

Trails and Travel Across Honouliuli in the District of 'Ewa

In traditional times, ala hele and ala loa (trails and major thoroughfares) were accessed by foot. The arrival of westerners and introduction of hooved animals led to developing new modes of travel and transporting of goods. By 1847, King Kamehameha III enacted the laws of the Alanui Aupuni (Government Roads). Many of these Alanui Aupuni were laid over the ancient system of trails. Only in instances when a more direct route could be developed (say by installing a bridge), or access was developed to clear wet lands or newly developed property rights, were the early government roads redirected from the original trails. Throughout the 1800s many trails fell from use because of the steady decline in the native population, changes in land use practices – the blocking of mauka-makai accesses as large ranching and plantation interests developed – and the consolidation of population centers evolved. This summary of native traditions and early historical accounts provides readers with details in the major routes of travel.

Sites and Trails of the 'Ewa District (1800-1811)

John Papa Ii, one of the preeminent native Hawaiian historians was born at Kumelewai, Waipi'o in 'Ewa in 1800. Raised as an attendant to the Kamehameha heirs, he was privy to many facets of early history, practices and events during his life. In the 1860s, Ii published a history under the title, "Na Hunahuna o ka Moololo Hawaii," translated by Mary Kawena Pukui under the title of "Fragments of Hawaiian History" (1959). Below are his recollections of the 'Ewa trails from his youth:

Trails from Honolulu to 'Ewa

...Let us turn to look at the trail going to Ewa from Kikihale, up to Leleo, to Koiuiu and on to Keoneula. There were no houses there, only a plain. It was there that the boy Ii and his attendants, coming from Ewa, met with the god Kaili and its attendants who were going to Hoaeae. When the kapu moe was proclaimed, they all prostrated themselves on the plain until the god and his attendants passed by.

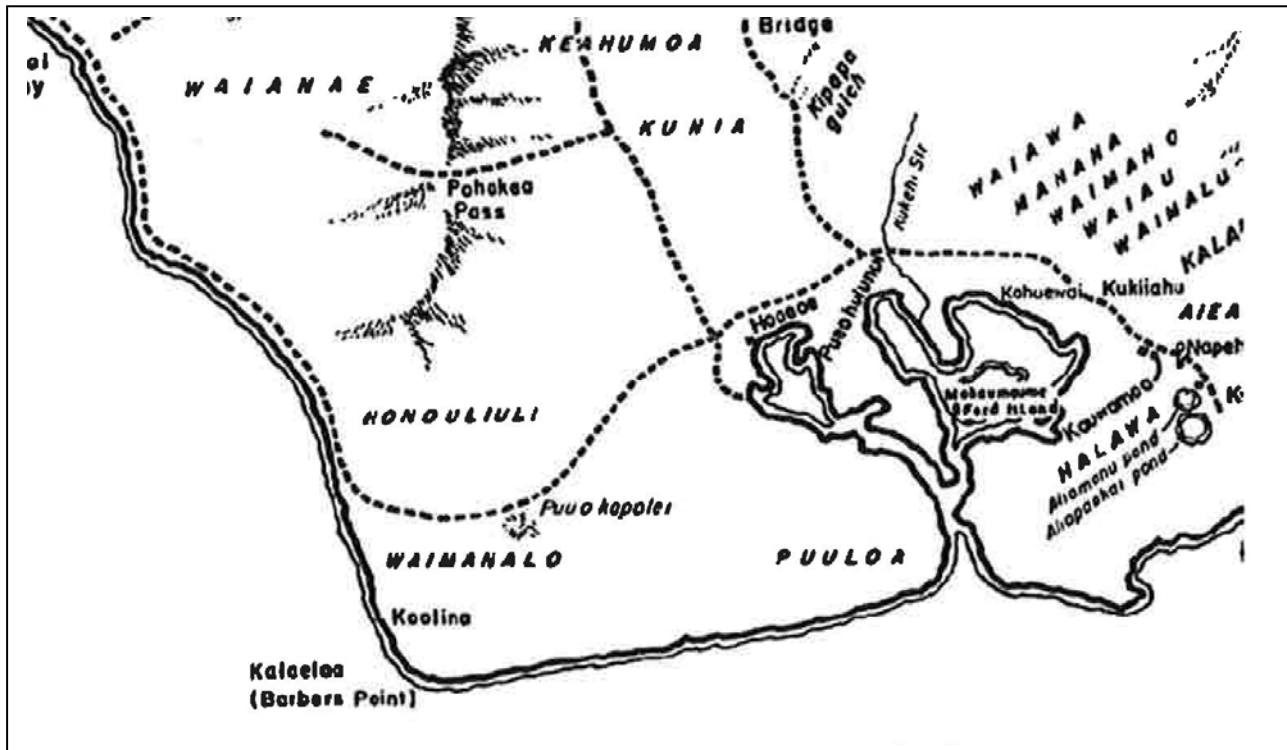
When the trail reached a certain bridge, it began going along the banks of taro patches, up to the other side of Kapalama, to the plain of Kaiwiula; on to the taro patches of Kalihi; down to the stream and up to the other side; down into Kahauiki and up to the other side; turned right to the houses of the Portuguese people; along the plain to Kauwalua, Kalaikoa's house of bones; down to a coconut grove and along the taro patches of Kahohonu; over to the other side, and from there to a forded stream and up to Kapapakolea, an established resting place for travelers.

