

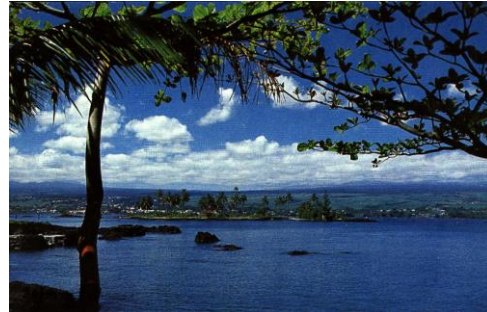
# Hawaii State Research Guide

## Family History Sources in the Aloha State



### Hawaii History

The Hawaiian Islands were originally settled by Polynesians a thousand years before any European contact. Captain James Cook visited the Hawaiian Islands in 1778. He named the islands the Sandwich Islands after the Earl of Sandwich, then the first Lord of the British Admiralty. The native Hawaiians identified Captain Cook with their god Lono. Although most of Captain Cook's encounter with the Hawaiians was positive and friendly, his return voyage in 1779 resulted in his death at Kealahou Bay at the hands of the natives. Cook's discovery awakened international interest in the islands.



Between 1790 and 1810, King Kamehameha I, the first Hawaiian monarch, united the islands and established political and social control. The Hawaiian monarchy ended when Queen Liliuokalanai was overthrown in 1893. During the first part of the monarchy, most of the Europeans and Americans who visited the islands were mainly crews of trading ships and whalers who stopped off for supplies on their voyages to the Orient. The primary sources of information during this time period come from the reports of the voyages. Outside the ruling class, or alii, very few Hawaiian names are mentioned.

Next came the Protestant missionaries who arrived from New England in 1820 and converted many native Hawaiians to Protestant Christianity. The missionaries developed a written Hawaiian language and used the printing press to create a fairly literate and educated society by the 1850s. King Kamehameha III agreed to a Western-style constitution in 1839. Roman Catholic missionaries arrived seven years later but were expelled from Hawaii by the Protestant leaders in 1831. Roman Catholics were allowed religious freedom in 1839 after a blockade of Honolulu by the French. Mormon missionaries arrived from California in 1850 and were successful among the native Hawaiians as well as the white population. They were opposed by both the Catholics and Protestants. It was not until the arrival of Japanese immigrants in 1885 that the written history of Buddhism in Hawaii can be traced.

The huge sugar and pineapple plantations of Hawaii account for the majority of the immigration. Chinese contract laborers came as early as 1852 to work on the plantations. The Reciprocity Treaty of 1876 allowed for Hawaiian sugar to be exported to the United States duty-free. The Reciprocity Treaty led to closer ties between the Kingdom of Hawaii and the United States and eventually to annexation in 1900.

The sugar plantations recruited from many countries, due in part to local pressure against further importation of Chinese. The sugar companies recruited Portuguese in 1878, Japanese in 1884, Puerto Ricans in 1900/01, Koreans in 1903, and Filipinos in 1906.

While Hawaii was annexed to the United States in 1898, it was not formally organized as a territory until June 1900. America entered World War II as a result of the infamous bombing of Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941. Prior to the war, Japanese-Americans had become part of the larger Hawaiian community demonstrating their

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patriotism. Hawaii became the fiftieth state on 21 August 1959. New immigrants arrived from Korea, the Philippines, Samoa, and Tonga. Hawaii continues to be the crossroads of the Pacific.

This section is from *History of Hawaii* in the Ancestry.com Wiki, and was originally published in *Red Book: American State, County and Town Sources*, ed. by Alice Eichholz, CG, Ph.D., chapter by Dwight A. Radford.

## State Census Records

Censuses for portions of the Hawaiian Islands were enumerated in 1866, 1878, 1890, and 1896. The 1878 census covers the islands of Hawaii, Maui, and Oahu, and the 1896 census covers Honolulu only. Copies of these early census records are on file at the Hawaii State Archives and the Family History Library.

