

HAWAIIAN SUGAR PLANTERS' ASSOCIATION

PLANTATION ARCHIVES

Register of the

HAMAKUA MILL COMPANY

Paauilo, Hawaii

1882-1959

Accession: 84-09
30 cu. ft.
April, 1988

Processed By
Deborah A. Saito &
Susan M. Campbell

HAMAKUA MILL COMPANY HISTORY

In 1877, Mr. Theophilus H. Davies demonstrated his entrepreneurial foresight and his faith in the potential growth of sugar in the Hamakua District by establishing a partnership with Mr. Charles Notley, Sr., to promote sugar production. During the following year, Mr. Notley began planting cane and Mr. Thomas Hughes from the Honolulu Iron Works, commenced building a mill for Mr. Davies.

The Hamakua Mill Company (HMC) concerned itself with milling operations in the area and was incorporated in 1883 with Mr. Hughes as its manager. The factory's first season was in 1885. Mr. Notley was the manager for the Hamakua Plantation Company whose main objectives were the growing and cultivating of sugarcane. The Theo. H. Davies Company was agent for both sugar interests.

The Hamakua Mill Company was located at Paauilo on the Hamakua Coast of the Big Island of Hawaii. The plantation encompassed six miles and was three miles across at its widest point. One side of the Company bordered the ocean with a windbreak of ironwood trees and sea cliffs. The other side rose to an elevation of 2000 feet.

The date of consolidation between Hamakua Mill and the Hamakua Plantation Companies could not be discerned from the records and other sources indicate conflicting dates. However, according to cashbooks LSCv. 108 & 109, it appears that these companies may have merged in September 1899.

By 1910, 4800 acres were planted in cane and nine miles of railroad track and three locomotives with numerous cane cars were used for transporting sugarcane. A warehouse at the boat landing was located on an overhanging cliff which allowed ships to anchor close enough to load sugar bags by crane. Contrasting with a labor population of twenty-nine in 1890, over six hundred people were employed by HMC in 1910. At this time, there was also a company store, a school and several churches in Pauuilo.

By the 1920s, twenty-one contracting gangs supplied the cultivation necessary for growing the cane and HMC employed close to 1200 people. The water supply for both domestic and mill purposes came from either water storage tanks or springs. As typical for plantations on the Hamakua Coast, no irrigation was necessary.

When sugarcane was harvested from the fields, it was taken down to the cane cars or railroad by wagon or wire rope slings. Some fields at higher elevation were so difficult to harvest, that a cable and steam hoist system was used to bring the cane down to the railroad. By the 1930s, all cane was delivered to the mill by railway, which consisted of fourteen and a half miles of track and over thirty railroad bridges crossing numerous gulches. Varieties of cane included D-1135, yellow tip and striped tip cane.

Mr. Anthony Lidgate managed the Hamakua Mill Company for the longest period of time, from 1888 (1886?) to 1921. The following men were managers during the time span encompassed by the Archives HMC collection; Robert M. Lindsay, 1921-1933, and William F. Robertson, 1933-1956.

Kukaiau Plantation became part of the Hamakua Mill Company in 1914. Since its inception, the agent for the Kukaiau Plantation Company was H. Hackfeld and from 1884 to 1912, Messrs. J.M. Horner and Albert Horner were the plantation managers.

Under the direction of Mr. Davies, the Kukaiau Mill was built and first managed by Mr. George F. Renton, 1888-1899. The Kukaiau Mill and the Kukaiau Plantation appear to have merged in 1914. Subsequent managers for the Mill were; E. Madden, 1900-1911, and J. McLennan, 1912-1918. The Kukaiau Mill ground its last crop in 1917 at which time the mill and the boiling house were sold to the Japanese for use in Formosa.

By 1972, cane from HMC was being ground at Laupahoehoe and in 1974, the Hamakua Mill Company became part of the Laupahoehoe Sugar Company.

Laupahoehoe Sugar Company, Other Company Series
Hamakua Mill Company

Accession #84-09
30 cu. ft.

HSPA PLANTATION ARCHIVES

The Hamakua Mill Company Scope and Contents

BACKGROUND, UNPROCESSED RECORDS

During October 1987, all Hamakua Sugar Company records, approximately 445 cubic feet, were removed from storage, fumigated and brought into the Archives. The Hamakua Mill Company records, 23 boxes and 21 volumes, were segregated for procession in March 1988, and were ready for use in April, 1988.

