had been used by her as a sanctuary from her husband. It is said that, having reached the sanctuary, she successfully hid from her wrathful husband under the great stone, now called Kaahumanu's stone.

Kamehameha I remained on the island of Hawaii until 1802, living variously at Kailua and Hilo, where his successor and heir, Liholiho, later Kamehameha II, was born in 1797. After moving to Lahaina on the Island of Maui and then to Oahu in 1803, he spent the last years of his life on the Kona Coast. He died at Kailua on May 8, 1819, at the age of 66 years; and his bones were concealed in a secret cave in North Kona, the location of which has never been revealed.^{4/}

The Abolishment of Idolatry

The death of Kamehameha I in 1819 resulted in the abolishment of idolatry by Kamehameha II, largely at the instigation of his mother, Kapiolani, and Kaahumanu, who had been the

^{4/} Alexander, A Brief History of the Hawaiian People, 121-165.

favorite wives of Kamehameha I. Ten days after the death of Kamehameha I, Liholiho was formally vested with sovereign power at Kailua. Finally, at the main insistence of Kaahumanu, he broke the ancient tabu by allowing women to eat with him. This led to the Battle of Kaumoo, four miles north of Kaawaloa, which was fought on December 20, 1819. There, the forces of Kaahumanu and her general, Kalanimoku, defeated those of the opposing chief, Kekuaakolani, who desired the continuance of idol worship. The defeated forces once again used the Place of Refuge at Honaunau as a haven from their pursuerers. This and the Hale o Keawe escaped the swift destruction of idols and hoiaus which followed the Battle of Kuamoo.

The arrival of the first American missionaries at Kailua on April 4, 1820, found idolatry in Hawaii definitely on the wane. Fortunately for mission endeavors, Kaahumanu became the regent of the kingdom in 1825 for the new king, Kauikeauli (Kamehameha III), who had succeeded Kamehameha II on the death of the latter and his wife, Kamamalu, in London in 1823 of measles.

A remarkable description of Hale o Keawe and the Place of Refuge at Honaunau is provided for us, as a result of the visit there of Rev. William Ellis, one of the missionaries who arrived on the Kona Coast in 1823. Accompanied by Revs. Thurston, Bishop, and Goodrich, his journey led him to the

village of Honaunau which at that time had 147 houses. Only four years had passed since the abolition of idolatry, and the royal bones had not yet been removed from the Hale o Keawe. So revealing is Ellis' account of Hale o Keawe at that time that it is recorded here in full:

The monuments and relics of the ancient idolatry with which this place abounds, were, from some cause unknown to us, spared amidst the general destruction of the idols, etc., that followed the abolition of the aitubu, in the summer of 1819.

The principal object that attracted our attention, was the 'Hare o Keawe' [sic.] (the House of Keawe), a sacred depository of the bones of departed kings and princes, probably erected for the reception of the bones of the king whose name it bears, and who reigned in Hawaii about eight generations back. It is a compact building, twenty-four feet by sixteen, constructed with the most durable timber, and thatched with 'ti' leaves, standing on a bed of lava that runs out a considerable distance into the sea. It is surrounded by a strong fence or paling, leaving an area in the front, and at each end about twenty-four feet wide. The pavement is of smooth fragments of lava, laid down with considerable skill. Several rudely carved male and female images of wood were placed on the outside of the enclosure; some on low pedestals under the shade of an adjacent tree, others on high posts on the jutting rocks that hung over the edge of the water. A number stood on the fence at unequal distances all around; but the principal assemblage of these frightful representatives of these former deities was at the south-east end of the enclosed space, where, forming a semicircle, twelve of them stood in grim array, as if perpetual guardians of 'the mighty dead' reposing in the house adjoining. A pile of stones was neatly laid up in the form of a crescent, about three feet wide, and two feet higher than the pavement, and in this pile the images were fixed. They stood on small pedestals, three or four feet

high, though some were placed on pillars, eight or ten feet in height, and curiously carved. The principal idol stood in the center, the others on either hand; the most powerful being placed nearest to him: he was not so large as some of the others, but distinguishable by the variety and superior carvings of his body, and especially of his head. Once they had evidently been clothed, but now they appeared in the most indigent nakedness. A few tattered shrods around the neck of the one that stood on the left hand side of the door, rotted by the rain and bleached by the sun, were all that remained of numerous and gaudy garments, with which their votaries had formerly arrayed them. A large pile of broken calabashes and cocoa-nut shells lay in the centre, and a considerable heap of dried, and partly rotten, wreaths of flowers, branches of shrubs and bushes, and fragments of tapa (the accumulated offerings of former days) formed an unsightly mound immediately before each of the images. The horrid stare of these idols, and tattered garments upon some of them, and the heaps of rotten offerings before them, seemed to us no improper emblems of the system they were designed to support; distinguished alike by its cruelty, folly, and wretchedness.

We endeavored to gain admission to the inside of the house, but were told it was 'tabu roa' (strictly prohibited) and that nothing but a direct order from the king or Karaimoku, could open the door. However, by pushing one of the boards across the door-way a little to one side, we looked in, and saw many large images, some of wood very much carved, others of red feathers with distended mouths, large rows of sharks' teeth, and pearl-shell eyes. We also saw several bundles, apparently of human bones, cleaned, carefully tied up with cinet made of cocoa-nut fibres, and placed in different parts of the house, together with some rich shawls and other valuable articles, probably worn by those to whom the bones belonged, as the wearing apparel and other personal property of the chiefs is generally buried with them.