From there the trail went to Kaleinakauhane, then to Kapukaki, from where one could see the irregular sea of Ewa; then down the ridge to Napeha, a resting place for the multitude that went diving there at a deep pool. This pool was named Napeha (Lean Over), so it is said, because Kualii, a chief of ancient Oahu, went there and leaned over the pool to drink water.

The trail began again on the opposite side of the pool and went to the lowland of Halawa, on to Kauwamoa, a diving place and a much-liked gathering place. It was said to be the diving place of Peapea, son of Kamehamehanui of Maui who was swift in running and leaping. The place from which he dove into the water was 5 to 10 fathoms above the pool.

There the trail led to the taro patches in Aiea and up the plain of Kukiiahu. Just below the trail was the spot where Kaeo, chief of Kauai, was killed by Kalanikupule. From there the trail went along the taro patches to the upper part of Kohokoho and on to Kahuewai, a small waterfall. On the high ground above, a little way on, was a spring, also a favorite gathering place for travelers. From there it continued over a small plain, down the small hill of Waimalu, and along the taro patches that lay in the center of the land. Above this trail was the home of one of the two haole men previously mentioned, the men to whom the boy's attendants spoke.

Paula Marin had a place there also. It could be seen near the edge of a low cliff going down to the upper side of a grove of cactus plants, said to have been first brought to Hawaii by Marin. [page 95]



Trails of Leeward O'ahu (portion of map by Paul Rockwood, based on narrative descriptions penned by John Papa Ii; 1959:96)

The trail went down to the stream and up again, then went above the taro patches of Waiiau, up to a maika field, to Waimano, to Manana, and to Waiawa; then to the stream of Kukehi and up to two other maika fields, Pueohulunui and Hauptuu. At Pueohulunui was the place where a trail branched off to go to Waialua and down to Honouliuli and on to Waianae. As mentioned before, there were three trails to Waianae, one by way of Puu o Kapolei, another by way of Pohakea, and the third by way of Kolekole.

