



# Biography Hawai'i: Five Lives

*A Series of Public Remembrances*



## PRINCE JONAH KŪHIŌ KALANIANA'OLE HAWAIIAN ALI'I & CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATE

*by Davianna Pōmaika'i McGregor*

*Let us begin by pondering what it meant to be a Hawaiian Prince of 20th Century Hawai'i.*

Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana'ole was genealogical heir to the mana (spiritual power) of deified high chiefs, the human embodiment of ancestral Hawaiian gods of the universe. At the dawn of the 20th Century, Prince Kūhiō faced the urgency and despair of his people on the brink of extinction.

From 1900 to 1920 the number of pure Hawaiians had declined from 29,799 to 23,700. The life expectancy of Hawaiians was only 30.2 years in 1910, and had increased to only 35 years by 1920. In 1925, the infant mortality rate was 136 per 1,000 live births, compared to only 39 per 1,000 for Caucasians.

These years also witnessed the growing urban ghettoization of Hawaiians, disenfranchised from their lands. The number of Hawaiians living in Honolulu increased to 17,500 in 1920, where they faced increasing competition from the 13,400 Chinese and 24,500 Japanese who lived in the city.<sup>1</sup> They lived in crowded tenement rooms, sharing a common kitchen, bath, and toilet facilities where viruses and diseases spread rapidly. In 1911 cholera claimed Hawaiian lives, and by 1918 tuberculosis spread throughout Honolulu.

Prince Kūhiō described the problems of poor Hawaiian families in the Honolulu tenements as follows:

We find that the people who live in the tenement houses in this city are nearly all Hawaiians. . . . These Hawaiian families living in the tenements are poor, they do not own an inch of land in their own country.<sup>2</sup>

Assuming the highest elected position in Hawai‘i, as Delegate of his people in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1902 through 1922, the Prince rallied his contemporary Hawaiian leaders around a plan for the “rehabilitation” of the Hawaiian people.<sup>3</sup>

On November 13, 1914, the Prince invited two hundred Hawaiians to a meeting at his Waikiki residence. They agreed to form the ‘Aha Hui Pu‘uhonua O Na Hawai‘i, an organization which devised the original plan to rehabilitate Hawaiians upon the ceded Crown and Hawaiian Kingdom lands under the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act.<sup>4</sup>

In December 1918, Prince Jonah Kūhiō and the ‘Aha Hui Pu‘uhonua organized a meeting of forty Hawaiian leaders at Honolulu’s Young Hotel to form yet another organization to work for the Hawaiian rehabilitation plan.<sup>5</sup> Together, the ‘Aha Hui Pu‘uhonua O Na Hawai‘i and the Hawaiian Civic Clubs combined forces for the passage of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act.

What did the Prince have in mind? A letter which he circulated to U.S. Senators in 1920 described the intent and purpose of this Act:

The Hawaiian Race is fast becoming a minority element among the races of the Territory. The mortality rate among the Hawaiians is exceedingly high as compared to the other races and if conditions exist as they do today the Race will become extinct in a very short period of time.

After extensive investigation and survey on the part of various organizations organized for the purpose of rehabilitating the race, it was found that the only method in which to rehabilitate the race was to place them back upon the soil. The Hawaiians were a seafaring and agricultural people. Their entire life was spent in the outdoors. But with the coming of civilization conditions were changed, the Hawaiians on account of their lack of business experience, and otherwise, were forced into the crowded tenements of the cities and towns and were subjected to all the evils of modern civilization. Disease and the change in their living conditions weakened their vitality to such an extent that today they are susceptible to all diseases and their resistance being very low the death rate is high. Under the provisions of this bill, by placing the Hawaiians upon the soil, away from the cities and towns, it is certain that they will again retain their former vitality and in the course of years the race will increase, and become a majority element in the land of their birth.<sup>6</sup>

On July 9, 1921, the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act passed both houses of Congress and was signed into law.

On January 7, 1922, six months after he had succeeded in having the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act passed, Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana‘ole passed away.

Let us close by reflecting upon the loss of the Prince of Hawai‘i. The leaders who were Kūhiō’s contemporaries in the ‘Aha Hui Pu‘uhonua O Na Hawai‘i and Hawaiian Civic Clubs concentrated their efforts on implementing the Hawaiian Homes Program. Kūhiō and these leaders were born under the Hawaiian monarchy, had risked their lives to restore the monarchy in 1895, and had served time, at hard labor, in the Provisional Government’s and Republic’s prisons. They continued to maintain an adversarial and competitive relationship to the haole elite.

