

Inventory of Records
of the
Historical Commission

May, 1999

**Hawaii State Archives
Department of Accounting and General Services
Iolani Palace Grounds
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813**

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The Historical Commission

Introduction

The records of the Historical Commission consist of 2.5 cubic feet. They span the period 1922-1934. They were accessioned from the Commission according to Act 120 of 1921, which stipulated that all Commission records should be preserved in the Territorial Archives. There are no restrictions on access.

Administrative History

Established: The Historical Commission was established by Act 120 of 1921, as amended by Act 139 of 1923, and abolished in 1932 and its functions transferred to the Regents of the University of Hawaii (Act 9, Second Special Session, 1932).

Functions: The function of the Commission was to accomplish four tasks: to write a comprehensive general history of Hawaii, to revise an apparently existing elementary history of Hawaii for use in the public schools, to compile a history of Hawaii's role in World War I, and to report to the legislature on places of historical importance for the purpose of marking them.

The law provided for a three-member commission and the employment of "such competent persons as are necessary for the compilation of the said history." The Commission wanted a trained historian to fill this job, involving as it did, the planning and writing of so much history, and in April, 1922, offered the position of executive secretary to Ralph S. Kuykendall. Kuykendall accepted and began work in September, 1922. The office of the Commission was located at the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

The Commission began first the writing of the elementary textbook. When that had been well started, they began the longer-term work of writing the comprehensive history. This project eventuated in Kuykendall's three volume History of the Hawaiian Kingdom, 1778-1893. In response to Kuykendall's idea that the history should place Hawaii in a world context, rather than concentrate purely on island affairs, the Commission first surveyed what records existed in Hawaii for the purpose, and then began concerted searches elsewhere. Kuykendall personally examined libraries in the United States and Canada with major holdings relating to Hawaii, especially the Bancroft Library at the University of California at Berkeley, the provincial library of British Columbia, the Oregon Historical Society library, Harvard College Library, and the U.S. State Department archives.

The Commission also contracted for copy work in the British and French government archives, again, for diplomatic

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correspondence relating to Hawaii. In addition, the Commission secured copies of documents relating to Hawaii from the Mexican government archives, and copies of the correspondence of David S. Gregg, Peter A. Brinsmade, Robert G. Davis, William L. Lee, and Sanford B. Dole. The law provided that it was to deposit all the documents it collected in the Territorial Archives.

Disestablished: The Commission was abolished in 1932 and its functions transferred to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii.

Subject access terms:

- Historic sites--Hawaii
- Hawaii--History--To 1893
- Hawaii--History--1900-1959
- Hawaii--Politics and government--To 1893
- Textbooks--Hawaii

Reference:

Historical Commission, Annual Reports, 1923-1932

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Series Descriptions

Series No. 366 Series Title: Correspondence

Date Range: 1922-1943

Quantity: 3 linear inches in 1 3" box

Creator: Ralph S. Kuykendall, executive secretary of the
Historical Commission

Physical characteristics/condition: Paper material in fair to good condition. The correspondence contains a small amount of acidification due to the inclusion of newspaper clippings in the folders, and a small amount of tearing of newsletter material that extended above the folder edges. No insect or water damage.

Content description: Contains correspondence relating to two projects of the Commission: the writing of a history of Hawaii's role in World War I, and the marking of historical sites in Hawaii. The World War I correspondence relates to the compilation of an Honor Roll of Hawaii's war dead in World War I. The historical sites correspondence contains mailed survey sheets relating to public nominations of historical sites on each island, and correspondence relating to the design of a standard plaque to mark sites, to the attempt to acquire the site of the Russian Fort at Waimea, Kauai, for a park, and to an attempt to acquire a model of Cook's ship Resolution from England for display in Hawaii.

Arrangement: Alphabetical.

Note: The Commission apparently did not preserve the minutes of its meetings.

Subjects: Hawaii--Historic sites
 Hawaii--History--To 1893
 Hawaii--History--1900-1959

For additional information, see:

Historical Commission, Annual Reports.

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Series No. 373 Series Title: Textbook History of Hawaii

Date Range: 1925

Quantity: 1.25 linear inch in 1 volume in 1 3" box

Creator: Ralph S. Kuykendall, executive secretary of the Historical Commission, with the assistance of Dr. Herbert E. Gregory, then Director of the Bishop Museum.

Physical Characteristics/Condition: Bound typescript material in paper cover in good condition; the copy is clean and contains no annotations.

Content Description: Contains a typescript copy of A School Textbook of Hawaiian History, dated April, 1925, labeled "Copy 1," written by Ralph S. Kuykendall and Dr. Gregory. The copy says it was prepared for the approval of the legislature, in accordance with the requirement of Act 120 SL 1921. Contains 347 pages.

Subjects: Hawaii--History--to 1893
 Hawaii--History--1894-1900
 Hawaii--History--1900-1959

For additional information, see:

Historical Commission, Annual Reports

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Series No. 374 Series Title: Copies of Material Relating to
Hawaii's Role in World War I

Date Range: 1914-1919

Quantity: 5.0 linear inches

Creator: Ralph Kuykendall, executive secretary of the Historical
Commission, and an unknown copyist.

Physical Characteristics/Condition: Paper material in good
condition.