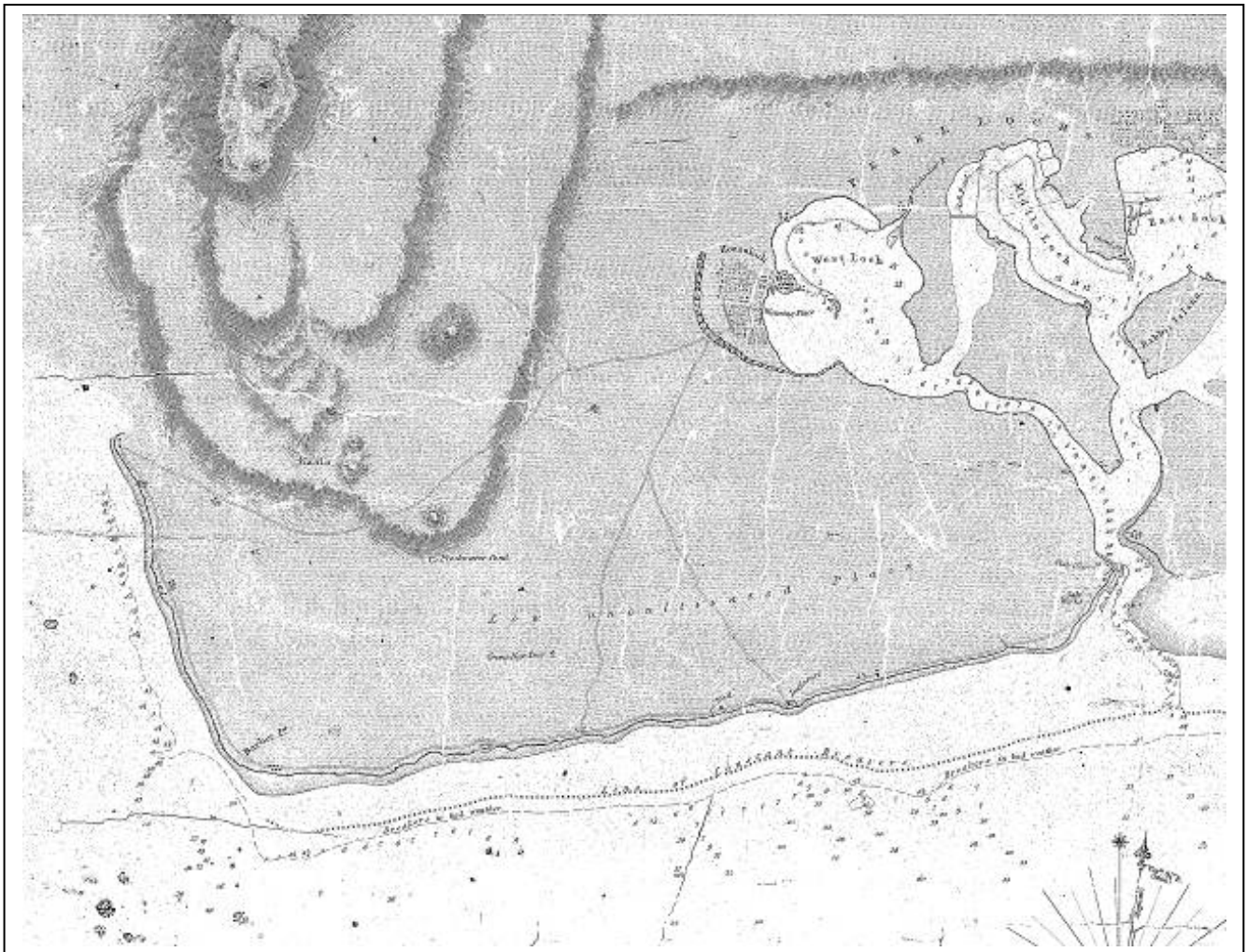
From Kunia the trail went to the plain of Keahumoa, on to Maunauna, and along Paupauwela, which met with the trails from Waiawa and Waialua. The trail continued to the west of Mahu, to Malamanui, and up to Kolekole, from where one can look down to Pokai and Waianaeuka. There was a long cliff trail called Elou from Kalena and Haleauau on the east side of Kaala coming down to Waianae. There was also a trail called Kumaipo which went up and then down Makahauka... [John Papa Ii, 1959, page 97]

Entering the 'Ewa District from Wai'anae uka:

There the trail met with the one from Kolekole and continued on to the stream of Waikakalaua, Piliamoo, the plain of Punaluu, to a rise, then down to Kipapa and to Kekualele [Kekuaolelo]. A trail ran from this main trail to Kalakoa, Oahunui, and other places much visited, such as Kukaniloko. From there it extended to the digging place of Kahalo, then went below to Paupalai, thence to Lelepua, and to Kahalepoai, where the legendary characters Kalelealuaka and Keinohoomanawanui lived. Then it reached Kekuaolelo, the stone in which the niho palaoa was hidden, then went on to Puunahawele and Pueohulunui, where it met with the Waiialua trail.