When we had gratified our curiosity, and I had taken a drawing of the building, and some of its appendages, we proceeded to examine other remarkable objects of the place.^{5/}

Ellis' description of the Place of Refuge, which adjoined the Hale o Keawe, is no less revealing. Of it he says:

Adjoining the Hale o Keawe to the southward, we found a 'Pahu tabu' (sacred enclosure) of considerable extent, and were informed by our guide that it was one of the 'puhonuas' of Hawaii, of which we had so often heard the chiefs and others speak. There are only two on the island, the one which we were then examining, and another at Waipio, on the north-east part of the island, in the district of Kohala.

These 'Puhonuas' were the Hawaiian 'cities of refuge,' and afforded an inviolable sanctuary to the guilty fugitive, who, when flying from the avenging spear, was so favoured as to enter their precincts. This had several wide entrances, some on the side next the sea, and others facing the mountains. Either the manslayer, the man who had broken a tabu, or failed in the observance of its rigid requirements, the thief, and even the murderer, fled from his incensed pursuers, and was secure. To whomsoever he belonged, and from whatever part he came, he was equally certain of admittance, though liable to be pursued even to the gates of the enclosure. Happily for him, those gates were perpetually open; and as soon as the fugitive had entered, he repaired to the presence of the idol, and made a short ejaculatory address, expressive of his obligations to him in reaching the place with security. Whenever war was proclaimed, and during the period of actual hostilities, a white flag was unfurled at the top of a tall spear, at each end of the enclosure, and until the conclusion of peace, waved the symbol of hope to those who, vanquished in fight, might flee thither for protection. It was fixed a short distance from the walls on the outside, and to the spot on which the banner was unfurled, the victorious

^{5/} W. Ellis, Narrative of a Tour through Hawaii, 153-155.

warrior might chase his routed foes; but here, he must himself fall back; beyond it he must not advance one step, on pain of forfeiting his life. The priests, and their adherents, would immediately put to death anyone who should have the temerity to follow or molest those who were once within the pale of the 'Pahu tabu'; and as they expressed it, under the shade or protection of the spirit of Keave, the tutelar deity of the place.

In one part of the enclosure, houses were formerly erected for the priests, and others for the refugees, who after a certain period, or at the cessation of war, were dismissed by the priests, and returned unmolested to their dwellings and families; no one venturing to injure those, who, when they fled to the gods, had been by them protected. We could not learn the length of time it was necessary for them to remain in the Puhonua; but it did not appear to be more than two or three days. After that, they either attached themselves to the services of the priests, or returned to their homes.

The puhonua at Honaunau is capacious, capable of containing a vast multitude of people. In time of war, the females, children, and old people of the neighboring districts, were generally left within it, while the men went to battle. Here they awaited in safety the issue of the conflict, and were secure against surprise and destruction, in the event of a defeat.

The form of it was an irregular parallelogram, walled up on one side and at both ends, the other being formed by the sea-beach, except on the north-west end, where there was a low fence. On measuring it, we found it to be 715 feet in length, and 404 feet wide. The walls were twelve feet high and fifteen thick. Holes were still visible in the top of the wall, where large images had formerly stood, about four sic rods apart throughout its whole extent. Within the enclosure were three large heiaus, two of which were considerably demolished while the other was nearly entire. It was a compact pile of stones, laid up in a solid mass, 126 feet by 65, and ten feet high. Many fragments of rock,

or pieces of lava, of two or more tons each, were seen in several parts of the wall, raised at least six feet from the ground. The erection of such a place as the puhonua at Honaunau, under the circumstances and with the means by which alone it was reared, (as they had no machinery) must have been an herculean task, and could not have been completed but by the labour of many hands. We could not learn how long it had been standing, but were informed it was built for Keawe, who reigned in Hawaii about 250 years ago. The walls and hoiaus, indeed, looked as if it might claim such antiquity; but the house of Keawe and the images must have been removed since that time.^{6/}

Ellis also described the site of Kealahou Bay which had been connected with the visit and death of Captain Cook in 1779. The Hikiau Heiau, there, where Cook had his observatory and where he participated in a native ceremony, was described also, as was the site of the Battle of Mokuohai where Kamehameha I defeated his enemies in 1782.^{7/}

Other Visitors to Honaunau

Others visited Honaunau shortly after Ellis. Among those were crew members of the Blonde, the ship of Lord Byron, which visited Kealahou Bay in 1825, after returning the bodies of Kamehameha II and Kamamulu from London. Their description, essentially the same as Ellis', also provided a pictorial representation of Hale o Keawe.^{8/}

^{6/} Ellis, 155-157.

^{7/} Ibid., 51-52, 130-132.

^{8/} Voyage of the Blonde to the Sandwich Islands in the Years 1824-1825, 195-201.

