

## Victor S.K. Houston Collection

### Introduction

The Victor S.K. Houston collection spans the years 1874-1955, and totals 20.6 linear feet. The majority of the collection documents Houston's career as Delegate to Congress from 1927-1932. Other papers relate to his naval career and personal life, including his interest in Hawaiian history, and his service as Chairman of the National Recovery Administration Consumer Advisory Board in Hawaii (1934-1935). The collection originated in loans and subsequent gifts by Houston himself in 1936-1937, and was added to by gifts from members of the community in 1962-1963, after his death. There are no restrictions on access.

### Biographical Sketch

Born, July 22, 1876, San Francisco, California, to Edwin Samuel Houston and Caroline Poor Kahikiola Brickwood Houston. Mother the daughter of A.P. and Louisa (Louika Pelekuke) Brickwood. Father at that time a lieutenant in U.S. Navy. Died July 31, 1959, Honolulu.

1877--Came to Hawaii briefly when 6 mo. old, but spent majority of youth on U.S. mainland and in Europe

ca. 1883-1893--Attended schools in Dresden, Lausanne and Washington, D.C

1897--Graduated from U.S. Naval Academy; started career as commissioned officer; served on U.S.S. Iowa during Spanish-American War; in China; and commanded U.S.S. St. Louis during World War I; see chronology of his career in series #2: naval correspondence

1909-1910--Transferred to Hawaii as inspector of lighthouses for Hawaiian district.

1909--Married Pinao G. Brickwood in Honolulu, July 19

1926--Retired from U.S. Navy, July 17, as Commander

1927-1932--Served as Hawaii's elected Delegate to U.S. Congress (70th to 72nd Congresses). Houston, a Republican, served on House Committees on Territories, Agriculture, Military Affairs, Naval Affairs, Public Lands, and Post Offices  
 1927-1931--Member, Capt. James Cook Sesquicentennial Commission  
 1933--Campaigned for fourth term to Congress; lost to Lincoln L. McCandless  
 1934--Chairman, Consumer Advisory Board of National Recovery Administration in Hawaii  
 1935-1941--Hawaii Equal Rights Commission  
 1941-1945--Recalled to active duty, U.S. Navy  
 1945-1951--Hawaiian Homes Commission  
 1947--travel to Washington, D.C. to testify for statehood  
 1953--Territorial Loyalty Board  
 1959--died in Honolulu, July 31.

### Scope and Content

The Houston Collection spans the years 1874-1955, but the bulk of the papers span the years 1897-1935, and document the period of his naval and political careers. There is no material documenting his professional or personal life after 1935 in the collection. After this date there are only a few items that reflect his Hawaiian history interests.

The collection is arranged into two subgroups: Personal and Delegate to Congress. The Personal subgroup spans nearly the whole of his life, 1874-1955, and includes family correspondence, namely letters from his father to his mother when Houston was 2-3 years old; Houston's naval correspondence, spanning 1895-1917; a reference file he kept as chairman of a board of the National Recovery Administration in Hawaii; research notes on Hawaiian history, ca. 1925-1955; a draft of a statement, presumably for a Congressional hearing, on the Rankin Bill; and various invitations and memorabilia.

The Delegate to Congress subgroup contains the correspondence files of his three terms in office, 1927-1932, and a Congressional bill file. This subgroup reflects Houston's special interests in Territorial military and naval stations and bases, veterans' affairs, roads in Hawaii, agriculture, and air transportation to and between the islands, and Philippine immigration.

The collection also documents Houston's response to Congressional actions regarding the Massie case. Congress made several efforts to control law enforcement and the courts in Hawaii, a momentum that culminated in the Britten (1932) and

Rankin (1933) bills, which would have eliminated residency requirements for the Territorial governor appointee. See Statehood files in series #12 and #13, and manuscript on Rankin bill in series #4.

Houston's personal correspondence for these years is filed in series no. 11, Correspondence Filed by Name, under "Houston."

