

Royal Mausoleum
2261 Nuuanu Avenue
Honolulu
Honolulu County
Hawaii

HABS No. HI-23

HABS
HI,
2-HONLU,
25-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

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ROYAL MAUSOLEUM

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Location:

2261 Nuuanu Avenue, (Nuuanu Valley on Nuuanu Stream), Honolulu, Hawaii.

Present Owner:

State of Hawaii.

Present Use:

Memorial chapel. Open to the public as an historic building.

Significance:

Serves as a memorial to the Hawaiian rulers, many of whom were first interred in the structure. An attractive example of Gothic Revival architecture.

PHYSICAL HISTORY

Date of Construction:

1863-65 (see below).

General Sketch:

The following paragraphs are excerpted from a 1962 leaflet for which the copy was prepared by the Archives of Hawaii:

"On October 12, 1865 keys to the completed Royal Mausoleum were turned over to the Minister of Interior F. W. Hutchinson in the presence of King Kamehameha V.

"Construction of the Mausoleum had begun immediately after the death of Kamehameha IV on November 30, 1863. The first, or west, wing was finished on January of 1864 and a large state funeral was held for Kamehameha IV on February 3. That evening the coffin of Ka Haku o Hawaii (Prince of Hawaii), who died in 1862 at the age of four, was taken to rest beside his father. In respect for Queen Emma, mourning widow of Kamehameha IV, the building of the other three wings was delayed for over a year.

"The Mausoleum had just been finished when, on October 30, 1865, the funeral of Robert C. Wyllie was held and his casket placed beside his late ruler. A Scot, he was an intimate friend of the royal family and had served for twenty years as Foreign Minister.

"That evening, eighteen coffins of kings and chiefs were taken to the Mausoleum from the old tomb in the Palace grounds. The most elaborate were those of Kamehameha II and his Queen Kamamalu and of Kamehameha.III. Two of the ancient chiefs, Liloa and Lonoikamakahiki, were also moved. They had first rested in the burial

cave of the secluded valley of Waipio on the Island of Hawaii. The other coffins transferred contained the remains of high chiefs who had died after 1825. The bones of Kamehameha I, who died in 1819, had been buried according to ancient custom and are concealed to this day.

"As Kamehameha V and other members of the family died, they went to join those in the Mausoleum; but not William Charles Lunalilo, last male of the Kamehameha line. King Lunalilo reigned for a short thirteen months and died February 3, 1874. His will provided that a separate mausoleum be built for him and for his father, Kanaina, in the church yard at Kawaiahao.

"David Kalakaua came to the throne in 1874. This brought a new family's dead to the Royal Mausoleum. The remains of his father, C. Kapa'akea, his mother Ane Keohokalole and an infant of the couple, were moved from Kawaiahao cemetery to the Mausoleum on November 30, 1875. The bones of Ke li imai ka i, brother of Kamehameha I, and Naihe, were also moved to the Nuuanu Mausoleum. As they died, other members of Kalakaua's family and of his wife, Kapi'olani, were also placed in the Mausoleum. These included Likelike Cleghorn, sister of Kalakaua, and her daughter the Princess Ka'iulani.

"The Gothic building was refinished in 1904. The wood paneling of the interior walls was replaced. The ceiling was braced with groined arches. Gothic windows were cut through on either side of the entrance door. A circular window was opened over the entrance and in the gable ends. The coral stone exterior was coated with hard finished plaster to prevent further erosion and the interior walls and coral stone floor covered with cement. Apparently at the time of this renovation, the royal coat of arms in the east wing was replaced with a rose pane. The diamond-shaped colors of the Hawaiian flag in the side arched windows were also replaced with rose glass. The renovation was carried out in consultation with ex-Queen Liliuokalani and other members of the royal family.

"Queen Liliuokalani had first proposed converting the Mausoleum into a house of prayer in 1909. She asked that part of the appropriation for the Kalakaua tomb be used for benches, a Bible, a melo~~ion~~ and other furnishings suitable for a place of worship; but nothing was done at that time.

"The building became vacant in 1918 when the lonely ancient chiefs, Liloa and Lonikamakahiki were deposited in the Bishop Museum. In 1922 Prince Kuhio's widow again suggested that the Mausoleum be converted into a chapel. She paid for the work herself and was later re-imbursed by the Territorial Legislature. Ceremonies on March 26, 1922 marked the dedication of the chapel. A small altar of Koa wood was erected in the east wing. On it was inscribed, "Hemolele, Hemolele, Hemolele" (Holy, Holy, Holy). The chancel platform and steps, the chairs, lectern and reading desk were also made of koa wood.