The next generation of Hawaiian leaders who assumed political office in the 1930s were trained in private and public schools under the American school system and were assimilated to accept Western values. The death of Prince Kūhiō left a vacuum in the leadership of the Hawaiian politicians. His passing marked the beginning of a new period of cooperation and collaboration between the part-Hawaiians and the haole elite which was finally disrupted by rise of the Hawaiian nationalist movement in the 1970s.

#### NOTES

1. U.S. Bureau of the Census. “Table 2. Composition and Characteristics of Population and Unemployment.” *15th Census of the United States: 1930, Population Second Series, Hawaii*. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1931. 48.
2. *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* Sept. 24, 1920.
3. Hawaiians constituted the majority of voters for the delegateship, and continued to return Prince Kūhiō to Washington to represent Hawai‘i from 1902 through 1922.
4. *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* Nov. 13, 1914
5. *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*
6. Hawai‘i State Archives. Delegate Kalaniana‘ole File.

# PRINCE KŪHIŌ: AN INTRODUCTION TO HIS LIFE

by *Davianna Pōmaika'i McGregor*

As one of the designated heirs to the throne, Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalanianaʻole was raised to rule the islands. He was born March 26, 1871, at Kukuiʻula, on the island of Kauaʻi. His father was David Kahalepouli Piʻikoi; his mother was Kekaulike Kinoiki, the granddaughter of King Kaumualiʻi, the last ruler of Kauaʻi, and the sister of Julia Kapiʻolani, the Queen Consort of King David Kalākaua. Prince Kūhiō was educated at Punahou and then sent to St. Matthew's College, a military school in San Mateo, California. The prince also studied abroad at the Royal Agricultural College in England. While there, he toured Europe and was received in the royal courts as a prince among equals.

Prince Kūhiō, together with his brother, Prince David Kawānanakoa, were heirs of the Queen Kapiʻolani Estate.<sup>1</sup> Kūhiō's home, Pualeilani at Waikiki, was the former home of his royal aunt, Queen Kapiʻolani. The mementos and historical curios gathered by King Kalākaua and Queen Kapiʻolani during their travels around the world were prominently displayed in the home.<sup>2</sup>

In 1895, Prince Kūhiō was incarcerated for one year for his role in the attempted restoration of Queen Liliʻuokalani and the monarchy upon which the perpetuation of his status of prince depended.<sup>3</sup> Upon his release, he married his sweetheart, Elizabeth Kahanu. Four years later, in 1899, Prince Kūhiō and Princess Kahanu celebrated a belated honeymoon with a tour of Europe and South Africa. In South Africa, the prince hunted big game and almost invested in diamond mines.<sup>4</sup>

Princess Kahanu Kalanianaʻole had been educated in convent schools in Honolulu, and prided herself on speaking "perfect" English. She was said to have the manner of a titled Hawaiian woman of the "old days of the court." The society pages of the Honolulu newspapers often described gala social functions hosted by Kūhiō and his wife, especially for visiting dignitaries from Washington, D.C. However, the Prince generally preferred the outdoor life and sports.<sup>5</sup>



## NOTES

1. For information on Kawananakoa, see the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, June 3, 1908: 4; for Kūhiō, see *The Story of Hawaii and Its Builders*, by George Nellist (Honolulu: Star-Bulletin, 1925): 137.
2. *Mid Pacific Magazine* Aug. 8, 1914: 188.
3. Hawaii State Archives, 1895 Insurrection File. "Index to Accused"; "List of names of persons arrested and charged as prisoners of war to date January 16, 1895 11am"; *Hawaiian Gazette* July 18, 1898.
4. Lori Kuʻulei Kamae, *The Empty Throne: A Biography of Hawaii's Prince Cupid* (Honolulu: Topgallant 1980). 98–101.
5. *Mid Pacific Magazine* Aug. 8, 1914: 188–89.



# THE FIRST ELECTION OF KE KEIKIALI'I KŪHIŌ KALANIANA'OLE

by Noenoe K. Silva

How did Kūhiō Kalaniana'ole get elected as delegate to Congress for the first time? The stories told in the history books are brief, and seem to imply that once the Republican Party had a Kanaka candidate their success was assured. In the previous election in 1900, however, the majority of voters were Kanaka Maoli,<sup>1</sup> most of whom had fought annexation, and were continuing to fight the haole oligarchy, now members of the Republican Party. In 1900, the Kanaka Maoli had formed their own party, called the Home Rule Party, through merging two organizations, Hui Aloha 'Āina and Hui Kālai'āina, who had worked together to support Queen Lili'uokalani and oppose annexation (Silva, "I Kū Mau Mau"). The Home Rulers had elected Robert Wilcox as delegate to the U.S. Congress, and had also swept the election for seats in the territorial legislature. So it would seem that the Home Rule Party was strong, and Wilcox should have been able to win re-election.

