

HAWAIIAN SUGAR PLANTERS' ASSOCIATION

PLANTATION ARCHIVES

Register of the

LIHUE PLANTATION COMPANY

Lihue, Kauai

1850-1968

Accession: 84-06
140.5 cu. ft.
Sept. 1987

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LIHUE PLANTATION COMPANY HISTORY

Lihue Plantation Company originated in 1849 as a partnership between Charles Reed Bishop, Judge William L. Lee, and Henry A. Pierce of Boston. H. Hackfeld & Co. served as agents and J.H.B. Marshall was the first plantation manager of record in 1853 to 1854.

The site of the first mill was selected in the valley of the Nawiliwili stream, the same site where the mill stands today. Water power was used to drive the mill rollers, which were iron bound granite crushers brought from China. A centrifugal sugar dryer, ordered from Mr. D.M. Weston in Honolulu, was installed in 1851. Open kettles provided the means for boiling the syrup.

Under the name of Henry A. Peirce & Co., the new company produced a first crop of 108 tons of sugar and 25,847 gallons of molasses. It is interesting to note that the spelling of Peirce varies and it's sometimes shown as Pierce. In 1859, a new partnership was formed and the name was changed to the Lihue Plantation Company.

While the laborers in the plantation fields were exclusively Hawaiians, Chinese workers operated the mill. In 1856 and 1857 William Harrison Rice engineered and built the sugar industry's first irrigation ditch, the ten mile Lihue Ditch, that brought water from Kilohana Crater. Mr. Rice became the second plantation manager, at a salary of \$400.00 a year, plus a house, firewood and pasture.

Paul Isenberg joined the plantation in 1858, becoming the manager in 1862, at 25 years of age. He managed Lihue for nearly 20 years, until 1878. It was during his management that the company was incorporated in 1872.

Improvements in the manufacture of sugar included the installation of an evaporating pan in 1866, an innovation at the time. A new strike pan, with steam pipes as a heat source, was the first use of steam for sugar boiling on Kauai.

The original 3,000 acres of Lihue Plantation increased by 300 acres at Ahukini in 1866. In 1872, 17,000 acres at Hanamaulu were added, which included an excellent water source. Lihue Plantation continued to expand, leasing 30,000 acres at Wailua in 1878.

A mill was built at Hanamaulu in 1877 for grinding cane grown on the north side of Hanamaulu Gulch. Mr. George Wilcox had brought the mill from Scotland, intending to erect it at Grove Farm. He decided, however, to continue to have his cane ground at Lihue, and sold the mill to Lihue Plantation Company. Mr. A.S. Wilcox took charge of planting and milling the Hanamaulu cane.

In 1878, Carl Isenberg assumed the management of Lihue from his brother, Paul, who returned to Germany. While there, Mr. Isenberg arranged for the immigration of 124 men and women to Kauai. In the party was a German forester who quickly started a reforestation program at Lihue Plantation. Originally, much of the plantation had been covered by forest and firewood was consumed in great quantities. In addition, firewood was sent to the Honolulu market and the forest receded dramatically. By 1884, \$10,000 had been spent replanting trees.

During this time, other sugar ventures, which later became a part of Lihue Plantation Company, were started in the area. Judge McBryde began planting cane at Eleele around 1875 and Captain James Makee chartered the Makee Sugar Company at

Kapaa in 1877. In 1891, a railway system was constructed at Lihue Plantation to replace the ox carts that transported cane from the many acres of fields to the mills.

Shortly after the turn of the century, nearly 1,600 workers were employed by Lihue Plantation. Japanese, Portuguese, and a few Hawaiian, Korean and Puerto Rican laborers made up the work force. Plantation housing was provided and in 1910, it was reported that the plantation hospital was one of the best in the Islands. Several churches and schools, as well as the plantation ranch and dairy also served the plantation communities.

Also in 1910, the irrigation system of Lihue Plantation Company had grown to contain 33 miles of ditches, four miles of tunnels, and 9,900 feet of water gearing flumes. There were 3,517 acres of cane harvested that year, producing 14,765 tons of sugar. A wharf and warehouse at Ahukini provided shipping and storage facilities for the sugar.

