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Honolulu, T. H.
October 1, 1926.

To my Friends in the States:

Leaving San Francisco Aug. 19th on the Gov't transport St. Mihiel at noon, we arrived at the port of Honolulu, August 25th at 10 a.m. The boat was said to be the steadiest riding boat in the Transport Service but even at that the motion of the boat, together with the smells from the kitchen, and that of the hot greasy machinery, coupled with the way fish was served at the first meal on board, was too much for me and by nightfall the first day I was in the throes of sea sickness. Mrs. Pickering was not much better, Elizabeth and Frances were affected some, but were able to be at each meal. Gordon and Virginia did not feel the sickness at all. It was four days later that I felt safe in venturing to the table in the dining room. After losing sight of land we watched the pilot clamber over the side of our boat and jump into a small boat and be rowed over to the Navy boat "Adventuress" which had followed us from port for this purpose. Then for days we saw nothing but water and now and then groups or flocks of flying fish, and even saw one bird, not a sea gull, while we were far from land.

The morning of the 25th as we were dressing we noticed on looking out of the port hole, what seemed to be clouds along the horizon. This soon took on the shape of mountainous shore line which we learned was the island of Molokai. On the north side of this island is located the leper colony. Soon after passing this island we came into sight of land again which proved to be Koko Head and Diamond Head on the Island of Oahu (pronounced O-wa-hoo). We noticed just before reaching this Island and at other points enroute that the water of the ocean was a deep blue, very much like bluing for clothes. In order to enter Honolulu Harbor we circled Koko and Diamond Heads, with Waikiki Beach on our right, passed Fort Armstrong and then into the harbor. Many people were on the pier, most of whom carried leis (pronounced lays), which are wreaths of fresh Ginger flowers or of colored paper, to place about the necks of their arriving friends. We were thus decorated by friends in the Army who met the boat. The leis of fresh flowers are very fragrant. Even the Army generals on board were decorated by these wreaths and as we had such on board we were received with a full military band.

On approaching Honolulu one of the most prominent things in the city to attract attention is a white tower rising from the water front and bearing the word "Aloha". This word means love and is used as a friendly salutation. The city is built along the sea and at the foot of mountains which rise to a height of over 3000 feet in a few miles. Punch Bowl, an extinct crater lies in the city and rises to a height of about 500 feet. From this vantage point an excellent view of the city and environs may be obtained. The U.S. Government has a 'position finger' located on this eminence. There is also a Mt. Tantalus hard by the Punch Bowl, rising to a height of over 2000 feet the sides of which are dotted with homes. At night the lights from these homes appear to be stars in the sky, they are so much higher than the rest of the city. There is a good auto road leading ~~in~~ nearly to the top. Upon this road one may easily imagine that they were in So. California or in Colorado. It passes thru a Forest Reserve of immense Eucalyptus trees interspersed with some other large trees.

The soil around Honolulu seems to be largely red, which pulverizes and blows about readily. In places on the road around the Island one may see old lava flows which have been cut thru in making the road.

Flowers and flowering trees are in luxuriant abundance

in Honolulu and remind us of Sunny San Antonio. Many are sweet scented so that the air is laden with their perfume. The shade air is cool and as there seems to be a good breeze every day it has been very pleasant. This, I understand, continues thru the year as the trade winds prevail all year except in Sept. and Oct.

Real estate and rents are high in Honolulu. Lots are sold by the square foot. Many of the family size cottages are built with a single wall. In the main part of the city many of the lots which originally contained but one dwelling, now have several. Thus a lot of 100 feet by 150 feet may have on it two cottages facing the street, another at the extreme end of the lot facing the driveway between the two on the street, and in addition there may be four other cottages, two on each side of the center driveway and facing each other. I live in a cottage in such a court for which I pay the 'mere pittance' of \$35.00 per month, the houses of the court facing the street renting for \$60.00 per month.- and I am getting mine at a five dollar reduction because of friendship. Yards are generally very beautiful with many flowers and shrubs, also trees, flowering and otherwise, of many kinds. Many hedges are of flowering shrubs such as Hibiscus. Coconuts, papayas, mangos, etc. are found growing in many yards. The Taro plant is much cultivated around the city. From the root of this is made "poi", the Hawaiian's staff of life. I am told that one must acquire a taste for this but the Hawaiian likes it after it has soured.