All of these places mentioned had large populations. The land was rich, and there were many trees in olden times. Who has "closed" these places today? We do not know enough to say, "It was so-and-so." But there would be commercial wealth in the trees of these mountains if they were fenced off from animals. So it is with the planting places of every poor person. The person who manages these mountains and valleys could become prosperous. [page 99]

Trails Cited on Malden's Map of 1825



**Map of Trails and Landscape of the Honouliuli Region in ca. 1793
(Malden, 1825. State Survey Division, Register Map No. 437)**

In the early 1790s Captain George Vancouver visited the Hawaiian Islands. As a part of the Vancouver expedition, cartographer, Lt. C.R. Malden, prepared a map of a portion of O‘ahu, which also covered the Honouliuli – Pu‘uloa region. Malden’s map was published in 1825 (Register Map No’s 437 & 640), and provides the earliest cartographic record of the Honouliuli region. The map depicts several clusters of houses, fish weirs, and fishponds in the Honouliuli/Pu‘uloa area. Being recorded during the early period of western contact, the map is believed to represent the basic pre-contact coastal settlement pattern for of Honouliuli and vicinity. Even though the map and visit is of an early date, given the rapid decline of the native population just after western contact, it is likely that the pre-contact population would have been higher and settlement more dense than indicated by the Malden.

Alanui Aupuni Trails and Road Development in the ‘Ewa District (1858)

Below, is one description of work on government roads and modes of transportation between Moanalua and lands of the ‘Ewa District.

June 20, 1858 [page 2] The Polynesian Roads on Oahu

...Kipapa gulch needs to be paved, an operation that calls for labor only, for the stones are ready to hand. But the people will not consent to go so far to work unless they are housed and fed. Waikele bridge has been repaired, and the hill at Kalauao (who does not remember it as it used to be?) has been so paved that we may consider it good for years to come.

Between Ewa and Kalihi a great deal of labor had been expended; in some places the road has been raised three feet, but nowhere to our mind has so much been done to ease the traveler as at Moanalua, where those rocky points over which the horses has to scramble, have been leveled off to the depth of several feet, and the road widened. At Aiea, a good and substantial bridge has been constructed. The streets of Honolulu have had more or less done to them...

Travel upon the Trails of Honouliuli in 1885 – A Visit to the Ranch Lands of Honouliuli

Below, readers are provided a historical perspective of the business in the ‘Ewa District, with the steady change in land use, and vast development of lands under the control of ranches, and travel across regional trails:

August 31, 1885 (page 2 & 3) The Daily Bulletin Viewing the Ranches (Editorial correspondence of the Bulletin.) Honouliuli Ranch,

Wednesday, Aug. 12th.

...The homeward trail leads over large areas of rough land, heavily sprinkled here and there with small rolling stones, almost invisible in the thick grass, and big boulders around which, the graziers say, the chickest bites of cattle feed are found. After getting

down the mountain, a detour is made into a large paddock on the immense area of that land referred to above. Here is seen a big drove of the finest cattle, gathered round a large reservoir of water—a sort of fresh water lake. Around this water, there lies an immense plain, already referred to, of about 10,000 acres. The soil is of the best quality on the island. With irrigation, every acre of these lands might be made available for rice, sugar, grape or banana plantations; and what is now but a grand wilderness of shrubs and grasses, supporting herds of cattle, might be made to bud and blossom with the rich products of the tropics, yielding sustenance to hundreds of families together with all the flocks and herds they might require. At half-past one, the party is again enjoying the hospitalities of the ranch house, where the day's excursion, and the dinner too, are unanimously voted superb.

Thursday, Aug. 13th.