A later visitor was Mrs. E. P. Judd, the wife of the missionary, who, in company with Kapiolani and Naihe, her husband, in 1829 was the first white woman to visit the Hale o Keawe. At that time it was still surrounded by the enclosure of wooden idols. Although the wrapped bones of departed chiefs were still arranged around the main room, the idols which had formerly been inside were gone. These had been taken by the crew members of the Blonde in 1825. Frequent old offerings were strewn about the room. So affected was Kapiolani by the neglect and sadness of the tomb, that she with Kaahumanu resolved to put an end to the superstitions connected with the place. As a result of their efforts, therefore, the bones were removed to the secret cave near Kaawaloa during this same year.^{9/}

Visitors of the middle part of the nineteenth century also left descriptions of the Place of Refuge and the site of Hale o Keawe, which no longer was standing. Rev. Henry T. Cheever in 1849 visited the area. Of it he says:

"The grim idols that received the man slayer within their strangely-friendly place, like a wolf turning his den into a sheepfold, are gone. The high priests of idolatry are all dead, and there are few remaining who can tell you anything of the transactions that have taken place here."^{10/}

^{9/} Alexander, "The Hale o Keawe at Honaunau," 160.

^{10/} H. T. Cheever, Life in the Sandwich Islands, 23.

Cheever shed some light on the last human sacrifices held there in 1313. According to him, one man was sacrificed for putting on the malo, or girdle of a chief; another for eating a forbidden article of food; and a third for leaving a house that was tabu and entering one that was not. At the same time a woman was put to death for going into the eating-house of her husband when intoxicated. On the authority of natives, according to Cheever, former kings had immolated eighty victims here at one time, as in the days of Uni, "whose blood-thirsty god, after one of his victories, kept calling from the clouds, 'Give, give,' until the priest and himself were all that remained of his train."^{11/}

S. S. Hill, a traveler of the 1850's, gives an additional picture of the site after its abandonment. The village of Honaunau had declined considerably since Ellis' visit, as it contained only 40 huts and not more than 100 residents. He describes the site of Hale o Keawe as follows:

After passing around the shore beneath the village, we came to the point forming the extremity of the south side of the bay, which was the site of the ancient tombs. The ground here was almost entirely formed by beds and blocks of lava; and all that remained to show to what purpose it was formerly appropriated were some rough walls, constructed of lava, broken into irregular masses, a few decaying stakes, and a cavern imperfectly covered by an enormous block of lava, but in which, we were informed, still remained the bones of several of the ancient kings of the island.
^{12/}

^{11/} Cheever, 24.

^{12/} S. S. Hill, Travels in the Sandwich Island, 183.

That there is some doubt as to the accuracy of Hill's information concerning the bones of several of the ancient kings is obvious, in view of their removal in 1829.^{13/} The significance of the cavern mentioned is uncertain. Perhaps such a cave exists, the entrance of which is covered by one of the large stones in the area. The determination of this, however, must await further confirmation.

Hill's description of the Place of Refuge reveals the deterioration of this site:

Near this spot there is a remarkable enclosure, of about two acres in extent, of which the rude walls, of three or four feet only in height, are formed of the same material as those of the tombs... The place was now full of cocoa-nut trees, thickly sown, and no longer retained any of its former virtue. Near to, or forming a part of its walls, our guide pointed out to us a block of hewn lava, that we judged to be about thirteen feet in length, which was preserved in remembrance of an ancient chief Keoua who is said to have been the length of the block when lying with outstretched arms upon its surface. If this be no exaggeration, the chief must have been of enormous dimensions indeed.^{14/}

Hill's description is important, as it indicates the height of the walls of the enclosure in the 1850's, before restoration and repair. Apparently at this time the hale kauila, which had been constructed in 1829 from the timbers of the Hale o Keawe, eastward of that site, was occupied by Hackfield & Co. Its first use had been as a government house.^{15/}

^{13/} Mark Twain, who visited the site in 1866, also was told that some of the bones of chiefs were buried there. This legend exists to the present time.

^{14/} Hill, 183-185.

^{15/} Alexander, "The Hale o Keawe at Honaunau," 160.

Mark Twain's visit in 1866 to the site, although entertaining, adds little to our information on the Hale o Keawe and the Place of Refuge. Like Hill, he found it hard to believe that Keoua's stone denoted the size of the man.^{16/}

Steps to Preserve the Site

The deterioration of the sites of Hale o Keawe and the Place of Refuge continued. However, an important step was taken to preserve the area in the late 1800's, when the Bishop Estate acquired it. Finally, Mr. S. M. Damon, after leasing it from the Bishop Estate, attempted to restore the main structures in 1902. With the help of W. A. Wall, surveyor, his main work was the repair and restoration of the Aloaloa Heiau and the Akahipapa Heiau, as well as some of the walls of the main enclosure. A plan of the Place of Refuge and related sites, drawn by Wall, was reproduced with photographs and described in The Hawaiian Annual, 1908.^{17/}

Further repair and restoration of the Place of Refuge and Hale o Keawe was done under the direction of Dr. C. F. G. Stokes of the Bishop Museum in 1919. For the most part this consisted in the restoration of the stone platform of Hale o Keawe and the repair of walls. A diagram produced by Rev. A. S. Baker in 1921 shows the details of the structures at that time.^{18/}

For the most part, the diagrams of Wall and Baker, and the descriptions of Thrum, agree essentially with the description of

^{16/} W. F. Frear, Mark Twain and Hawaii, 395-396.

^{17/} T. G. Thrum, The Hawaiian Annual, 1908, 75-77.