"The Royal Chapel was removed in 1950. New panels of koa wood were used to line the chapel walls and the faded rose windows were replaced. Still the Royal Mausoleum built by Theodore C. Heuck looks much as it did in 1865 when Kamehameha IV and his son became the first of the Hawaiian royal family to rest at Mauna Ala.

Architect:

Theodore C. Heuck of Honolulu (c. 1830-1877). For a sketch of Heuck's career see Charles E. Peterson, "Pioneer Architects and Builders of Honolulu", Seventy-Second Annual Report of the Hawaiian Historical Society for the Year 1963, pp. 10-12.

Description as first built:

"The Mausoleum is designed in Gothic style, plain, but well proportioned, in its outward finish, the effect of light and shade brought out to advantage by projections and recesses, by the projecting cornices along walls and gables, buttresses, etc., etc....."

"In each of the three gables are two Gothic windows of colored glass in diamond form, filling the same in such a way as to represent in the center column the number of stripes and colors of the Hawaiian Flag.

"In the eastern gable is a circular window in Gothic fashion, having on its center field the Royal Hawaiian Escutcheon, surrounded by twelve transparent lights in the colors of the Hawaiian flag....."

The Hawaiian Gazette, October 4, 1965

Prepared by Charles E. Peterson, FAIA
332 Spruce Street
Philadelphia, Pa. 19106

For Columbia University School of Architecture

September, 1967



ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTIONArchitectural Interest and Merit:

Excellent Gothic Revival design by Honolulu's first architect - Theo. C. Heuck. The building was first intended for royal interments, but the bodies have, in recent years, been moved out into underground crypts.

Condition of Fabric:

Apparently good, though the exterior has been entirely plastered over and certain changes have been made in the interior (see above).

EXTERIORGeneral:

The building is in the form of a Latin cross in one story; overall dimensions 27'-9" x 54'8 1/2".

Foundations:

Presumably stone; there is no sign of a cellar or crypt.

Walls:

Coral stone, now completely covered with light tan stucco lined off in imitation of mortar joints. (Note: Old photographs show that the masonry originally had raised mortar joints like Heuck's Iolani Barracks and other old Honolulu buildings). Buttresses at corners. Parapets at gables surmounted by metal crosses.

Structural Systems:

Decorative, exposed wooden/^{roof}trusses supported on ordinary stone walls.

Porches:

A closed, gabled, Gothic entrance porch 7'-0" x 11' - 1".

Chimnies:

None

Doorways:

Entrance doorway protected by a wrought and cast iron double gate. Inside these are double, panelled hardwood doors.

Windows:

The principal windows are simple, narrow lancets fitted with wood casement sash with colored obscure glass. Front main gable has cross-shaped medieval "loophole". The other three gables have simple "rose" windows.

Roof:

A steep cross-shaped construction covered with gray asbestos shingles.

Cornices:

Concealed gutters, copper downspouts in corners.

INTERIOR

Floor Plan:

Anteroom in long arm of cross. Main room T-shaped. Short arm divided off to serve as a chancel.

Flooring:

Synthetic modern tile - mottled tan color with black marbled border.

Wall and Ceiling finish:

Walls panelled with modern hardwood to cornice. Heavy wooden cornice, apparently original. Openwork "gothic" wooden trusses of considerable interest. Exposed sheathing of painted v-joint boards. The two doorways leading into the main room have pointed arches cased with hardwood panelling.

Decorative Features:

The chancel and altar are of natural hardwood finish with simple decorations.

Miscellaneous:

Lighting: seven antique-style wrought-iron lanterns plus modern indirect units.

Notable hardware: none. Heating: none.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGSOrientation:

The structure is parallel to Nuuanu Avenue. The entrance faces Honolulu Harbor below in the distance.

Other Structures:

There is an octagonal underground crypt topped with a polished gray granite column inscribed "In memory of the sovereigns^e and high chiefs of Hawaii". It contains the Kalakauas. Another tomb of polished pink granite is for Kamehamehas II - V inclusive. Two more monuments are named for Charles Reed Bishop and miscellaneous important people. A caretaker's cottage is in the rear.

Landscaping:

Along Nuuanu Avenue is a fine iron fence. At the entrance - between decorative cast iron posts with urns - are a double carriage gate and two pedestrian gates. A circular driveway, accommodating visitors' automobiles, loops around the mausoleum.

The lawns are planted with royal palms and other attractive decorative trees and shrubs.



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