The Hawaii State Archives has two "census files" (1840–66 and 1847–96) that contain miscellaneous records such as school censuses, population lists, and vital record summaries. These are also on microfilm at the Family History Library.

The 1847 "Foreigners in Honolulu" census has been indexed in volume 2, #1-2 (April–July 1993) issue of *Ke Ku'auhau* magazine.

Hawaii did not establish counties until 1905. The 1900 federal census for Hawaii is arranged by island.

Related censuses available on Ancestry.com:

- [Hawaii, Compiled Census Index, 1900-1910](#)
- [U.S. Enumeration District Maps and Descriptions, 1940](#)

<i>Population</i>	
<b>1805</b>	<b>264,160</b>
<b>1831</b>	<b>130,313</b>
<b>1853</b>	<b>73,134</b>
<b>1872</b>	<b>56,897</b>
<b>1876</b>	<b>53,900</b>
<b>1884</b>	<b>80,000</b>
<b>1900</b>	<b>154,001</b>
<b>1910</b>	<b>191,874</b>
<b>1920</b>	<b>255,881</b>
<b>1930</b>	<b>368,336</b>
<b>1940</b>	<b>420,770</b>
<b>1950</b>	<b>499,794</b>

## Hawaii Vital Records

Statewide registration of birth and marriage records began in 1896. Records before that were kept by local governments and clergy.

Divorce records from July 1951 to December 2002 are kept at the Office of Health Status Monitoring, Department of Health. All other divorce records are kept in the court where the divorce took place.

- [Office of Health Status Monitoring, Department of Health](#). Birth, death, and marriage records from 1896; divorce records July 1951 – 2002. Note: access to records less than 75 years old is restricted to the party(ies) named on the record or those with a "direct and tangible interest" in the record. See the Office of Health Status Monitoring's [website](#) for details.

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- [Hawaii State Archives, Hawaiian Genealogy Index](#) contains Indexes to Marriages (1826-1929), Divorces (1848-1929), Naturalization (1844 to 1894), Denization (1846-1898), Passports (1845-1874), Probates (1848 to 1915) and Wills (1852-1915).

## Hawaii Military Records

- [Honolulu, Hawaii, National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific \(Punchbowl\), 1941-2011](#)
- [Middle Pacific Stars and Stripes \(Honolulu, Hawaii\)](#)

## Other Collections

- [Hawaii Chinese Exclusion Index](#)
- [Honolulu, Hawaii, Passenger and Crew Lists, 1900-1959](#)
- [Hawaii, Passenger Lists, 1941-1948](#)
- [Index to Passengers Arriving at Honolulu, Hawaii, 1900-1952](#)
- [Honolulu, Hawaii Directory, 1890](#)
- [The Story of Hawaii](#)
- [U.S. City Directories, 1821-1989](#) (Use the browse box in the upper right corner to determine what directories are available for your ancestor's area. If they lived in a rural area, check to see if that area was included with a larger city in the vicinity.)
- [U.S. Map Collection, 1513-1990](#)

## Other State Resources

The organizations listed below provide information about Hawaii history and genealogy. In addition to these state-level resources, many counties and towns maintain important genealogical collections in local libraries, genealogical societies, or historical societies, so check for a local resource when researching.

- [Hawaii State Archives](#)
- [Hawaiian Historical Society](#)
  - Some digital collections available through the [Oceania Digital Library](#)
- [Hawaii GenWeb](#)
- [HawaiiHistory.org](#)
- [Mountain West Digital Library](#)
  - Contains collections from [Brigham Young University-Hawaii](#)
- [National Archives and Records Administration at San Francisco](#): This facility maintains records from Federal agencies and courts in Hawaii.
- Genealogical societies:
  - [Honolulu County Genealogical Society](#)
  - [Portuguese Genealogical Society of Hawaii](#)

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### Help and Advice

- [Hawaii Family History Research](#)
- [Map of Hawaii](#)

[View all Hawaii collections on Ancestry.com](#)