^{18/} A. S. Baker, "How to Spend a Day in Kona," 23.

Ellis in 1823, with the exception of the Hale o Keawe, which has never been reproduced in full. All agree that the walls of the main enclosure were 12 feet high and 15 feet thick, which they are today. The south wall as given by Wall and Baker is 660 feet in length. Thrum's statement, however, gives it as 404 feet, which is the figure of Ellis in 1823.^{19/} The difference is accounted for perhaps by the wire fence which forms an extension to the south wall. The east wall in the diagrams of Wall and Baker show it to be 700 feet in length, whereas Ellis and Thrum state that it was 715 feet in length. The north wall, existent in Ellis' time, is gone. Both Ellis and Thrum agree essentially on the dimensions of the Aloaloa Heiau, which was 125 feet long, 65 feet wide, and 10 feet high. The Akahipapa Heiau was 24 x 28 feet, and the dimensions of the wood superstructure of Hale o Keawe as given by Ellis were 16 x 24 feet.

Recent steps taken to preserve the Place of Refuge and its related site of Hale o Keawe finally culminated in the lease of the site by the Bishop Estate to the County of Hawaii as a park. This lease, due to expire in 1961, assures the preservation of the area, pending further action to give the site national recognition. Meanwhile a custodian is giving minimum protection to the area. For many years the site has been used by local people as a gathering place, where

^{19/} Thrum, The Hawaiian Annual, 1906, 46.

fishing, boating, swimming, and picnicking, all ancient Hawaiian activities, are continued.

Bibliography

Bibliographical material on Hawaii, including the Kona Coast, is abundant. To list all important works would take a considerable amount of time and space. The archives of Hawaii, the Pacific Coast, New England, and Washington, D. C., especially, contain voluminous records of events connected with Hawaii and the rise of the Kamehamehas. Newspapers and periodicals after the 1830's have been well-preserved. Perhaps the most useful bibliographical aid for the purpose of this narrative is Harold Whitney Bradley, The American Frontier in Hawaii, Stanford University, 1942. Bradley covers primarily the period after the visit and death of Captain James Cook, the discoverer of the Hawaiian Islands, and thoroughly lists the authorities who have dealt with Hawaii. The following are representative of the most important dealing with the Place of Refuge and surrounding area.

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E. Conclusion and Evaluation

Representative of a larger story of the Hawaiian People, the
Place of Refuge at Honaunau retains much of the flavor of its
ancient setting and purpose. Here all groups of Hawaiian society--
common people, priests, chiefs, and royalty--took part in the
drama of Hawaii before the coming of the white man. The story
portrayed here is symbolic of the best qualities of Hawaiian life,
in which every human could find a haven from fear and oppression.
Perhaps Ellis summed it up as well as any when he wrote:

We had often passed over the ruins of deserted
heathen temples, and the vestiges of demolished altars,
in the Sandwich Islands, and I had frequently visited

those in other groups of the Pacific; but the feelings excited on these occasions had always been those of deep melancholy and horror, at the human immolations and shocking cruelties which they so often exhibited. Here, however, idolatry appeared at least in the form of clemency, and the sacred enclosure presented a scene unique among the ruins of paganism, which we contemplated with unusual interest. Whether its establishment was originally projected by the priests, to attach to their interests all who might owe their lives to its institution, or by some mild and humane prince, anxious to diminish the barbarous cruelties of idolatry, and soften the anguishing character of savage warfare; or whether derived traditionally from the Israelitish cities of refuge, to which some of its features are strikingly analogous--we do not pretend to determine ... *

The qualities which make the story of the Place of Refuge and the Hale o Keawe an outstanding one, plus the remarkable state of preservation of the structures there, qualifies this site as of more than local interest. It typifies old Hawaii. As such it is a part of our national heritage and cannot be duplicated. It is recommended, therefore, that it be given recognition as a national monument or national historic site. By so doing it will be preserved, interpreted, and developed to the highest degree for the inspiration and enjoyment of this and future generations.

*Ellis, Narrative of a Tour through Hawaii, 157-158.

II. Park Data.

A. Ownership

The Place of Refuge and the site of Hale o Keawe at Honaunau are owned by the Bishop Estate, and leased to the County of Hawaii as a park. Should this become a national monument or historic site, it is contemplated that the Territory of Hawaii will exchange with the Bishop Estate sufficient lands for the transfer of the area to the National Park Service. The County of Hawaii is agreeable to this proposal, as are the local people, provided their ancient rights of fishing, boating, and swimming are protected, and private "kulcanas" (small individual land holdings) are not incorporated within the monument.

B. Appraised Value

Most of the land suggested for acquisition by the National Park Service is now used for park purposes. Because of the character of lava here, it has little value as agricultural land. Its appraised value, therefore, is small.

C. Condition and Previous Development

For the most part, the ruins at the Place of Refuge are in a good state of preservation, largely because of the repair and restoration work which was done on the walls and main structures in 1902 and 1919. This work was in the nature of repair and partial restoration of stone walls and heiaus only. No attempt was made to duplicate the wood superstructure of Hale o Keawe. The area of the smaller enclosure, where

Kamehameha's fish ponds and the Hale Kauila were situated, has been used for picnicking, and for boating and swimming. Fishing sites, of an ancient nature, are situated along the shore of the main enclosure. These are still used by native Hawaiians.