Pineapple culture is very interesting. We attended the Territorial Fair held in September and learned some interesting things about how pineapples are grown. The crop planted in Sept. 1926 will continue to produce profitably until 1930, the first crops being harvested in the summer of 1927. In 1931 the field will be plowed up and sowed to a kind of grass to keep out the weeds and to enrich the soil. Cucumbers here grow to over a foot long. We saw some stalks of sugar cane at the Fair which must have been over 20 feet long. The way they grow that here is also interesting. Strawberries, apples, oranges, lemons, various garden vegetables that we know were on exhibition there. The principal crops on Oahu, however, seem to be sugar cane, pineapples, rice, bananas, ~~xxx~~ avocados and papayas.

The mountain ranges of the islands are cut by deep and rugged ravines or short canyons. They can be traversed only where trails have been made. Frequently people get lost because they attempt to scale some peak or mountain where there is ~~xxx~~ no trail.

The inhabitants of the Island of Oahu are principally Japanese. They also have more children in school than any other group. Next in order comes the part-Hawaiian, Portuguese, Chinese, Hawaiian, Filipino, Anglo-Saxon, Korean, Porto-Rican and Spanish, in the order named. So Honolulu is the meeting place of the nations. One may see all colors on the streets or at any public gathering, ranging from the black of the negro to the white of the Caucasian. The Hawaiians are usually a bronze.

Numbers of churches are listed in the city directory, including native churches and even pagan such as Buddist. The Methodist (MS), Christian, Catholic, and Mormon are represented. The Mormons have one of the finest temples that they have anywhere outside of Salt Lake City. They also have quite a community around the temple as in Utah. The Salvation Army, the YMCA and the YWCA are here. The Army and Navy YMCA have as quarters what was formerly the Hawaiian Hotel built by the Republic years ago to accomodate the travellers coming to the Island. Here one may obtain accommodations for even a family at a moderate rate. They have daily programs for men of the Army and Navy. The uniforms of both are conspicuous on the streets, as is also the Japanese naval uniform at times.

There are numbers of modern stores in Honolulu, such as are found in any large city on the mainland but there are also the quaint and distinctly oriental stores of the Chinese and Japanese. These little stores are quite reasonable and usually, when in the suburbs, carry nearly everything a person might want. I stopped yesterday at one to get a tooth brush. The sign said ^{butcher} shop and groceries but they had toilet articles, hardware and miscellaneous other articles and I got the brush.

Many of the Japanese and Chinese wear their native costumes. The Chinese lady in her pantaloons of black silk or other material, with a coat of the same material, or perhaps different material, reaching nearly to her knees. The coat is slit on each side up as far as the waist. The Japanese lady in her flowing robe with flowing sleeves and a wide and stiff belt of similar material to the dress. Most of them have a wealth of coal black hair usually done up in the characteristic Japanese fashion. The native foot dress of sandals, similar to those used in olden times, is also worn. The ~~Chinese~~ ^{Japanese} style has a cord which slips between the great toe and the one next to it, while the ~~Chinese~~ style has the straps arranged so that the toes of the foot slip into them without separation, hence may wear ordinary stockings with them. The ~~Chinese~~ ^{Japanese} must have specially made stockings. Those for street and wet weather wear have cork soles which raise them a half inch off the street. Our children have learned to use them.

The native Hawaiians occupy many of the city and territorial positions, and properly so. (The Island of Oahu is included in the city and county of Honolulu). Some of these are as black as any negro, while others are swarthy or bronze. In reading the history of the Hawaiian people one is struck by their aptitude for assimilation of modern civilization nearly one hundred years ago. A number of Americans, who were originally forced to remain on the islands, later became prominent in the affairs here. So we find among the pictures of "Royal Hawaiians", hanging in the Hall of what used to be the royal palace, people whose faces and names show that they are mixed with the Caucasian race. The territorial legislature now meets in the old throne room of the royal palace used by the later Kamehamehas (pronounced Ka-ma-ha-ma-has) and Queen Liliuokalani. The governor and his staff have offices there and it is now called the Executive Building. The names of the streets of the city commemorate the earlier people, they being named after royalty of an earlier period. Kamehameha I (there were five Kamehamehas), established his rule and dynasty over the entire group of islands by driving his opposer's army over the Pali (cliff). This cliff is a gash in the Koolau Range of mountains and has a sheer drop of 700 feet. There is a tablet of bronze in the stone at the top where an excellent auto road tops the Pali, marking the place and giving the legend. This is but seven miles from the heart of the city.

