

## GOVERNMENT CEMETERIES, 1893-1967

Official concern for cemeteries began as part of the government's efforts to establish a Board of Health. Faced with a cholera epidemic, King Kamehameha III and the Privy Council passed two ordinances on December 16, 1850, one creating a Board of Health, and the other establishing health regulations which the Board was to administer. In recognition of the possible health hazard caused by indiscriminate burials within city limits, one regulation, Article 16, attempted to restrict this practice. It provided that burials be made instead "in places selected for that purpose by the Board of Health with the approval of the government." The law was not to apply, however, until such sites were selected. These ordinances were later confirmed by the legislature in May of 1851.

In accordance with Board of Health requests, the Privy Council passed a resolution on February 7, 1851, appointing John Ii as a committee of one to seek suitable cemetery sites in Honolulu. No definitive action was taken by this committee, and for the next few years nothing of significance was done to fulfill the Board's intended objectives in this matter.

To encourage the creation of government-regulated burial sites, the Legislature of 1859 authorized the Minister of the Interior to grant charters of incorporation to interested cemetery associations (S.L.H. 1859). The Act, in effect, allowed private associations to independently establish and maintain cemeteries for public use as long as they observed applicable government and health regulations.

In 1869, the Board of Health was given the additional responsibility of establishing any regulations it deemed necessary for the interment of the dead, in addition to matters respecting cemeteries and burying grounds (P.C. 1869, R.L.H. 1905).

In its Biennial Report of 1888, the Board of Health voiced its concern over the crowded conditions at the long-established Catholic (King Street) and Kawaiahao cemeteries. The need for new cemetery sites was reiterated in the 1895 Special Board of Health Report which expressed the undesirability of interring epidemic dead in overcrowded cemeteries located within the city limits. By 1899, Makiki and Nuuanu cemeteries were also reported to be filled to capacity. Since no new government-approved cemetery sites had yet been selected, however, Article 16 of the health regulations could not halt the continuous interment of dead in the already overcrowded existing cemeteries. Similar appeals for new and larger cemetery accommodations were expressed throughout Board of Health reports from 1875 through 1905.

In the Board of Health Memos of 1901-1903 to Governor Dole, it was recommended that the pressing cemetery question be placed in the hands of a committee consisting of Dr. W. H. Mays, M. P. Robinson, and Attorney General Andrews. It was also decided that an amendment to a former resolution be made withholding all permit requests for interment within city limits, except to those already possessing them.

Despite these moves, in a 1905 Report of the President of the Board of Health, it was noted that there were nineteen cemeteries open for burials within the city limits of Honolulu. These were small sites accommodating specific ethnic and religious groups and were scattered well within the city limits.

In an "Act Relating to Public Cemeteries" passed June 23, 1898, powers of acquisition were delegated to the Minister of the Interior. Subject to the approval of the Executive Council, the Minister was given the authority to: (1) establish public cemeteries as he deemed necessary, even setting aside public lands, or purchasing private lands for that purpose (2) transfer and convey to any cemetery association or organization the property set apart for that purpose under such terms and conditions that he determined.

Section 3 of that particular Act emphasized that the provisions of the Act were not to be construed as conflicting with the authority of the Board of Health whose jurisdiction it still was to make regulations respecting cemeteries and for the interment of the dead, and to protect the public health.

Although there were no major changes in the responsibilities of agencies involved, annexation brought about basic changes in administrative structures. Under the Organic Act, a "Superintendent of Public Works" assumed the duties and powers of the Minister of the Interior when that department was changed to Public Works (sec. 75), and the Governor took over the duties of the "Executive Council" (sec. 68). Section 55 designated the Legislature as the body authorized to grant charters of incorporation for cemetery associations in place of the obsolete Minister of the Interior.

With Act 97 of the 1913 Revised Laws of Hawaii, the counties assumed part of the responsibilities of the Superintendent of Public Works. Given the right of eminent domain, the counties were authorized to acquire land for the purpose of establishing cemeteries. In 1935, the powers and duties of the Board of Supervisors of each county were likewise broadened. Under chapter 86, section 2833 of the Revised Laws, they were given the authority to make and enforce within the limits of their county all ordinances covering cemeteries and burying grounds, overlapping a function previously left solely under the jurisdiction of the Board of Health.