D. Care

A custodian administers the area for the county. To the best of his ability, an attempt is made to supply sanitary facilities and to keep the area presentable. This is difficult, because of limited funds and the large number of people who visit the site, especially on week ends.

E. Accessibility

A narrow road runs westward through the town of Honaunau to the Place of Refuge. From there it branches to roughly skirt the enclosures to approximately the southeast corner of the sanctuary wall, where it then turns southward. All important ruins and structures lie to the west of this road. The road is connected with the Mamalahon Highway, thus making it easily accessible to all parts of the Kona Coast and the Island of Hawaii. An airport at Kailua, which is only a few miles to the north, and shipping facilities make the Place of Refuge further accessible to Hilo and other islands of the Hawaiian group.

F. Possible Preservation

Preservation and stabilization of ruins and not further restoration or reconstruction should be stressed in this area.

The site contains a dramatic display of ancient structures, which, if properly preserved, interpreted, and developed, are adequate to stimulate interest in the story which is here. Interpretive facilities in the form of literature, guide service, and museum presentation would do much to enhance the inherent historical values of the site. The scenic values of the site, which are considerable, should also be protected to the fullest degree. Few places in the Hawaiian Islands have a more interesting meeting of land, palm trees, sea and the works of man.

G. Suggested Development

Should the Place of Refuge and the site of Hale o Keawe become a national monument or historic site, it is recommended that adequate boundaries be provided to fully protect the historical and scenic values of the site. At the meeting of September 19 between National Park Service officials, the Land Commissioner of the Territory of Hawaii, and members of the Kona Civic and Improvement Club, it was suggested that most of the present county park south of the main boat harbor on Honaunau Bay be included, as well as lands to the east of the Place of Refuge for an entrance road and parking, and for administrative, interpretive, and sanitary facilities. An additional area to the south, which would not include private kuleanas, should also be acquired for picnic facilities. This would make it possible thus to remove picnicking from within

the walled enclosures, where it tends to detract from the historical features of the area.

The above program would assure the greatest preservation, interpretation, and development at the Place of Refuge, and, at the same time, would protect the ancient Hawaiian rights of boating, swimming, fishing, and picnicking which in themselves are historical. A map is attached to this report, which indicates generally the proposed boundaries and developments.

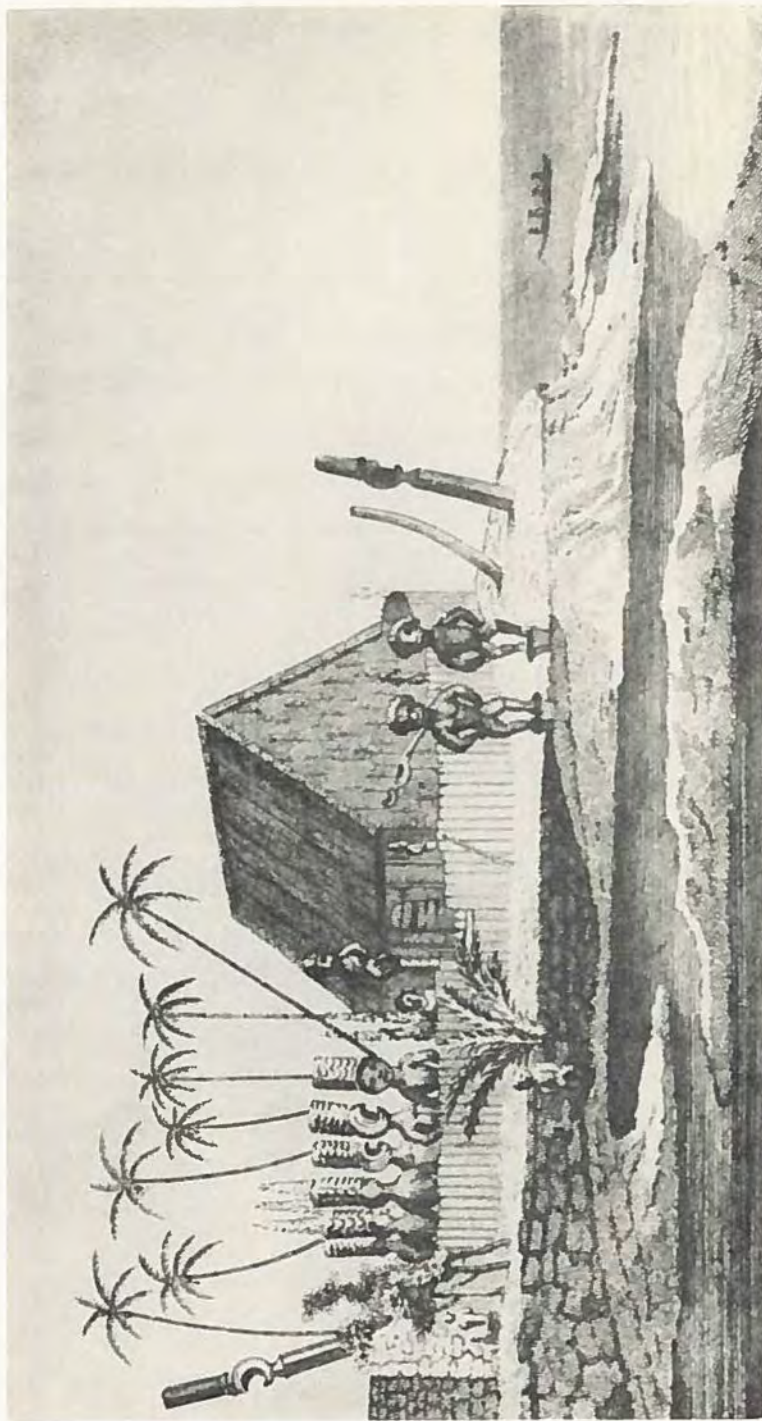
H. Relation to other National Park Service Areas