Content description: Contains typescript copies of the material
copied by the Commission for the history of Hawaii's role in the
war, in the Archives: governor's correspondence relating to the
National Guard and the Food Commission, newspaper copies of the
Star-Bulletin and Advertiser relating to enlistments and first-
hand accounts of war experience; and a typescript memoir by a
Mrs. Gill relating to the Hawaii War Relief Committee.

Arrangement: Alphabetical.

Subjects:

Hawaii--History--1900-1959
Hawaii--Politics and government--1900-1959
World War, 1914-1918--Hawaii
World War, 1914-1918--War work--Hawaii

For additional information, see:

Historical Commission, Annual Reports

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Container List

Series 366: Correspondence

<u>Box</u>	<u>Description</u>
366-1	Cook's Ship <u>Resolution</u> , 1926 Hawaii's Honor Roll, 1922-1928 Historic Sites, Hawaii, 1923-1928 Historic Sites, Kauai, 1923-1929 Historic Sites, Kauai, 1926 Historic Sites, Maui, n.d., 1923 Historic Sites, Oahu, 1924-1943 Historic Sites, Oahu, King's Hwy., 1930-1931 Historic Landmarks, 1922-1931 Historic Landmarks, 1926-1929

Series 373: Textbook History of Hawaii

373-1	<u>A School Textbook of Hawaiian History</u>
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Series 374: Copies of Material Relating to Hawaii's Role in World War I

374-1	Civilian Assistance, 1917-1919 Enlistments, 1917-1918 Fish supplies, 1917-1918 Food Commission, 1917-1918 Food Commission, 1917-1918 Letters to the editor, 1916-1919 National Guard, 1914-1918 War Relief Committee, 1914-1919
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Series 375: Copies of Documents Relating to British Policy
toward Hawaii, 1824-1894

<u>Box</u>	<u>Description</u>
	BRITISH FOREIGN OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO HAWAII
375 vol 1, box 1	First Series: FO--Charlton, Crampton, Miller, 1824-1843, 1851-1854
375 vol 2, box 1	Second Series: Reports of Byron, Paulet, Thomas, 1824, 1843
375 vol 3, box 1	Third Series: FO--Miller, 1855-1857
375 vol 4, box 1	Third Series: FO--Miller, 1858-1862
375 vol 5, box 1	Third Series: FO--Synge, 1863-1865
375 vol 6, box 1	Third Series: FO--Miller, 1850-1852, 1854
375 vol 7, box 1	Fourth Series: FO--Charlton, 1825-1843
375 vol 8, box 1	Fifth Series: FO--Miller, 1844-1845
375 vol 9, box 1	Sixth Series: FO--Miller, 1846-1847
375 vol 10, box 1	FO--Miller, 1848-1849
375 vol 11, box 1	FO--Wodehouse, 1866-1869
375 vol 12, box 1	FO--Wodehouse, 1867-1871
375 vol 13, box 2	FO--Wodehouse, 1872-1873
375 vol 14, box 2	FO--Wodehouse, 1874
375 vol 15, box 2	FO--Wodehouse, 1873-1874-(1875)
375 vol 16, box 2	France, 1844-1852
375 vol 17, box 2	Untitled, 1843-1849
375 vol 18, box 2	Domestic Correspondence, 1850-1861
	BRITISH CONSUL, OUTGOING LETTERS, 1825-1894
375-2	1825-1848
375-3	1849-1873
375-4	1874-1894
	BRITISH CONSUL, INCOMING LETTERS, 1824-1887
375-4	No date, 1824-1887

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Series No. 375 **Series Title:** Copies of Documents Relating
to British Policy in Hawaii, 1824-1894

Date Range: 1922-1934

Quantity: 2.0 linear feet

Creator: Ruth Anna Fisher and an unnamed person, employees of
the Historical Commission

Physical characteristics/condition: Handwritten material in
bound volumes and loose typescript material. All in good
condition.

Content description: Contains copies of documents from the
British Public Record Office, London, relating to the formation
of British policy toward Hawaii from 1824 to 1894, copied by Ruth
Anna Fisher. Includes the British Foreign Office letterbook
series no. 58 relating to the Pacific Islands, and another
relating to France. Series 58 contains outgoing letters to the
British Consuls in Hawaii. The subseries relating to the British
Consul-General in Honolulu contains outgoing letters sent home to
the British Foreign Office, as well as to the Hawaiian Secretary
of State for Foreign Affairs.

Arrangement: In two subseries: Foreign Office material followed
by Consul-General material. The Consul-General subseries is
arranged chronologically.

Notes:

1. The Historical Commission made copies of the outgoing and
incoming letters to the British Foreign Office from the
British consuls in Hawaii. The names of the British consuls
in Hawaii appear in the Container List opposite the relevant
date span of the copybook letters (e.g., Charlton, Synge,
Miller, etc.).
2. The Historical Commission used a numbering system for its
copybooks that began with "First Series" and ended with
"Sixth Series," but continued to copy material after the
sixth series. This newer material carries no series
numbers.
3. The Commission did not copy the British Foreign Office
letterbooks exactly in chronological order, so that some of
the copied material is out of sequence. Nevertheless, there
appear to be no gaps in the coverage, although as noted
above, the copyist was selective in what letters she copied

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from any one letterbook.

Subjects: Hawaii--History--To-1893

For additional information, see:

Historical Commission, Annual Reports