As the duties and powers for the establishment of cemeteries were distributed among other agencies, the Department of Health became primarily responsible only for those regulations necessary to maintain the public health and safety (R.L.H. 1945). Maintenance and general interment records of government-owned burial areas remained under the control of Public Works, with the counties assuming most of the land acquisition rights. In addition, with the reorganization brought about by Statehood in 1959, the Department of Public Works became a part of the Department of Accounting and General Services.

#### Makiki Cemetery

Makiki Cemetery, at the corner of Pensacola and Wilder, was probably the first government cemetery in Honolulu. Little is known of its origins, but as early as 1878, allusions were made to it in the Biennial Report of the Board of Health to the Legislature as a cemetery for Hawaiians "located on the eastern slope of Punchbowl and neatly fenced in." It was committed to the care of Captain John H. Brown who noted that "In the new cemetery opened on Punchbowl in June last there have been up to date eighty-one burials."

The cemetery is approximately 311,671 sq. feet, 197,018 sq. feet of which is used by the State and Oahu prison. The remaining area contains ethnic societies

and private plots. Under Executive Order No. 590 signed on June 21, 1933 and No. 1164, signed June 25, 1946, Makiki was put under the control and management of the Superintendent of Public Works as provided by section 73 of the Organic Act.

Puukamalii Cemetery

Executive Order No. 493 signed July 20, 1931 put Puukamalii Cemetery, also known as Kalaepohaku, under the jurisdiction of the Public Works department. Located at the corner of Makamani and Lolena Streets, it consists of approximately 130,810 sq. ft., 20,000 of which are privately-owned plots.

Aiea Government Cemetery

Aiea Government Cemetery, on the mauka side of Kam Highway and 300 feet from the Aiea Depot road, was put under the jurisdiction of the Public Works department by Executive order No. 1003, signed on February 26, 1943. Its total area is 69,870 sq. feet with approximately 20,000 sq. feet being private plots.

Puea Cemetery

Puea was perhaps the most controversial of the cemeteries. Also known as the Kapalama cemetery, located on School Street near Houghtailing, there was some confusion as to who was responsible for its maintenance and ownership. Land Department files showed that the original land for the cemetery was obtained by the Government from the Bishop Estate in 1890. In 1910 Governor Frear set it aside as a burial place for hawaiians. Then the Puea Cemetery Association incorporated to handle the cemetery business of Puea on October 19, 1910. Although the corporation was dissolved in 1966, the State, up to 1967, still understood the cemetery to be managed by the Association, and consequently did not make appropriations to maintain the area. 1910 Land records showed no conveyance of title to the Association, and its tax maps have shown, instead, that it was jointly owned by the State, City and County, and the Kaahumanu Society.

Royal Mausoleum

Executive order No. 998 signed on February 22, 1943 put the Royal Mausoleum officially under the control and management of the Superintendent of Public Works.

The records of Government Cemeteries consist of miscellaneous correspondence, minutes, interment permits, maps, reports and executive orders. (2 5-inch boxes)

- Government Cemeteries - miscellaneous correspondence and records (1893-1971)
- Aiea Cemetery - records
- Makiki Cemetery - records
  - interment permits - (Sept. 1916, July 1920, Jan. 1921, 1922, 1923, 1928-1951, March 1954)
  - disinterment permits
  - record books of interment - (1896-1899, 1900-1901, 1901-1908, 1903-1909, 1947-1949)
  - construction records
- Puea Cemetery - records
- Puukamalii Cemetery - records
- Royal Mausoleum - records

Government Cemeteries - 4

See also:

Executive Files: Board of Health  
Government Publications: Board of Health Annual Reports  
Subject Files: under Aiea, Makiki, Puea, Puukamalii cemeteries  
Genealogy Binder Vol. 1 (Ref 929.1072 H3 v.1)

Related Records:

Interior Department Files  
Board of Health Files  
Public Works Files  
Public Land Files  
Executive Orders  
Privy Council Records

RECORDS OF MAKIKI CEMETERY, 1896-1954.

Series 100  
DAGS 4-box 2

**INTERMENT PERMITS. 1921-1954. 3.0 lin. inches.**

Arranged numerically.

Includes interment permits and burial-transit or removal permits.

