

# Kekaulike: King of Maui

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION...

In noting the controversy that has surrounded the location and construction of a new Upcountry high school for Maui students, and the name Kekaulike for that new addition to the Valley Island's secondary education system, the question of who this ali'i was, and what part he played in Maui's history, arose.

Searching for an answer to that question is somewhat like playing the role of a detective in an mystery novel, as there are many passing references to this king in certain histories, but no detailed in depth reports that this writer has been able to locate to date. (Perhaps some readers of the Maui Press may be able to forward more information here to Maui FYI for future use.)

The accounts that have been located are both diverse and occasionally contradictory. However, some of the following facts and/or legends are associated with this ruler.

### THE THREADS...

The descendants of King Kekaulike of Maui are like the woven threads of a tapestry that display a brilliant scene that includes most of the leading ali'i of 19th Century Hawaii. This tapestry

reflects the history of that last great period of the Kingdom of Hawaii.

We can learn from sources as varied as Samuel Kamakau, King Kalakaua, Queen Liliuokalani, William Westervelt, Abraham Fornander, Inez Ashdown, Cummins Speakman, George Kanahele, and John Dominus Holt, among others, who help identify strands of the web spun by Kekaulike and his descendants.

Kekaulike, born before 1700, was of sacred pi'o birth, making him a chief of the highest order in the days of Hawaii Nei. Through several different wives, he continued and established lines of descent that touched all islands and many ali'i ohana.

With one wife, his sister, Ke-Ku'i-'apo-'iwa I, he produced three children who formed the base for many of the following leading ali'i of Hawaii.

### SACRED TRIO...

One child was Kamehameha-Nui, (not to be confused with Kamehameha I, more about his connection later), who ruled Maui following the death of Kekaulike in 1736. Kamehameha-Nui married his half-sister, Kukamano, and became ultimately the grandfather of Paki, father of Bernice Pauahi Bishop.

Kekaulike's eldest daughter, Kalola, married Kalani-'opu'u, king of Hawaii

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Island, and gave birth to his heir, Kiwala'o. She also lived with Keoua of Hawaii Island, and their daughter was Ke-ku'i-'apo-'iwa Liliha, who married her half-brother Kiwala'o, and gave birth to the sacred pi'o chiefess, Ke-'opuo-lani. Ke-'opuo-lani became second wife of Kamehameha I, and the mother of Liholiho (Kamehameha II), Kau-i-ke-aouli (Kamehameha III), and their sister, the high chiefess or Princess Nahi-'ena'ena.

The great Maui ruler, Kahekili, who ruled Maui upon the death of his brother Kamehameha-Nui, was also son of Kekaulike and Ke-ku'i-'apo-'iwa I. This great warrior-king of Maui was tattooed in a checkered pattern down one half of his body, and was said to wear sticks of bamboo to hold open his eyelids during a war, in order to look fiercer.

### THE TWINS...

Kekaulike was also father of the famous twins, Kame'eiamoku and Kamanawa, who both helped raise the young Kamehameha I in Pololu Valley in the Kohala district of Hawaii Island.

These are the twins that appear on the great seal of the Kingdom of Hawaii. Kamanawa was grandfather to the Kingdom of Hawaii's last monarchs, David (King Kalakaua) and his sister Lydia (Queen Liliuokalani).

Kame'eiamoku was father of Hoapili-Kane who married Ka'ahumanu's sister, Kalakua. Hoapili became the adoptive or hanai father of Lot Kapu-a-iwa (Kamehameha V). Lot became the owner of the 'Kekaulike Cape' (discussed in last week's column) which came back to Hawaii from England when it was purchased by Queen Kapi'olani. This queen, wife of Kalakaua, was also a descendant of Kekaulike, through his son, Ka'eo, who was her great grandfather.

With another wife, Ha'alo'u, Kekaulike became the grandfather of other historic figures of Hawai'i such as Queen Ka'ahumanu, John Kina'u, Kalanimoku, and Boki, and Boki's wife, Kuini Liliha.

### KAMEHAMEHA I...

A fascinating connection, that is mentioned by some of the above sited sources, regards Kamehameha I, and the possibility of Kekaulike being his grandfather, through Kekaulike's son, the fierce warrior-king of Maui, Kahekili.

Kamakau tells us that when the great fleet of Kamehameha I was gathering strength for an attempt to conquer the island of Kauai, the expedition spent a year on Maui making preparations for the effort. During this period, the great ruler and his son, Liholiho, rededicated many heiau, and constructed several others. They traveled to Kipahulu first, then to Kaupo, and eventually established a base at Lahaina.

During this period, the twin, Kame'eiamoku, was dying at Pu'uki in Lahaina. When Kamehameha went to

pay respects to his old friend and counselor, the twin told him: "Kahekili was your real father, you were not Keoua's son. Here are the tokens that you are son of Kahekili."

Kamehameha replied: "Strange you should live all this time and only when dying tell me that I am Kahekili's son! Had you told me this before, my brothers need not have died; they could have ruled Maui while I ruled Hawaii."

Kame'eiamoku answered: "That is not a good thought; had they lived there would have been constant warfare between you, but with you alone as ruler, the country is at peace."

King Kalakaua refers to this episode in his book, "The Legends and Myths of Hawaii", in several places, and his treatment of it leaves doubt of his own views. Inez Ashdown refers to Kekaulike as grandfather of Kamehameha I, as if it were established fact on Maui, and explains many of Kamehameha's later actions here as a result of his knowledge of the story.

### KEKAULIKE'S DEATH...

Like most information gathered, there are contradictory reports of Kekaulike's death. Kamakau says the king, because he feared an upcoming invasion from the Big Island, deserted Kaupo to travel to Wailuku, where he died. Kekaulike suffered from an attack of 'violent illness or epilepsy' (ka-maka-huki-lani, or eyes drawn heavenward) according to this version.

A second version claims he died while waiting for the invasion in Kaupo area at Lele-Kea Gulch, and was transported to Wailuku after death. However, there seems to be agreement that he was mourned and prepared for burial at Haleki'i Heiau in Waiehu area, was the last of the great Hawaiian chiefs whose bones were interred in the sacred burial cave of Iao, in Iao Valley.

Kamakau says this cave is in an area in Olopio, close to the side of Pali-o-Kaka'e at Kalakahi. One entrance was said to be underwater, and the second on a sheer cliffside. Kamakau claimed, that in his time, there was no one remaining alive who knew the exact location of the famous burial cave.

### NOTE TO STUDENTS...

For our younger readers who may become students at the new Upcountry high school, it may be worth your effort to learn more about the new school's namesake. While this column usually deals in facts, in Hawaiian history and genealogy there are many areas where certainty is not established. Kekaulike's life is such an area. Go to original sources for your study, and let general articles like this provide ideas for speculation, and do not consider them the last word on this subject, by any means.

Next week we will come 'Back To The Present', until then, Aloha from Maui FYI...