The lands seen yesterday from the neighboring hills are today more closely examined in the course of a long weary equestrian tour. On horseback from seven in the morning to three in the afternoon, the sun between 90 and 100 degrees in the shade, the sea breezes intercepted by the mountains, and the coral strand reflecting more incandescent caloric than poetic sentiment—the third day's exploration was one of those intensely exciting sort of holiday excursions that yield their highest satisfaction retrospectively, in the exhilarating recollections of them that arise afterwards. The trail leads over coral which is evidently upheaval. Up through every crevice and around every boulder, big and little, there are thick growths of pili, makuekue, pualele (milk weed), manienie, kukae-puaa and other native grasses. At one place, a cavity in the rocks contains luxuriant growths of breadfruit, bananas, sugar-cane, and numbers of wiliwili trees, with their exceptionally pretty red seeds. The natives say when these seeds are ripe and red, there are plenty sharks off Puuloa. On the lower part of this land among the rocks, fine clumps of algarroba trees appear in different stages of development. All these trees have grown up within about six years. The large progeny of baby algarrobas whose frowsy heads appear here and there over the plains, if not nipped by cattle, would evidently evolve, within a very few years, a race of sylvan giants. Cattle kept off, and the natural propagation of these fine trees assisted by some planting, there is here the possibility of a big bonanza in a ten thousand acre forest within ten miles of the city of Honolulu. As pasture land this portion of the ranch is unsurpassable in richness. It is the part of Honouliuli designated the fattening paddock.

There are numerous historical accounts describing trails and government road and rail work through the 'Ewa District which provide factual and eye-witness accounts of their history and importance on the cultural landscape.

Development of the 'Ewa Sugar Plantation and O'ahu Railway & Land Company (1890)

Henry M. Whitney's "Tourists' Guide..." provides an overview of developments in the 'Ewa-Moanalua region in 1890. At the time of writing, the O'ahu Railway & Land Company (O.R. & L. Co.), had just opened with train service passing from Honolulu to the 'Ewa Court House (remaining track routes to be laid shortly thereafter). With the development of the rail system, businesses began immediately expanding, as rail access made the job of transport freight and livestock an easy task, and the 'Ewa Plantation incorporated.

...Progress of the Oahu Railway and its Attendant Improvements.

The enterprise shown by the Oahu Railway and Land Company from the very commencement of its great undertaking, and in every branch of its service, is worthy of special note and commendation. Every month witnesses the opening of some new plan, or the completion of some noteworthy object, in which all will be more or less interested. Of what may be termed the Pearl Harbor Section of the Oahu Railway there will be sixteen miles of track from the city to the mill of the Ewa Plantation, located near the shores of the west lagoon of the lagoon. Of this [page 160] twelve miles are completed and in excellent order to Pearl City Depot, improving, however, with each month's service and use by daily freight and passenger trains, and with the additional ballasting which the road receives from time to time, wherever and whenever wanted. At each station convenient buildings have been erected, with two good depots at Honolulu and Pearl City... The site of the new town at Ewa, which has been named Pearl City, is a very desirable one, the land rising gradually from the water's edge to the foothills of the mountains, distant three or four miles, and with a beautiful view of the lagoon from any portion of it. About one hundred lots have been surveyed, and will be built on, and water from mountain springs being brought down in pipes for the use of residents. On a recent visit there, the writer left the city on a calm and very sultry day, and on reaching Ewa was surprised to find a cool mountain breeze blowing, which made it very comfortable...

Huakai Makaikai a na Poe Kakau Nupepa i ke Alahao Hou A Site Seeing Journey of the Newspaper Publishers on the New Railroad

This 1895 article shares with readers an account of journey made by newspaper staff, landowners, rail executives, and dignitaries on the newly opened extension of the O'ahu Railway & Land Company track to Pōka'i, in Wai'anae. While passing through the 'Ewa District, the author (editor, W.H. Kapu) referenced several traditions of noted places seen along the way.

Iulai 8, 1895 (aoao 1)

Ka Makaainana

O.R. & L. Co.

Huakai Makaikai a na Poe Kakau Nupepa i ke Alahao Hou

E like hoi me ka mea i hoikemua ia, pela no hoi i hooko ia ae ai i kakahiaka Poalua iho la, hora 9:30. Ua akoakoa ae ua poe kakau nupepa ma ke kahu kikowaena o ka Hui Alahao a Aina Oahu mamua ae o ka manao i hoikeia maluna ae, a i ka hora 9:40 nae hoi i haalele iho ai ia Kuwili, no ka ulu niu o Pokai ka pahuhopu, kahi hoi i makaikai o ka hooloihi ana aku o ke alahao, e hoopuni aku ai paha hoi ia Oahu nei ma keia mua aku, no ka lio hao e holo ai.