There are eight inhabited islands in the Hawaiian group. They are, beginning at the Northwest end:- Niihau, Kauai, Oahu, Molokai, Lanai, Maui, Kahoolawe and Hawaii.

Niihau has but a few inhabitants and a large sheep ranch. However it is noted from the fact that from this island comes the famous sedge from which the natives weave their serviceable soft grass mats.

Kauai is the 'garden isle' as it is rich, well watered and clothed with varied and luxuriant verdure. Here are found high water falls and a canyon rivalling the Grand Canyon of the Colorado, in coloring and depth.

Oahu is the principal island of the group in that it has two excellent harbors. One at Honolulu and the other at Pearl Harbor a few miles distant. Most of the business of the islands is carried on here and here Uncle Sam has located his great fortifications, coaling plant, floating dry dock and Army Posts. There are two mountain ranges on Oahu. The Koolau (pronounced Koo'-la-oo) and Waianae (pronounced Wa-e-ah'-na-e). The former is about 37 miles long and the latter about half that. Diamond Head on this island rises in bold relief from the shore line beyond the famous Waikiki (pronounced Wa-e-key-key) beach, to a height of 761 feet. This is an extinct crater of a volcano and is now fortified with batteries. On this island are located numerous artesian wells of good fresh water. The City of Honolulu obtains its water supply from this source and I can testify to the fact that it is so soft as to lead one to believe that it came from melted snows as does the water supply of many Colorado cities. While the rainfall in Honolulu in 1925 was around 16 inches, the Pali had a rainfall of over 100 inches. This is due to the fact that the winds blow so continuously from one direction and rain clouds ~~borne~~ borne by them strike the windward side of the mountains and lose a large part, if not all, of their moisture there. Thus the windward slopes are wet and the leeward slopes are dry and arid.

Molokai, the first to be seen in coming from San Francisco, has on its North side the leper colony. This ^{colony} occupies 5000 acres and is shut in on three sides by the ocean and on the remaining side by high mountains so they are effectually cut off from the rest of the island. It has two main mountain peaks, fertile valleys, rivers and the remains of orange and bread fruit groves.

Lanai and Kahoolawe are small and of little note.

Maui, the valkey isle, has two prominent peaks on it, one of which terminates in the crater of Haleakala (pronounced Hal-e-ah'-ala). This crater is in one of our National Parks and one writer tells us that all New York City could be placed in it and buried a quarter of a mile deep. It is the second largest inhabited island. One of its valleys, the Iao, has been compared in grandeur to the Yosemite Valley.

Hawaii is the largest of the group and after which the group is named. Captain Cook in his discovery of the islands in January 1778, landed on this island at Waimea Bay on the South side. On this island is Mauna Kea, the highest island mountain in the world (13,825 feet high), and Mauna Loa, the noted active volcano. Both are about the same height and the former is snow capped parts of the year. Its name means "White Mountain". The lava flow from Mauna Loa in 1926 crossed the auto road around the island. This is still too hot to permit cutting thru, the several attempts have been made. It covered a strip of the road about 300 yards long and is from 10 to 15 feet thick. ~~xxxx~~ The road at present goes over this flow, the outside being cool. The island is about the size of Connecticut and comprises 5/8 of the entire group. It has one good seaport at Hilo, a city of about 12000 inhabitants. The craters of Mauna Loa and Kilauea are National Parks and are administered similar to those in the States.

In closing let me add, altho this writing is becoming too lengthy, that in the pronunciation of Hawaiian names remember that "a" has the broad sound of "ah"; "e" has the sound of "a"; and "i" has the sound of "e". The rest of the pronunciation must be acquired by practice as no rule seems to apply.

Farewell! - And may you never be tempted to come to the "Paradise of the Pacific", unless you have an assured income or plenty of cash, for at least one of these is essential.