The Mauna Loa and Kilauea sections of Hawaii National Park are about 20 and 35 miles east respectively of the Place of Refuge on the Island of Hawaii. These can be reached readily by the Mamalahoa Highway. The Haleakala section of Hawaii National Park, which is on the adjacent Island of Maui, is the nearest other area administered by the National Park Service. This can be reached by air within a few hours, and by ship within a day.

III. Photographs



1. The Place of Refuge at Honaunau, from the Northeast.
Note outer and inner enclosures and site of Hale o Keawe
at extreme right.

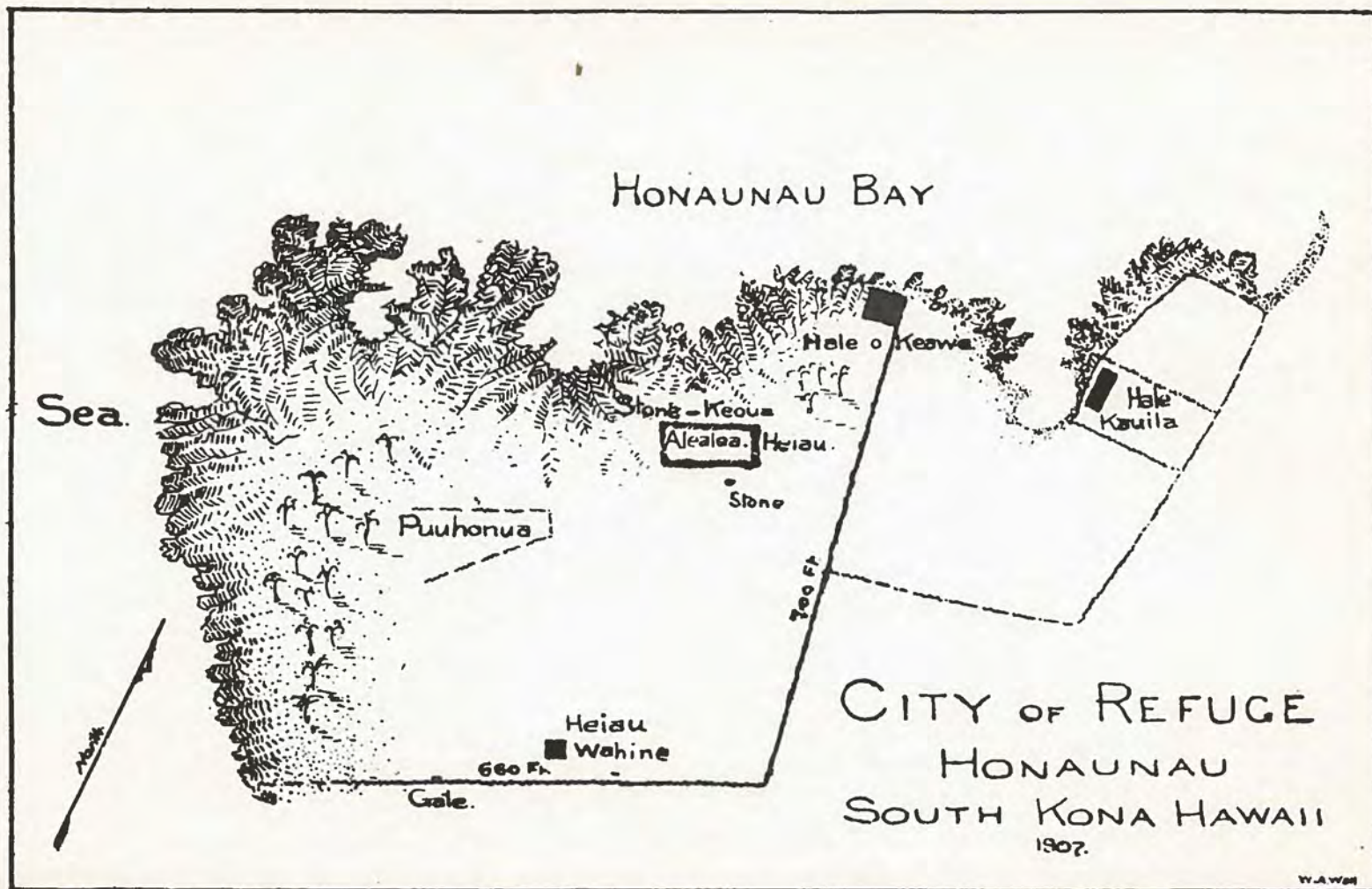


The Depository of the Kings of Hawaii, adjoining the Place of Refuge at Honolulu.