Malalo iho na lala o ka Papapai i holo aku F.J. Testa (Hoke), Puuku o ka Ka Makaainana nei; J. Nawahi, Aloha Aina; J.E. Buki, Ka Leo o ka Lahui; a me D.M. Punini o ka Oiaio; J.U. Kawainui, Kuokoa, i kokuai e G.P. Kamaouha, luna makaainana hoopili wale; Bihopa Wilisi no ka Nupepa Ekalesia oili hapaha, S.W. Bihopa, Hoaloha; W.R. Farinetone, Pi Ki Adavataisa ame Kekake; G.C. Keniona, Kuokoa namu; E. Tause, Hoku; J.M. Vivasa. A Senetina; G. Mansona, Bulletin Ahiahi; J.D. Haine, Ka Hawaiiiana; J.D. Stake, Kamanawa; L.P. Linekona, nupepa ekalesia oili malama a ka Re. A. Makinikoki; Ho Fona, Nu Hou Pake; C. Iakanama, Manawa Pake; H.M. Wini, nupepa malama a no poe mahi ko; F. Godfere, aihe ana nupepa, aka he kamaaina oia no ia oihana. Aohe mea o na nupepa Kepani i hiki ae, a

me he la, oia keia paha kekahi akoakoa nui loa ana o na poe o ka papapai, koe nae hoe ke ano laulea like nui ole ae, A mawaho ae hoi, na kau aku ma ke ano ohua o Hope Makai Nui Kelekona o Waianae a me kana wahine. O ke Ana aina Nui o ka Hai a me ka mea paa ae like no ka hoomoe alahao ana kekahi i kaa pu me na poe kakau nupepa.

Mai ka hoomaka ana aku e holo a hoea hou mai iluna nei, ua nana , malama, a hoomaopopo ia na mea a pau e Luna Nui F.C. Samita, a ua hookeleia hoi ka enegina mahu e ka Wiliki Nui H.D. Robata. I ka haalele ana iho ia Honolulu nei a mahoe koke iho, ua hoolawaia mai kela a me keia me ua po-ke pua Pake poni a ulaula, a ma hope iho me na kika a me na mea inu mama. Hora 10:09 i kaalo loa aku ai ia Kulanakauhale Momi me ka hoomaha ole, a ku i ka halewiliko o Ewa i ka hora 10:25, a aole no i loihi loa iho hoomau aku la i ke kamoe ana no ke kaha o Waianae, kahi i kaulana i ka moolelo o Kamapuaa, a me Kaopulupulu i ke au o Kahahana ka Moi o Oahu nei, a pela no hou me Hiiaka-i-ka-Poli-o Pele, ma kana huakai imi kane, ia Lohiau.

Ua like ka holo ana o ke kaa mahope iho o ka haalele ana i ka hale wili me he “kai nehe i ka iliili, “ a e “pahee ana i ka welowelo, “ hookahi no hana, he hoolai wale no, i ka maikai a iliwai like o ke alanui a i ka laula ae paha hou kahi o ke alahao. I ka hoea ana aku hoi keia i kahi papaakea o ke ala, i awaili pu ia me ka lepo, aohe puehu a koe mai o ka lepa, a poina na maka o na poe ma ke kaa hamama mahope. Maika na me ma ke ala i ka ikena aku a na maka, koe no ka uliuli mai o na pohaku on na pali. Komo aku la i Waimanalo, he ulu kiawe ma o a maanei, a aole i liuliu iho puka ana i ka aekai, ae waihoa hamama mai ana ka uliuli o ka moana i ka loa a me ka laula, a aohe nani aku a koe mai oia wahi o ke ala. A hoea i Piliokahe, he wahi pa pohaku kahiko, a ilaila la, wahi a kamaaina, pale mai o Ewa a pale aku o Waianae, a e waiho lahalaha mai ana hoi mauka ae na awawa hanai holoholona o Nanakuli a me Mikilua...

...A pau no hou ka ai ana, ua hele hou aku kela a me keia e makaikai hou i ka halewili a me kahi mau wahi e ae... a haalele aku ke kaa ia Waianae i ka hora 2. Ma ke ala hou, ua ku ma ka halewili o Honouliuli e kali ai no ke kaa iho aku. A mai laila mai hoi, aohe no i holo nui loa mai, no ka ike e ia ana mai nae paha hoi kahi o kekahi kaa maua i ke kamahele kaa ma Waiau, a nolaila, ua ku pokole ma Kalauao, a hoohiki loa iluna nei he mau minute mahope iho o ka hora 4...