Lihue Plantation expanded in 1910 with the purchase of controlling interest in Makee Sugar Company. Expansion again occurred in 1916 when Lihue Plantation and W.F. Sanborn purchased 6,000-acre Princeville Plantation. In 1922, American Factors, Ltd., successor company to H. Hackfeld & Co., acquired control of Lihue Plantation Company with the purchase of 3,026 shares of stock.

In the early 1920s, major improvements were made and the Lihue mill was electrified with power supplied by hydro-electric generators. The Hanamaulu mill was closed in 1920 and some of the equipment used to improve the Lihue mill, which was grinding cane from Grove Farm and Kipu Plantation as well as its own.

In 1923, a lease of Wailua lands prompted work on a project to bring water from the south branch of the Hanalei River for irrigation and hydroelectric power. In the early 1930s, approximately 100 acres of land had been reclaimed from swamp and bog lands. A record-breaking year, 1930, saw a harvest of 36,506 tons of sugar.

In 1933, Lihue Plantation Company became the sole owners of Makee Sugar Company and the two plantations merged. By 1935, the Lihue and Makee mills had been combined, making a 21-roller mill at Lihue with the capacity to grind 150 tons of cane per hour.

When Mr. Caleb E.S. Burns became manager in 1933, the properties of Lihue Plantation included Makee Plantation, Ahukini Railway Co., Nawiliwili Transportation Co., East Kauai Water Co., Princeville Ranch, Waiahi Electric Co., and pineapple lands leased to Hawaiian Canneries.

A new power plant with a 2,000-Kilowatt turbine generator was built at Lihue in 1937. Electricity was brought to all the plantation home in the Makee division, completing electric service to the whole plantation.

World War II intruded upon Lihue Plantation, as it did on all other plantations, causing labor shortages, night time blackouts, and land and facilities diverted from sugar to military uses. In September 1944, 5,000 employees and friends celebrated an excellent harvest in spite of wartime conditions with the first Harvest Home Festival.

With the help of returning veterans, an all time harvest record of 59,417 tons of sugar was set in 1947. Environmental concerns were addressed with the installation of a soot remover at the Lihue factory in 1948. An industrial engineering division of the plantation was created in 1949, charged with finding ways to curtail costs.

Facilities for bulk shipping of sugar were finished in 1950, with a warehouse in Nawiliwili, which used electric power shovels to fill sugar conveyors. In the same year

shortwave radio-telephone transmitters were installed connecting the trains, mill, fields, offices, and machine shops.

The recent history of Lihue Plantation has been a record of increasing improvement in the growing and manufacturing of sugar. New cane varieties, innovative irrigation techniques, and efficient milling and shipping operations have contributed to higher sugar yields and greater productivity, keeping Lihue Plantation successful in a highly competitive industry.

MAKEE SUGAR COMPANY HISTORY

In 1877, Capt. James Makee, from Ulupalakua on Maui, was joined by King Kalakaua and several prominent businessmen in purchasing the Ernest Krull sugar estate on the island of Kauai. The purchase of this land established the Makee Sugar Company at Kapaa. Upon Makee's death in 1878, his son-in-law, Col. Z.S. Spalding, purchased the majority interest and took over management of the new sugar venture.

W.G. Irwin & Co. served as agents for Makee Sugar until 1887, when C. Brewer & Co., Ltd. became agents. H. Hackfeld & Co. took over in 1904, becoming American Factors in 1919.

In 1880, about 190 men were employed on the Kapaa plantation and the crop that year was estimated at 1500 tons of sugar. The mill machinery included a double effect, vacuum pan and a centrifugal for drying the sugar. Annual fuel consumption at the mill amounted to 244 tons of coal and 250 cords of firewood.

Installed in 1882, a wire rope tramway brought a steady stream of cane to the mill and by 1889, there were 1030 workers at Makee producing 5000 tons of sugar a year. Irrigation water was brought to the fields in ditches from mountain streams.