### Significant Dates (through 1959)

**1627** – Spanish visited Hawaii.

**1778** – British Captain James Cook arrived at the Hawaiian Islands.

**1779** – Cook and some of his crew were killed in a skirmish with local Hawaiians.

**1795** – Kamehameha gained control of the Hawaiian Islands, except for Kaua'i and Ni'i'hau.

**1809** – Kamehameha gained the remaining islands.

**1813** – Coffee and pineapple introduced to Hawaii by Don Francisco de Paula y Marin.

**1815** – Georg Anton Schaffer of the Russian-American Company arrived in Kaua'i to establish relations with Kamehameha. Eventually, Kaumuali'i, the chief of Kaua'i, signed a treaty granting Tsar Alexander I a protectorate.

**1817** – Russians built Fort Elizabeth on Kaua'i.

**1819** – Kamehameha died; his son Liholiho gained control. In this transition, many traditions and rituals were changed.

**1820** – Protestant Christian missionaries arrived on the islands.

**1827** – Catholic missionaries arrived; they were forced to leave in 1831. In 1839, Catholics were granted religious freedom in Hawaii.

**1840** – New Hawaiian constitution established a constitutional monarchy.

**1843** – Lord George Paulet seized Hawaii on behalf of England. His actions were reputed by Rear Admiral Richard Darton Thomas and Hawaii's government was restored.

**1848** – Kamehameha III enacted the Mahele, a change in land use that allocated land among the king, the chiefs, and active tenants who worked the land.

**1848-1849** – Influenza, measles, and whooping cough epidemics killed one-tenth of the native Hawaiian population.

**1850** – The Kuleana Act established fee simple land ownership.

**1852** – New constitution limited powers of the monarch; expanded the Declaration of Rights; divided the government into executive, judicial, and legislative branches; and granted adult males suffrage.

**1853** – Smallpox killed more than 5,000.

**1864** – The Constitution of 1864 established literacy and property requirements for voting and returned some power to the monarchy.

**1866** – First group of lepers arrived at Kalaupapa on the island of Moloka'i, sent there because of the "Act to Prevent the Spread of Leprosy."

**1868** – First Japanese contract laborers arrived.

**1873** – Father Damien arrived on Moloka'i and began his work with the leper settlement. Damien contracted leprosy in 1883 and died in 1889.

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- 1878 – Portuguese laborers and their families began to arrive in larger numbers to work the sugar plantations.
- 1882 – Chinese Exclusion Act reduced the number of Chinese immigrants.
- 1886 – Fire destroyed eight blocks and more than 7,000 homes in the Chinatown section of Honolulu.
- 1887 – The Bayonet Constitution (so called because King Kalakaua signed under duress) greatly reduced the power of the monarchy and extended voting to all males except Asians. Property qualifications were kept in place, which prevented many Hawaiians from voting for members of the House of Nobles.
- 1893 – The "Committee of Safety," organized by American businessmen, overthrew the government of Queen Lili'uokalani.
- 1894 – Republic of Hawaii was established.
- 1895 – A coup was unsuccessful in re-instating the queen. She was tried for treason and imprisoned; she abdicated later that year in order to secure clemency for those who supported her.
- 1898 – The United States annexed Hawaii.
- 1900 – In an effort to control the spread of bubonic plague in Chinatown, fires were set in the contaminated areas. The flames got out of control; the fire burned for 17 days and destroyed 38 acres and 4,000 homes.
- 1907 – James Dole founded the Hawaiian Pineapple Company.
- 1922 – The Hawaiian Homes Commission Act set aside land for homesteading.
- 1924 – Twenty people were killed in labor riots in Hanapepe.
- 1935 – First trans-Pacific flight was between Hawaii and San Francisco.
- 1941 – Japanese attacked the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor, bringing the U.S. into World War II.
- 1946 – A tsunami hit Hilo, killing 159 people.
- 1959 – Hawaii was admitted as the 50<sup>th</sup> state.



Lahaina Branch – Maui County Library, Hawaiian Islands,  
from U.S., Historical Postcards