Translation Summary — A Site Seeing Journey of the Newspaper Publishers on the New Railroad

At 9:30 on Tuesday morning, newspaper editors and others gathered at the Honolulu station of the O’ahu Railway & Land Company. At 9:40 we departed on our trip past Kūwili on our way to the end of the route now at the Pōka‘ī in the coconut grove.

Having left Honolulu, by 10:09 drew near to Pearl City, and then reached the ‘Ewa Sugar Mill at 10:25. We continued on our path [through Honouliuli] before us towards the shore of Wai‘anae, passing the place made famous in the traditions of Kamapua‘a and Ka‘ōpuluhulu in the time of Kahanana, king of O‘ahu; also in the tradition of Hi‘iaka-i-ka-poli-Pele, in her journey to fetch Lohi‘au... We entered into Waimānalo, where the kiawe trees grew here and there, and passed along the seashore, arriving at Pili-o-kahe, where there is an ancient stone wall. This was pointed out by a native as being the boundary between ‘Ewa and Wai‘anae...

Reaching our destination we ate and then left Wai'anae at 2 o'clock, traveling along the new track to the mill at Honouliuli where we waited for the passing of another train. From there, it was not long until we traveled to Waiau, then a short time to Kalauao, returning [to Honolulu] at 4 o'clock.

November 5, 1901 (page 1)
The Honolulu Republican
Village Planned for Puuloa Peninsula

Immense and promising scheme of the Dowsett estate.
Arrangements for quiet retreat.
To occupy a mile of land almost facing Pearl Harbor.
Material for short railway arrives.

By Claudine—Handsome Boulevard--Branch railroad—boating, Fishing and other attractions.

Puuloa, the famous point at Pearl Harbor, for so many years so dear to the hearts of bridal couples, yachting parties and pleasure-seeking aggregations, is to be made a residence district. If present plans carry—and there is much in their favor—the pretty peninsula may in a few years bear to the visitor the sight of a sea-girt village of tropical cottages in place of the present expanse of waste, kiawe and unattractive landscape.

By the Claudine, which arrived Sunday morning from Maui, came a lot of railway material. Its discharge upon the wharf yesterday was the talk of the front, and the story of its purpose leaked out early in the day. The material was purchased from the Hawaiian Commercial & Sugar Company and is destined for Puuloa where it will become a railway line of about a mile in length or the benefit of prospective settlers. It was purchased and shipped over by the Dowsett Estate, which owns the Puuloa lands and purposes putting the fine lots there on the market at once.