Interment permits issued by Superintendent of Makiki Cemetery to Agent of Board of Health certifying that deceased has burial plot up to 1947 and issued by Department of Public Works from June, 1947 to 1954. Contains name of deceased, date and plot number.

Burial-transit or removal permits (1947-1954) issued by the Registrar, Board of Health, to accompany the remains to the place of burial. When remains are moved to another district, the removal permit is delivered to the registrar of that district and a burial permit obtained. Contains name of deceased, date of permit, date of death, manner of disposition and place of burial or cremation.

Indexed by personal name under Makiki Cemetery.

**RECORDS OF DISINTERMENT. 1903-1922; 1948; 1951. .5 lin. inch.**

Arranged chronologically.

Includes disinterment permits and disinterment record book.

Disinterment permits issued by the Registrar General of the Department of Health, grant permission to disinter remains and designate where remains are to be reinterred. Contains name of deceased, age, sex, race, date of death, cause of death and where remains are to be sent.

Disinterment record book, 1 vol. (1903-1922), of William J. Karatti, Superintendent of Makiki Cemetery, contains name of deceased, age, sex, nationality, date of disinterment, date of death, lot number, years of interment and condition of remains at disinterment.

Indexed by personal name under Makiki Cemetery.

**RECORD BOOKS OF INTERMENT. 1896-1949. 4 vols. 1.0 lin. inch.**

Arranged chronologically.

Record books of Helemauna and William J. Karatti, superintendents of Makiki Cemetery; Book 3 (1896-1899), Book 3A (1900-1901) and Book 5 (1901-1909). Contains name of deceased, date of burial, sex and lot number. Book 15 (1947-1949) contains name of deceased, date of death and date of burial.

Indexed by personal name under Makiki Cemetery.

RECORDS OF LOCH VIEW CEMETERY, 1901-1937.

**BURIAL PERMITS. 1901-1930. 20 lin. inches.**

Arranged numerically.

Includes burial permits and removal permits.

Burial permits issued by the Board of Health, give permission for interment or cremation of the body. Contains name of deceased, date of burial, place of burial and plot number.

Removal permits (1901-1918) contain name of deceased, sex, nationality, age, place of birth, date of death, place of death, cause of death, place of burial and name of physician.

Indexed by personal name under Loch View Cemetery.

**DISINTERMENT PERMITS. 1901-1937, .05 lin. inch.**

Arranged alphabetically by name.

Issued by the Executive Officer, Territorial Board of Health, to the Superintendent of the Loch View Cemetery, giving permission for the disinterment of remains. Contains name of deceased, date of disinterment, age, sex, race, date of death, cause of death and fee paid to the Board of Health.

Indexed by personal name under Loch View Cemetery.

*See M-482  
Loch View Cemetery*

GOVERNMENT CEMETERIES COLLECTION

CONTAINER LIST

Series  
DAGS 4

TITLE  
GOVERNMENT CEMETERIES

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>
1	1	Records 1893-1959
	2	Records 1960-1971
	3	Aiea Cemetery
	4	Makiki Cemetery
	5	Makiki Cemetery – construction records
	6	Puea Cemetery
	7	Puukamalii Cemetery
	8	Royal Mausoleum
2		Makiki Cemetery Records
	1	Record Book of Interment Book 3, 1896-1899
	2	Record Book of Interment Book 3A, 1900-1901
	3	Record Book of Interment Book 5, 1901-1909
	4	Record Book of Interment Book 15, 1947-1949
	5	Record Book of Disinterment Book 1, 1903-1922
	6	Disinterment Permits 1948-1951 Nos. 143, 179, 542 and 584
	7	Cemetery Permits Sept. 1916 – Jan. 1928 Env. #1, pages 1-49
	8	Cemetery Permits 1929 – 1930 Env. #2, pages 50-111
	9	Cemetery Permits 1929 – 1930 Env. #3, pages 112-215
	10	Cemetery Permits 1929 – 1930 Env. #4, pages 216-295
	11	Cemetery Permits 1929 – 1930 Env. #5, pages 296-346
	12	Cemetery Permits 1929 – 1930 Env. #6, pages 347-393
	13	Burial or Removal Permits 1948 Env. #7, pages 394-440
	14	Burial or Removal Permits 1949 Env. #8, pages 441-477
15	Burial or Removal, Burial-Transit Permits 1950 – Mar. 1954 Env. #9, pages 478-508	