The Houston Collection was brought together from numerous gifts from both Houston and from other members of the community, after his death. In addition, the Delegate papers, which were maintained as a separate collection, were merged with his personal papers. The personal subgroup was rearranged into its present order, but the Delegate subgroup was left in its original order. Folder numbers 395 and 415-419 of series 12, Miscellaneous--Subject Correspondence of the Delegate subgroup, relating to appointments to military academies were deaccessioned in accordance with instructions from the branch chief on February 15, 1994.

Houston also donated a collection of approximately one hundred Hawaiian prints to the Archives known as the Pinao Brickwood Memorial Collection in 1938.

#### Sources:

Honolulu Advertiser, August 1, 1959, p. 1.  
Men of Hawaii, 1930  
Men And Women of Hawaii, 1954  
Pan-Pacific Who's Who, 1940-1941  
 Name index, Hawaii State Archives  
 References throughout Houston Collection

### Series Descriptions

#### A. PERSONAL PAPERS

Contains seven series as follows: letters of Edwin S. Houston to Carrie Houston; naval correspondence; research material on Hawaiian history; papers relating to the Rankin Bill of 1933; working files of Chairman, Consumer Advisory Board of N.R.A. in Hawaii; speeches; and invitations and memorabilia.

1. Letters of Edwin S. Houston to Carrie Houston. Jan. 24, 1874; Sept., 1877-Dec., 1879. 0.36 lin. inch.

Arranged chronologically.

Documents naval tradition of Houston's family and something of Houston's background. Contains handwritten letters of Lt.

E.S. Houston on board U.S.S. Ticonderoga and U.S.S. Hartford in Atlantic waters to wife in Los Angeles and Connecticut. Contain some comments about son Victor, then 2-4 years old.

**2. Naval Correspondence. February, 1895-March, 1917. 1.75 lin. inch.**

Arranged chronologically.

Documents course of Houston's naval career from last year at Naval Academy to middle of World War I, including service on Pacific and Atlantic coasts; recruiting duty in Cincinnati, Ohio; duty as lighthouse inspector in Hawaii (1909-1910); service on the Asiatic Station; and duty as Commanding Officer of U.S.S. St. Louis. Includes correspondence, orders, promotions, and award letters.

**3. Research Material on Hawaiian History. n.d., 1940-1955. 1.5 lin. inch.**

Arranged by topic of research and manuscript drafts arranged sequentially.

Documents Houston's research interests in Hawaiian history, particularly on the Hawaiian flag and coat of arms. Contains research notes and manuscript drafts of an article on the Hawaiian flag, and notes on the Hawaiian coat of arms; loose pictures and drawings and newspaper clippings. See also Hawaiian history research subjects in series 12, "Miscellaneous--Subject," and pamphlet entitled "The Hawaiian Flag" by Victor S.K. Houston, Bishop Museum Press, n.d.

**4. Papers Relating to Rankin Bill. ca. 1933. 3 lin. inches.**

Arranged in approximate chronological order.

Documents Houston's research into the reasons Hawaii should remain self-governing in preparation for either publication or as testimony before Congress in hearings on the Rankin bill of May, 1933. Contains three to four undated manuscript drafts and a possible final draft of approximately 150 pages, 2 linear inches. No published version included.

**5. Working Files of Chairman, Consumer Advisory Board of National Recovery Administration in Hawaii. Jan., 1934-May, 1935. 9 lin. inches.**

Arranged alphabetically by industry.

Documents Houston's role on N.R.A. advisory committee in Hawaii. Contains correspondence, memoranda, and annotated mimeographed drafts of industry codes for the purpose of regulating industry in Hawaii. First folder contains correspondence and speech on his role. Files on codes for each industry also contain memoranda reports from Houston to Allen Gullion, Deputy Administrator of the N.R.A. in Hawaii, 1934-1935. See also U.S. National Recovery Administration, Hearings on Codes of Fair Competition for Hawaii, 1934-1935 in Archives; Lincoln L. McCandless, Delegate to Congress papers--"Agricultural Adjustment Act" and "N.R.A. and P.R.A. File--communications" files under Subject files, Hawaii State Archives; and Samuel Wilder King Collection, M-472, Delegate to Congress subgroup, "National Recovery Administration, 1935" under U.S. Departments, Hawaii State Archives.