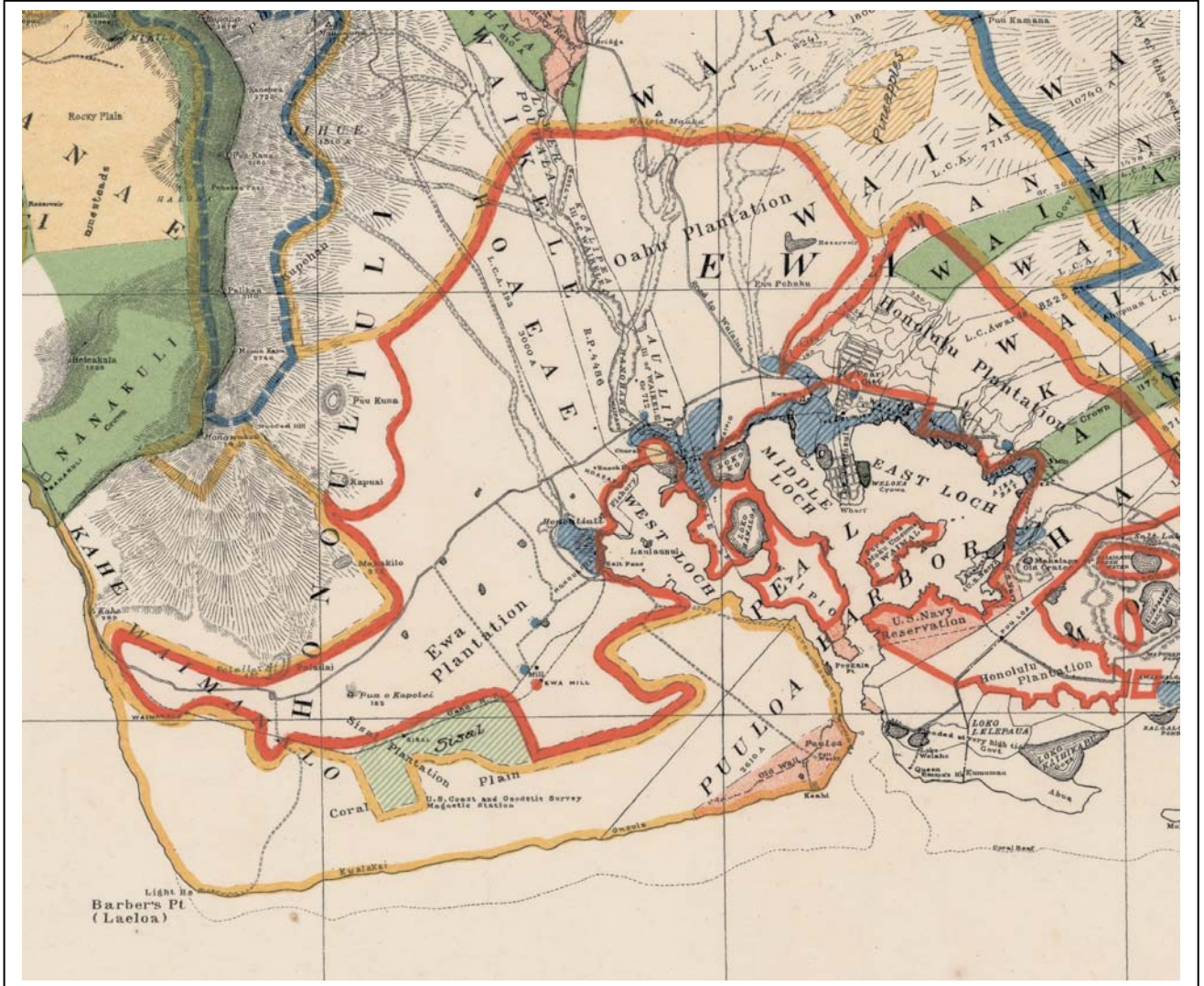
Puuloa begins at the entrance to Pearl Harbor and extends back, north and west, about two miles. The lots near the harbor are the ones that will first be placed upon the market. Following the sale of these, others will be offered to settlers. The whole tract will be plotted and divided into building properties. Along the harbor front two rows of trees will be set out, shading a boulevard. This boulevard will extend from the old house near the shark pen to a point almost opposite the head of the western loch. It will be finely macadamized for driving purposes, and near it will run the little railway that will transport the material for building and other requirements of the settler.

As an inducement to settlement there will be established in this new village exceptional boating and bathing facilities. Homes for yachts will be established and there will be houses at which shore boats and canoes will be kept for the edification of those with a tendency to such luxuries. There will be fish nets, and fish lines, and fish spears and shark pens. After a time there will be a livery stable, with fine horses and good drives.

In co-operation with the general scheme the Oahu Railway & Land Company has consented to lay a special track from Puuloa station to a point near Waiaho, immediately opposite Puuloa. From this terminus residents or pleasure seekers may be easily conveyed by boat to the other side and into the prospective village.

There is but one “bitter in the sweet” of all these plans. It is the question of just what lands the United States government will take for fortifications.

It has been understood all along that the government would require Puuloa point for a fortress. In case condemnation proceedings are instituted the plans affecting the immediate point will have to be modified.



Portion of the Island of Oahu (W.D. Alexander, 1902). The area outlined in yellow depicts grazing lands; the area outlined in red depicts sugar plantation fields; and major roads and railroad routes, as recorded in Government Survey are also depicted. (University of Hawaii-Manoa, Hamilton Library Map Collection—georef_Oahu_Alexander_1902)