PROCESSED RECORDS, NOTES

Hamakua Mill Company records are organized into the following series or major categories:

- Correspondence
- Corporate Records
- Cultivation Contracts
- Financial Records
- Miscellaneous Records
- Other Company Records
- Personnel and Payroll Records
- Production Records

Correspondence

1915-1949. One major area in the Hamakua Mill Company correspondence series is the Hospital Correspondence, 1921-1940, with a two year gap from 1934 to 1936. Subjects of this correspondence include: the return to the Philippine Islands of disabled workers, plague cases in the 1920s, plantation children treated at the Shriners' Hospital in Honolulu, and supply requests. Monthly hospital reports indicate illness, patient's name and bango, and days off work. A few medical brochures are included and birth and death reports begin in the 1930s. The 1938 Ewa Health Project Report, headed by Dr. Nils Larsen, covers all aspects of plantation health. Drs. Christensen, Ferre and Bergin were the plantation physicians at the Paauilo Hospital between 1921 and 1940. The HSPA Filipinos Correspondence – 1921-1941 (Box 22C & Box 24) provides information about Filipino laborers returning to the Philippines, as well as newly recruited laborers arriving in Hawaii. Work records with arrival dates and ships are included. Circular letters from HSPA deal with recruiting policy, contract fulfillment, warnings concerning schemes to

Laupahoehoe Sugar Company, Other Company Series
Hamakua Mill Company

Correspondence (continued)

defraud workers, compensation to accident victims, and monies sent between Hawaii and the Philippines. Correspondence with the agency, T.H. Davies Co., Ltd., covers the years 1920 to 1933.

Corporate Records

1882-1940. The Corporate Records deal with Hamakua Mill Company land: a Land Book lists and identifies real property owned and leased by the Company between 1882 and 1926. Copies of leases and deeds as well as rents due Hamakua Mill Company are included in the corporate records.

Cultivation Contracts

1927-1937. The Cultivation Contracts set forth the terms between planters and plantation and include signatures of both parties. The Future Farmers of America in agriculture classes at Paauilo School also cultivated fields at Hamakua Mill Company.

Financial Records

1883-1959. The Cash Books, 1883-1947, are the most complete financial records for Hamakua Mill Company. Two early volumes (V.108 and V.110) appear to contain some Hamakua Plantation Company records. The Contractors Statements and Settlements list the adherent planters' names, cash advances, deductions and payments made to contractors and gangs. The Journals cover the years 1915 to 1935 and the General Ledgers cover 1904 to 1942, containing an index to account numbers. An Inventory and Depreciation Book provides original costs and annual depreciation value of buildings, vehicles, machinery, water system, railroads etc. from 1922 to 1959. Various tax accounts between 1920 and 1943 include income taxes and perquisite taxes.

Miscellaneous Records

1892-1925. Entries in the Analysis of Juice and Sugars Book were made daily at the mill between 1892 and 1898. Labor Reports from 1922 to 1925 (LSC25/7) contain comparative labor figures from all plantations. In 1924, the HSPA Strike Claims Committee requested special forms and information to determine, in tons of sugar, the loss to crops as a result of strike conditions.

Laupahoehoe Sugar Company, Other Company Series
Hamakua Mill Company

Other Company Records

1914-1934. Paauilo Store records comprise the majority of material in this category. The Paauilo Store Ledger, 1914-1920, provides an alphabetical list of customers, bangos, and monthly purchases. The store invoices and inventories are sources of information about merchandise. The Doctor's Hospital Record, 1933-1934, provides the same kind of information as the monthly hospital reports found in the Hospital Correspondence, 1921-1940 (LSC23/1-7). Seven volumes of payroll books from Kukaiau Plantation Co. cover 1910 to 1917. Names are provided for contract planters and a few others. Bangos identify most workers.

Personnel and Payroll

1900-1941. Time and Payroll Books, 1900-1934, include information covering names, sex, gangs, wages, deductions and overtime of laborers. There is a gap between 1906 and 1910. Accident Reports to the Industrial Accident Board, 1927-1932, include compensation information and a short run of Separation Cards, 1940-1941, document employees, mostly Filipinos, who left Hamakua Mill Company just before World War II.

Production Records

1913-1947. Crop Data Books, 1931-1943, give good summaries of costs of crops. Field Records cover days of labor devoted to individual fields and the Field Tonnage Records cover tons of cane from individual fields, as well as providing a list of adherent planters. The Sugar Record book, 1924-1938, accounts for tons and bags of sugar shipped and the names of shipping vessels. Mill Reports are daily and weekly labor reports, and production reports of tons of cane, juice, sugar, molasses and bagasse.

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Hamakua Mill Company Collection.

Strengths

Hospital Correspondence, 1921-1940
Cash Books, 1883-1947
Paauilo Store Records, 1914-1932

Weaknesses

Journals, pre-1915
Correspondence, pre-1920
Payroll, 1906-1919