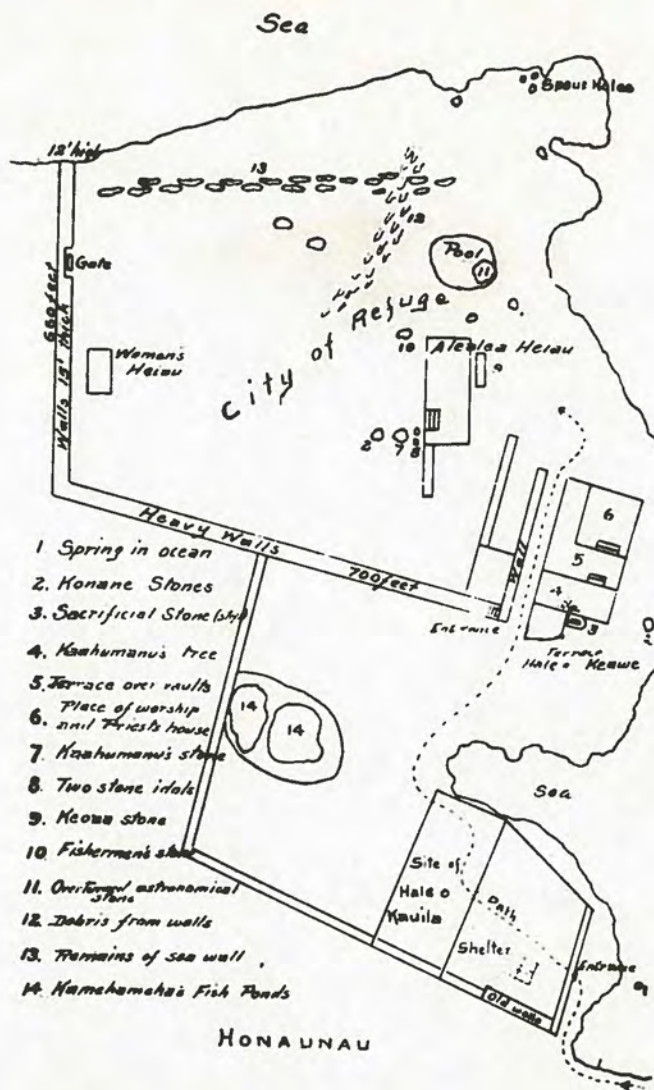
2. (From Ellis, Narrative, 152.)



3. Morai Near Karakakooa.
(From Voyage of H.M.S. Blonde, 189.)



4. Wall's Plan of Place of Refuge in 1907.
(From The Hawaiian Annual, 1908, 75.)



5. Plan of Rev. A. S. Baker Showing Place of Refuge in 1921.
(From Baker, "How to Spend a Day in Kona," 23.)



6. Alealea Heiau in Place of Refuge, Honaunau.
(From, The Hawaiian Annual, 1908, 48.)



7. Kaahumanu Stone near Alealea Heiau in 1907.
(From The Hawaiian Annual, 1908, 76.)



8. Keoua Stone near Alealea Heiau, 1907.
(From the Hawaiian Annual, 1908, 77.)



9. Messrs. Tolson, Vint, Castro, and Neasham at Alealea Heiau, Place of Refuge, September 18, 1949.

(Photo by F. Oberhansley)



10. Messrs. Tolson and Neasham Inspecting Area to South of Place of Refuge, September 18, 1949.

(Photo by F. Oberhansley)



11. Picnic Crowd in Outer Enclosure, Place of Refuge,
September 18, 1949.

(Photo by F. Oberhansley)



12. Bathing Beach, Place of Refuge, Honaunau.
(Photo, Courtesy Hawaiian Airlines)



13. Approach to Kealakekua Bay from the Sea, September 19, 1949. The cliffs are lined with Burial Caves. Captain Cook was killed on the shores of this bay in 1779.

(Photo by F. Oberhansley)

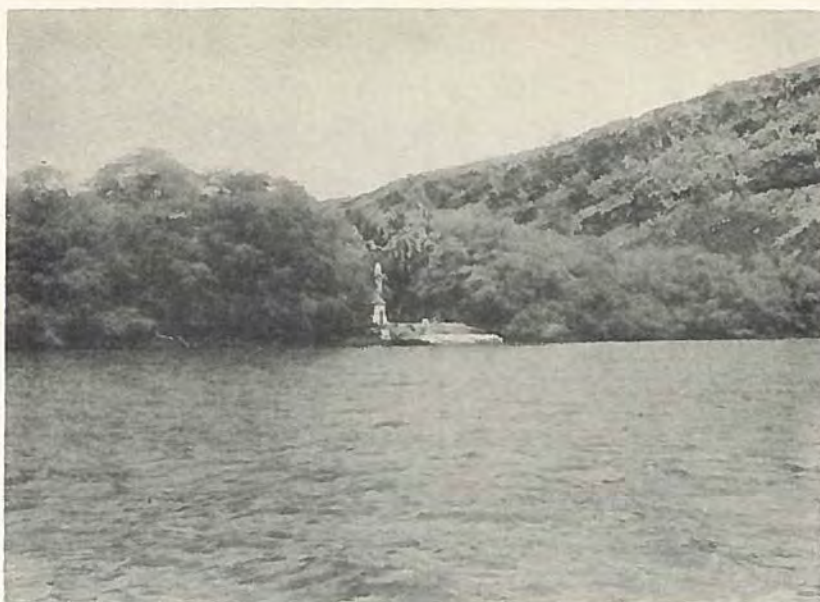


14. Close-up of Cliffs at Kealakekua Bay, September 19, 1949. Note Small Openings to Burial Caves in Cliffs.

(Photo by F. Oberhansley)



15. The Cook Monument, Kealakekua Bay. He was killed by the Natives Near This Spot in 1779.



16. Approach to Site Where Captain Cook was Killed at Kealakekua Bay in 1779. The Monument is Maintained by the Cook Monument Trust.