6. Speeches. n.d., 1935-1940. 0.25 lin. inch.

Arranged chronologically.

Documents Houston's civic interests. Contains manuscript copies of speeches and notes, including texts of two speeches in support of Samuel Wilder King for Delegate to Congress, ca. 1934; a speech in reference to the Cook Sesquicentennial on the introduction of venereal diseases to Hawaii, ca. 1936; and notes for a speech on the sales tax of the Territory.

7. Invitations and Memorabilia. n.d., 1910, 1930-1933. 0.5 lin. inch.

Arranged chronologically.

Documents Houston's social life and circle of contacts as a naval officer in Hawaii, and as Delegate to Congress in Washington, D.C. and in Honolulu. Contains invitations, entertainment programs, commemorative announcements, brochures, personal thank you notes and newspaper articles.

**B. DELEGATE TO CONGRESS**

Contains nine series documenting Houston's three terms in Congress, 1927-1932, as follows: Correspondence with City and County of Honolulu; Correspondence with U.S. Departments; Correspondence with Territorial Departments; Correspondence Filed by Name; Miscellaneous--Subject Correspondence; Congressional Bill File; Newspaper Clippings; Correspondence Received after 1932; and Correspondence Log.

Note that Houston organized his correspondence series according to either originator or subject (alphabetically), and for the Congressional Bill file, by numerical sequence.

8. Correspondence with City and County of Honolulu. 1929-1930. 0.12 lin. inch.

Arranged chronologically.

Contains correspondence, memoranda, and telegrams on issues of importance to Honolulu, particularly a petition to the U.S. Congress from the Board of Supervisors for a separate grant of powers.

9. Correspondence with U.S. Departments. 1927-1932. 9.5 lin. inches.

Arranged alphabetically by name of department or agency.

Documents Houston's contacts with federal agencies concerning the regulations, practices or procedures of Federal departments where they concerned Hawaii. Contains correspondence, Congressional bills, committee reports and committee hearings transcripts. Most cases deal with Houston's concern with equal appropriations or equal treatment under laws or departmental rules and regulations for Hawaii. Subjects include export rates of the ICC on interstate commerce; appointments of a U.S. Marshal in Hawaii; a U.S. Attorney at Pearl Harbor; and an F.B.I. agent in Hawaii; Chinese immigration; and judicial recommendations for Hawaii courts.

**10. Correspondence with Territorial Departments. 1927-1932.  
3.75 lin. inches.**

Arranged alphabetically by name of territorial officer, department, board or agency.

Documents Houston's contacts with Territorial officials, including the governor, and federal departments over federal appropriations or regulations. Contains correspondence, telegrams, bills, and committee reports. Subjects include federal aid for education, health and roads. Correspondence often initiated by Houston, but filed under appropriate Territorial office.

**11. Correspondence Filed by Name. 1927-1932. 2.5 linear feet.**

Arranged alphabetically by name of correspondent.

Documents Houston's correspondence with constituents over matters of personal concern, originated by the constituent. Contains correspondence as well as supporting documents, such as parts of military service records and personal correspondence. Subjects include: widow's pension claim from the U.S. Army, the salary level of the Chief Deputy U.S. Marshal in Hawaii, promoting a Hawaii boxing bill in Congress, and promotion for a disabled Naval officer, etc. Also contains Houston's personal correspondence filed alphabetically under "Houston."

**12. Miscellaneous--Subject Correspondence. 1927-1932. 10.3 lin. feet.**

Arranged alphabetically by subject or by name of corresponding organization or company.

Documents Houston's correspondence with constituents, both organizations and individuals, on matters of concern to Hawaii generally. Subjects or originators of importance include air transportation; airports and air mail service in Hawaii; the Chambers of Commerce of the various islands; Hawaiian history material; island fisheries; Philippine immigration; Hansen's disease and Kalaupapa; Pearl Harbor naval base; judicial and post office appointments; pension requests; roads in Hawaii and sugar tariffs. Includes eight linear inches on the Massie Case ("Ala Moana Case") that contain Honolulu Police Department transcripts of witness statements, Congressional hearings transcripts, Congressional bills, Navy press releases, and correspondence and telegrams relating to the Richardson Report to the U.S. Attorney-General.