Since the majority of the voters were still Kānaka Maoli in 1902, let us look at how the campaign was conducted in the Hawaiian newspapers at the time. The newspaper of the Republican Party was *Nupepa Kuokoa*, which had almost always been owned by members of the haole oligarchy, and almost always had a Kanaka editor sympathetic to their views. In 1902, the editor was David A-i (the spelling in the newspaper), the publisher was the Hawaiian Gazette Co., and the Luna Nui (CEO) was A. W. Pearson. The Home Rule Party was probably most closely associated with *Kuokoa Home Rula*, edited by Joseph M. Poepoe, but unfortunately, no issues from the year 1902 (among others) have been preserved, so we do not have any information from that paper. *Ke Aloha Aina* had been the paper of the Hui Aloha 'Āina, and so we might suppose it would support the Home Rule Party. Joseph and Emma Nāwahi originally founded the paper in 1895, and in 1902 Emma was still the business manager, and her nephew Edward L. Like was still the editor.

The story told in the *Nupepa Kuokoa* was that Kūhiō had been a loyal member of the Home Rule Party;



in July 1902 an elected committee of the party drafted changes to reform the party's constitution. "Some of the longtime members of the party, led by President Kalauokalani, opposed the Constitutional changes" (McGregor 218). In an all-night meeting, Ke Keikiali'i Kalaniana'ole and Kalauokalani agreed to a compromise, but in an open meeting the next day, Kalauokalani, with no warning, broke the agreement. Kūhiō walked out of the meeting, followed by many friends, and immediately told reporters that he quit the Party. This was apparently not just a news story, but a hint that the Republican campaign had already begun. A big photo of Ke Keikiali'i accompanied the story, with another story beneath it about his many virtues. It included this statement: "Me ka manaolana no ka manawa e hiki mai ana e komo mai ai oia ame kona mau hoa ma ka aoao Repubalika" [Hoping the time will come when he and his friends will come into the Republican party] (*Nupepa Kuokoa* July 18, 1902: 6). Kalaniana'ole's identity as ali'i was emphasized in this article, and would continue to be a major factor in his election. Here he is described as "he alii maopopo oia no ka aina hanau, he hua mailoko mai o na puhaka alii ponoii o Hawaii aloha" [He is a recognized ali'i of the birth land, a fruit of the loins of beloved Hawai'i's own ali'i].

The importance of his ali'i identity is also evident in a report from Hilo, where Kūhiō spoke on August 13. It is headlined "Nui Ke Ohohia Ia O Ke Keikialii Kalanianaole" [Prince Kalaniana'ole Greatly Acclaimed]. Near the beginning of the report, the anonymous author quotes the epithet "O ke alii wale no ka'u makemake, o ka luhi o maua me ia nei" [The ali'i is my only desire, our labors are with him] (*Ke Aloha Aina* Aug. 30, 1906: 2).

On September 5, *Kuokoa* reported on the front page that Kūhiō had been selected as the Republican Party candidate for Congress, after being nominated by H. P. Baldwin. Kūhiō wrote an article about his decision that ran on page 4, saying he thought it was pono [beneficial] to send a delegate from either the Democratic or Republican parties "i kulike me ke kulana Mana Hooonopono Aupuni e noho mana ana ma Amerika Huipua" [in order to conform to the structure of the governmental powers that rule the U.S.] He believed that it was impossible to get anything done if the people again sent a representative who was not a member of one of the ruling parties in the U.S. And although Wilcox had said that it was the Democrats who were their friends in Washington, Kūhiō dismissed that by saying the Democratic Party in Hawai'i was merely trying to strengthen itself by making friends with the Home Rulers (*Nupepa Kuokoa* Sept. 5, 1902: 4).

But the young ali'i's friends and followers in the Home Rule Party were hurt and angered by his decision. *Ke Aloha Aina* reported

. . . ua ku aela kekahi mau hoa a haalele aku i ko lakou alakai, me na manao piha inaina a me na waimaka e haloiloi mai ana ma ko lakou mau lihilihi. Aloha no ia mau hoa luhi i haalele ia iho la e ko lakou alakai i ke anu. (Sept. 6, 1902: 3)

[. . . Some friends stood up and left their leader, with anger-filled thoughts and with tears welling up onto their eyelashes. How sad it is for those companions in work to have have been left out in the cold by their leader.]