(Photo by F. Oberhansley)



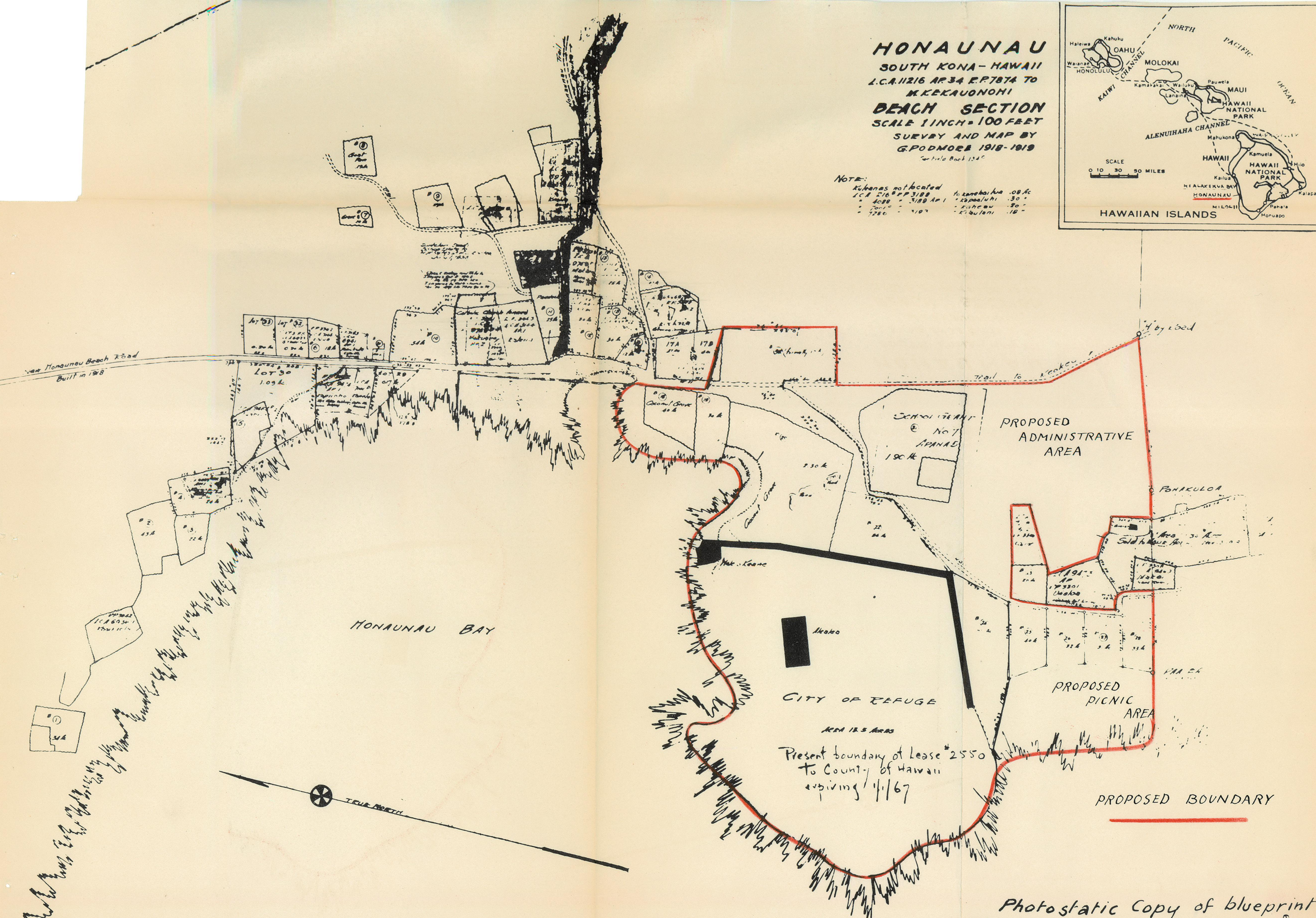
17. Plaque at Hikiau Heiau, Kealakekua Bay, Placed in Memory of First Recorded Christian Service in the Hawaiian Islands in 1779.

(Photo by F. Oberhansley)

IV. Map (Attached)

See field Book 134C

Kubanas not located	
1CA 216 ⁰ RP 3188	to Kanchaihua .08 Ac
" 4088 - 3189 Ap 1	" Kapaohua .30 "
" 7011 - "	" Kachow .20 "
" 7280 - 3187	" Kibulani .18 "



Photostatic Copy of blueprint
submitted by Supt. with his memo ⁶⁵⁹
of August 11-1949. "City of Refuge"
HAWAII ISLAND