**13. Congressional Bills. 1927-1932. 4.7 lin. feet.**

Arranged by the number of the Congress (i.e., 70th, 71st, etc.), by chamber of origination, and then numerically.

Documents Houston's legislative activity on behalf of Hawaii, and contains correspondence, calendars, bill copies, committee reports, hearings transcripts, copies of acts, and newspaper clippings. Also contains files on legislation of special interest to Houston, such as veterans affairs, the U.S. Navy, immigration and appropriations. Other subjects include amending the Organic Act to permit women on juries; protecting the citizenship of American-born women who married aliens; federal funding for Hansen's disease; keeping Philippine immigration open; roads in Hawaii; the military base facilities in Hawaii; and boxing in Hawaii, which was prohibited in the Territories by the U.S. Penal Code.

**14. Newspaper Clippings. 1927-1932. 8.5 lin. inches.**

Arranged in chronological order and by title of newspaper.

Contains clippings of the Honolulu Star-Bulletin and Honolulu Advertiser, translations of the Japanese language press, including the Hawaii Hochi, Nippu Jiji and Yoyen Jiho (possibly sent to him by the Territorial Attorney General), and some mainland newspapers. Documents extensively the Massie Case ("Ala Moana Case").

**15. Correspondence Received after 1932. January-March, 1933. 0.5 lin. inch.**

Arranged chronologically.

Contains correspondence received from constituents after Houston left office in late 1932. Subjects include veterans disability pensions, the U.S. Press Wireless Company, and postmaster appointments in Hawaii.

16. Correspondence Log. November, 1930-March, 1933. 1 volume, 0.75 lin. inch.

Arranged chronologically.

Secretary's (David K. Bent) record of outgoing letters and file locations of retained copies. Includes date, addressee, subject of letter, and filing series name for carbon copy. Entries in Mr. Bent's handwriting.

### Container List

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#### PERSONAL PAPERS

##### Series No. 1, Letters of Edwin S. Houston to Carrie Houston

1 1874; 1877-1879

##### Series No. 2, Naval Correspondence

2 1895-1907

3 1908-1910

4 1911-1917

##### Series No. 3, Research Material on Hawaiian History

5 Correspondence re Hawaiian Flag, July, 1940-June, 1955

6 Notes and Draft of Article on Hawaiian Flag, n.d.

7 Final Draft of Article on Hawaiian flag, n.d.

8 Notes on Hawaiian coat of arms, n.d.

9 Notes on the Crown Lands Legal Opinion (ca. 1896?) of Edward Preston, n.d.

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- 19      Automobiles, January-April, 1934; April, 1935
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- 21      Banking, February-October, 1934
- 22      Barber Shops, Beauty Shops, March-June, 1934
- 23      Bottled Soft Drinks, Canning Industry, July-November,  
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- 24      Crushed Stone, Custom Needle Workers, March-November,  
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- 25      Fishing, Funeral Industry, April-June, 1934
- 26      General Contracting, February, 1934-February, 1935
- 27      Graphic Arts, May, 1934; 1935
- 28      Graphic Arts, June-October, 1934
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- 30      Laundry, Manufacturing, March-October, 1934; 1935
- 31      Motion Pictures, Radio Broadcasting, February-April,  
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- 32      Restaurants, March-November, 1934; April-May, 1935
- 33      Retail Trade, February, 1934-January, 1935; May, 1935
- 34      Savings and Building and Loan Companies, Transit  
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- 35      Trucking, February-October, 1934
- 36      Wholesale Trade, Wine Industry, February, 1934-January,  
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38 n.d., 1910, 1930-1933

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39 City and County

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41 U.S. Attorney General

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45 Collector of Customs

46 Comptroller General

47 U.S. District Attorney

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Washington, D.C.

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50 Employees' Compensation Commission

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Series no. 15, Correspondence Received after 1932

- 893 January-March, 1933

Series No. 16, Correspondence Log

- 894 November, 1930-March, 1933  
G. White 9/1992