At about the same time that Capt. Makee was starting Makee Sugar, Col. Spalding had purchased land and erected his own sugar mill at Kealia. In 1885, Col. Spalding dismantled that Kapaa mill and moved it to Kealia, where he combined the two factories. Shortly thereafter, Col. Spalding changed to the diffusion process of sugar manufacture. To keep the process continually fed with cane, Makee Sugar Co. instituted the first night manufacture in Hawaii. The factory was outfitted with electric lights and even the fields were lighted for night harvesting, which enabled the new plant to handle 400 tons of cane every 24 hours.

In 1900, the diffusion plant was changed back to the maceration process and in ten years, a modern nine-roller mill was in operation. Power for the mill was generated by burning bagasse as well as hydroelectrically from mountain streams and the company had its own ice plant. Approximately 2000 acres of cane were harvested in 1914 producing 10660 tons of sugar.

In 1933, the Lihue Plantation Co. purchased all of the outstanding Makee Sugar Co. stock and in the next year the Kealia mill was dismantled and combined with the Lihue factory.

Managers at Makee Sugar Co. up to the 1934 merger included Col. Spalding and Messrs. Fairchild, Blaisdell, Wilcox, and Wolters.

Accession #84-06
140.5 cubic feet

HSPA PLANTATION ARCHIVES

The Lihue Plantation Company Scope and Contents

BACKGROUND

Before being sent to the HSPA Plantation Archives, the Lihue Plantation Company (LPC) business records were stored in three different locations in the plantation office building: a first floor vault; a second floor storage room; and a dank basement in the garage. In 1983, a total of 99 boxes, 75 items and 3 bundles were shipped from Kauai. The overall condition of this collection is fairly good.

Although the majority of LPC records are here in the Archives, some LPC records are housed at the Kauai Library and the Kauai Museum. These records were salvaged from bunkers located on the plantation's premises by the Friends of the Kauai Public Library.

NOTES

The Lihue Plantation Company is the third largest record group in the Plantation Archives. A total of 56 boxes (including roll and oversize boxes), 18 file drawers (of various sizes), and 264 volumes comprise this company's collection. The Lihue Plantation Company's records are divided into eight series: Corporate Records; Manager's Personal File; Correspondence; Financial Records; Personnel and Payroll; Production Records; Miscellaneous Records; and records from Other Companies. What follows is the scope and contents of each of these series.

Corporate Records

1875-1946. 1/1-10, 23/17-18, 48/14, O-12 These corporate records consist mainly of copies of land documents: deeds, leases, and support papers. The earliest document is dated 1875. There is an index in LPC 1/1: all land documents in the possession of the archives are noted in the index. Recorded land transactions at the turn of the century as well as the effects of WWII are reflected in these documents.

Manager's Personal File

1931-1964. 6/1-18, 7/1-14. MPFV.1-31 The Manager's Personal File Series shows the relationship between the plantation manager and the community, HSPA, and the parent company and predecessor, AmFac and H. Hackfeld Co., respectively. This series reflects the impact of WWII, such as night grinding, the use of LPC fields for military purposes, workers leaving the plantation for defense/military work, etc. Job applications from Hawaii residents are located throughout this series while follow-ups regarding employment can often be located in the Correspondence Series under the applicants last name.

LPC Scope and Contents (cont.)

Correspondence

1893-1896, 1904, 1907-1949. 2/1-5, 3/1-3, 4/1-4, 5/1-11, boxes 8-12, 14-19, 23
Daily letters, reports, and miscellaneous written materials are found here. These files were from LPC's main office. There are a number of gaps (missing records) in the 1800s and in the early part of this century. This series has an abundance of information ranging from fertilizer to hospitals, canneries, water, labor statistics, molasses, taxes, etc. It is strongly suggested that the archives database and the in-house finding aid be used for any in-depth research in this series.

Personnel and Payroll

1866-1951. PV.1-90, 24/1-5, boxes 26-40 [LPC 40/4 (1930) can be used as an index (See P series)], 42, boxes O-2-1, O-2-2, O-2-5, DR.17-28, WB.E&F The Personnel and Payroll series of LPC is fairly complete. Starting in 1866, these records provide names of laborers by race and often by occupation as well as location of work (camp). Each ethnic division had its own numbering system (bangos). Some of the records list persons as "Wahines", "boys", or "girls". As typical of payroll records, the "salaried, lunas, mechanics, etc." group is listed separately from the field workers.