Kūhiō is at times represented as an unthinking puppet of the Republican Party, but it is clear from his speeches and writing in this campaign that he risked the anger of his supporters in order to join the Republican Party for the purpose of benefitting his own people (McGregor 201–220). In his acceptance speech, for instance, he said, "I will try to show my people that we can work for the benefit of Hawai'i in Washington" (*Nupepa Kuokoa* Sept. 5, 1902: 1).<sup>2</sup> And on September 12, Ke Keikiali'i explained his decision in this way:

no ke kulana a'u i lawe iho la iloko o keia mau la . . . no ke kulana holomua o ka aina ame ke kulana pomaikai o ka Lahui Kanaka mai kela ame keia pea o ka aina. (*Nupepa Kuokoa*, Sept. 12, 1902: 4.

[concerning the position I have taken in recent days . . . (it is) for the progress of the land and for the prosperity of the Hawaiian People across this entire land.]

At the same time, both newspapers reported that the Home Rule and Democratic parties were merging (*Nupepa Kuokoa* Sept. 5, 1902: 7; *Ke Aloha Aina* Sept. 6, 1902, 4). The Democratic Party apparently was quite small, and the Home Rule Party must already have been weakening in order to consider such a move. *Ke Aloha Aina* was supportive of the merger (Aug. 30: 4), and was not enthusiastically backing the Home Rule Party or

Wilcox. In fact, the paper ran articles complimentary to Ke Keikiali'i on August 30, 1902. One of them was a report of a speech Kūhiō had given in Hilo that ran under a subheadline of "Nui ke Ohohia ia o Kana Mau Olelo Naauao" or 'Great Enthusiasm for His Wise Words.' Kūhiō was highly critical of the leadership of the Home Rule Party in this speech. On September 13, *Ke Aloha Aina* ran a short item saying that should Ke Keikiali'i Kalaniana'ole be elected, they would trust "ma kona ano he opio alii hanau no ka aina" [in his being a young ali'i born of the land]. Such a statement showed the importance of the Prince's ali'i status, as well as a distinct lack of support for the Home Rule Party and its candidate, Wilcox.

Furthermore, Wilcox had apparently made a devastating mistake. He had introduced a bill in the U.S. Congress to turn the management of the Kalaupapa leprosy quarantine settlement over to the U.S. Since the public was usually angry at the Board of Health for its historical and continuing racist and reckless policies, including prolonged neglect of the leprosy patients, and, most recently, the burning of Chinatown because of some cases of bubonic plague, Wilcox must have thought this would be a popular idea. But at the same time, a commission of U.S. Senators was visiting Hawai'i nei, and one of them said publicly that should the U.S. take over, they would immediately separate husbands from wives, and parents from children, within the settlement. The patients at Kalaupapa were outraged at this prospect. They got 750 or more names on a petition that they submitted to the U.S. commissioners. They also wrote several letters of appeal to *Kuokoa's* readers, asking them not to vote for Wilcox (Oct. 3: 7, Oct. 10: 1-2, 6; Oct. 24: 1; Oct. 31: 1). The one published on October 24 was on the front page between two portraits—Kūhiō on the left captioned "Ka Hoopakele o ka Lahui Hawaii" [The Savior of the Lāhui Hawai'i],<sup>3</sup> and the Queen on the right, captioned "Kakoo i ka Hoopakele o ka Lahui" [Supports the Savior of the Lāhui].<sup>4</sup> It was titled "He Leo Uwalo i ka Lahui Hawaii" [A voice of Appeal to the Lāhui Hawai'i] and was framed by chain link icon. It reiterates the patient-prisoners' outrage at Wilcox's bill, concluding with,

Ke pule a ke uwalo aku nei no hoi makou i ko makou mau ohana pono i ame na hoaloha . . . e hoike i ko oukou aloha ia makou ma ko oukou koho ole ana ia Wilikoki i Elele no kakou i Wakinekona.

[We pray and we appeal to our own family and friends . . . to show your aloha for us by not voting for Wilcox for our Delegate to Washington.]

This emotional plea to the people combined with the lack of support from *Ke Aloha Aina* certainly contributed to Wilcox's defeat, and thus to Ke Keikiali'i Kalaniana'ole's landslide victory. Through the young prince, the Republicans were thus successful in bringing Kānaka Maoli into their party. The victory, for many Kānaka, must have been infused with anxiety and doubt, as they prepared to do politics as members of the same party as their enemies of recent days.

After the results were in, *Ke Aloha Aina* expressed hope for the future, and offered the Delegate some words concerning his new responsibilities:

[K]e kau aku nei ka manaolana o kou lahui maluna ou e ka Elele Alii a ka lahui. . . . Ma ke ano he Hawaii oiaio ka Elele lahui hou i puka ae la. . . . [K]e hauoli nei makou me ka haaheo i ka ike ana aku ia pua aliio-pio i oni ae nei a kela iluna a kau i ka pane poo o ka hanohano. Ke kalokalo ae nei Ke Aloha Aina[,] E ola ka Elele a ka lahui a e ola pu ka lahui ma ou 'la. (Nov. 8, 1902: 4)

The image shows a page from the newspaper "Ke Kilohana Pookela no ka Lahui Hawaii" (The Voice of Appeal to the Lāhui Hawaii). The page is dated "HONOLOULU, POA'INA, OKATOBA 24, 1902" and "MAHELO APAU 1902". The main headline is "KA HOOPAKELE O KA LAHUI HAWAII." Below this is a portrait of Ke Keikiali'i Kalaniana'ole. To the right is another headline "KAKOO I KA HOOPAKELE O KA LAHUI." with a portrait of Queen Liliuokalani. The central text is titled "HE LEO UWALO I KA LAHUI HAWAII." and contains a long letter or petition. At the bottom left, there is a list of names including "Huli hoi mai o Jas. H. Boyd" and "Aole oia i halawai me Puuku Wright." At the bottom right, there is a small advertisement for "Loa'akua na lako pono puih rama" and "Hanaia keia hana mahope o ka hale pupule."

[The hopes of your lāhui are placed upon you, Ali‘i Delegate of the people. . . . It is as a true Hawaiian the new Delegate has emerged. . . . We are proudly happy to see this young ali‘i who has moved up and is at the summit of honor. . . . *Ke Aloha Aina* prays, Long live the Delegate of the lāhui, and long live the lāhui through him.]

#### NOTES

1. Kanaka Maoli is one way of saying “Native Hawaiian” in Hawaiian; Kanaka is another. I use them interchangeably.
2. Kūhiō said this in English, which was translated into Hawaiian for *Kuokoa*, from which I have translated it back into English.
3. “Lāhui Hawai‘i” can mean the “Hawaiian People” or the “Hawaiian Nation,” so I have left it untranslated.
4. The Queen’s support was not very enthusiastic; she is quoted thus: “Ina ua ike oe oia ke alahele e loa mai ai o ka pono ia kakou, hana aku oe” [If you have seen/know that he is the way by which we will benefit, then do it].

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*Biography Hawai‘i: Five Lives* gratefully acknowledges the Hawai‘i State Archives as the source of the photos of Prince Kūhiō appearing in this guide.

# Biography Hawai'i: Documentary Lives & Public Events

*Biography Hawai'i* is a television documentary series that focuses on residents whose lives have had a lasting impact on these islands. Featuring people from different ethnic groups and walks of life, but with an emphasis on Hawaiian subjects, *Biography Hawai'i* will appeal to a statewide and national audience through the informative and engaging format of visual biography.

The primary sponsoring organizations are Hawai'i Public Television and the Center for Biographical Research of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. For more than a quarter of a century, Hawai'i Public Television has produced and provided programs that enlighten, enrich, and entertain the island community. The Center for Biographical Research is dedicated to the interdisciplinary and multicultural study of life writing through teaching, publication, and outreach activities.

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*Biography Hawai'i: Five Lives* is a series of life history presentations cosponsored by the Center for Biographical Research and the King Kamehameha V Judiciary History Center. These events commemorate people from diverse backgrounds, time periods, and cultural positions who have had lasting impacts on Hawai'i's history, culture, and society. The subjects for these biographical explorations are Harriet Bouslog, Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana'ole, Princess Ruth Ke'elikōlani, Sanford Dole, and Margaret Maiki Aiu Lake. The public events will feature discussions and commentary enhanced by readings, performance, and audiovisual material. Pre-performance displays and informational guides will complement the public events, which will encourage a look at Hawai'i's history, culture, and society through the lens of biography.

For more information about either program, contact the Center for Biographical Research, 1800 East-West Road, Henke Hall 325, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96822; telephone/fax: 808 956-3774; [biograph@hawaii.edu](mailto:biograph@hawaii.edu).

*Biography Hawai'i: Five Lives* is brought to you with funding from the

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