There are a significant number of gaps in the payroll books. However, time books, bonus sheets, registers, and personnel master cards may help to fill those periods and provide some continuity of names of workers (See General Outline).

Labor statements can be used for a general overview of plantation workers between 1901-1905. These statements do not include names, but instead, provide monthly summaries of the labor force, i.e., race, citizenship, number of laborers and days worked.

Because of the physical nature of these payroll records, they are housed in archival boxes, wooden boxes, drawers, and the volumes are located on the shelves. Payroll records of other companies can be found in the Other Company Records Series.

Financial Records

1850-1968. V.1, 3-23, 26, 28-29, 31-42, 44-50A, 25/13, 25/6-9, 25/9-11 The earliest work in the entire Plantation Archives is in this series: a general ledger of the predecessor company, H.A. Peirce, 1850-1862 (LPC25/11). The major bulk of records date from 1920-1940. Unfortunately, the weakest subseries in this series is the general journals, with years 1882-1926 missing. However, ledgers, trial balances and other financial records cover this time period.

A change in personnel or a mandate from AmFac often meant a change in bookkeeping methods. For example, ledger account numbers changed between 1906 and 1907; and the early sundry personal account ledger which was part of the trial balance from 1927-1936, later came into its own from 1937 on. To trace a change in account numbers, the trial balance can be used.

Early works from the 1850s are housed in boxes. Please handle these books with care, as many are quite fragile.

LPC Scope and Contents (cont.)

Production Records

1875-1897, 1901-1966. 19/8-9, 48/1-6, 48/10, PRV.1-23 This series encompasses mill, field, and water records. The shipment records provide ship names, dates, amounts shipped, etc. Perhaps the most complete field record is best described in PRV.12-14, which provides a thirty-year span of expenditures, costs, and returns of all LPC fields.

Miscellaneous

1920, 1929-1951. 48/12-13, 48/16, roll boxes 1-5, O-2-3, O-2-4, DR.17 This series is composed mostly of maps, blueprints, and magazines. Maps during WWII reveal the effect of the war on the plantation. Three posters from the late 1940s indicate how the community benefited from the sugar industry.

Records from Other Companies

1877-1965. 9/15A, 13/1-14, 20/1-3, 21/1-15, 22/1-15, 41/1-14, 42/11, boxes 43-45, 46/1, 47/1-17, 48/7-8, 48/15, V.24-25, 30, 52-100, 102-129, WB/A-E, DR.2, 21, 26, O-2-5, O-3-1, O-3-2

Other company records within the LPC collection include: Makee Sugar; Lihue and Hanamaulu Stores; Ahukini Terminal & Railway; East Kauai Water Co.; the sugar companies of Kekaha, Kipu, Koloa, Oahu, Oloo, Pioneer, and Waianae; Lihue Hospital; Lihue Union Church; Nawiliwili Harbor; Kauai Planters' Association; Princeville Plantation; and Waiahi Electric.

The Kauai Planters' Association subseries dates from 1904 when the association was organized, to 1951. This subseries includes correspondence, minutes, treasurer's reports, housing regulations, training, program, health league information, etc. Gaps in this subseries are from 1938-1945 in the correspondence and 1941-1946 in the minutes.

Makee Sugar merged with LPC in 1933. In spite of the fact that in 1901, LPC held the controlling shares of Makee, it still functioned as a separate company. Appraisal of Makee Sugar was done in 1921. The resulting 5-volume set covering dwellings and land (including plats of all camps) is located in this subseries. Personnel and payroll records from Makee contain bonus sheets from 1916-1932, payroll cards from 1933-1940, and registers of employees from 1941-1947.

Manager's monthly reports are copies of reports from other plantations. Although these reports were widely circulated, LPC's collection of them is the most complete of any in the plantation Archives. Information provided in these reports cover weather, water, crop, field, labor, factory, and financial data.

Some records from other companies are found outside of this series and are accessible through the archives data base.