

# AUDIO TRANSCRIPT

## HAYSTACK HISTORIES

Please use in the galleries and leave behind for other visitors.

**Speaker 1:** I get the impression that it was a number of young men, they were having a meeting at the time, but they were out by the haystack. Legend has it that a storm came up and they decided to crawl into a haystack to keep out of the rain, which seems totally unreasonable to me. But the legend has, is that they will, in the haystack, they say to themselves, if we survived the storm, then we will spread the word. And they do indeed survive the storm. And from there they, they help create the Board of Foreign Missions. It's always amazed me how much New England was involved in Hawai'i and how much new England itself was involved in Asia, with the Asia trade to China trade, the India trade and then Hawai'i. And that's all because during this time, San Francisco, Seattle, Los Angeles, they're not well developed yet as far as ports of trade with Asia. And it's the east coast that still dominates that Asia trade until San Francisco becomes much more developed and that, that would be around this time that it develops. But it's really still on the east coast that Asia and Hawai'i are linked to America.

**Speaker 2:** When I wake up in the morning, in Dennett 3, Mission Park and walk out through those doors and I walk past the Haystack Monument, it is a slap in the face and my body has a visceral reaction, every time I see it. To the point where sometimes I go out the other door, because that reaction is too strong. Because when I walk past the monument, my vision is blurred by pictures of Hawaiians dying from disease, Hawai'ians being beaten for speaking Hawaiian. I see the blood that is stained on that monument and the lands surrounding it and realize that this entire campus carries the same weight and the same stain on the Mohican People that were here before, you know. It's the same resonant story. And then I just see wave after wave of Hawaiians being dispossessed of their own lands. Of Sanford B. Dole giving away lands that aren't even his. And with this monument, Williams College inherently is celebrating this history of settler colonialism and U.S. imperialism in Hawai'i.

**Speaker 3:** The Haystack Monument, and this is just my personal experience, is a green, peaceful, patch of space along the walkway down to the Williams football/soccer fields. It's got trees, it's got benches and there is something about that

space, just speaking personally again, that makes me want to sit there and just be quiet and pray. And to be honest, I just ignored it for a number of years until I started getting requests to lead a prayer moments by visitors. And I started doing some of the research about what, what is this monument. Historically it is a monument commemorating the 1806 Haystack gathering of five students that became missionaries and it's commemorating what is often thought of as the birth of the American missions movement. And so you can trace the American missions movement back to those five people praying in 1806 during a storm, finding refuge in a haystack, to that place. And then the monument was installed, I think it's 1867. And so it's a way of remembering that, and the College is . . . celebrating, honoring that missionary heritage and history at that time. That is the . . . the paradoxical nature of a monument like this, that is, inherently connected to the missionary enterprise and, Christianity, and a college public institution. I viewed that as the paradoxical reality of faith identity and just cultural racial identity that we have to grapple with today. And how do you hold both realities without diminishing one or the other? I don't know the answer to that, but I, I see the dual nature, and probably more than dual nature, of the multifaceted complex questions that arise around this.

**Speaker 4:** It stands as an example of, like Western imperialism, essentially. It's just the idea that Christianity is the idealized way to live and that it should be taught to people all over the world who have never really benefited from that kind of teaching. I mean, they can, but not in a way that's, like, generous or given to them or taught in a way that's actually beneficial for the societies as a whole, I think. I think it's very much just a way of executing some sort of like western imperialistic agenda. It's just kind of like the Trojan horse for spreading western ideals and I think personally it's offensive to have it on a campus that is supposedly trying to revert away from that kind of history. But at the same time I do think it's important that it actually remains and exists because it is a reminder of this College's problematic past, but it should be cheated in a way that's not monumentalizing that past. But also I think, in terms of monuments as objects themselves, they're just really limiting as objects. They only exist to teach one sort of history, whatever history is confined to the small plaque that have, which is why it just doesn't work as the monument and why it's so confusing and amorphous to people is because you see in it like what you know of his history and what it represents to some people. It's just like this weird looking obelisk thing in the distance; to some people, it's a representation of like a bloody history that tortured past. Because some people, it's like a really amazing structure

that represents their faith and their belief in that faith, and the importance of it. I remember just the beginning of the school year, I saw someone was doing some kind of sermon or praying to the monument and I had never seen that before. That was just an attitude towards the monument that I didn't realize had existed and I sort of remind myself of, I suppose, it's really just important to a lot of people.

**Speaker 5:** It's funny because when you hear the story you think, okay, this is what you dedicated a monument to [laugh]? Because it's really kind of a silly story when you think about it. There's these guys who . . . there was a thunderstorm and they were so terrified that, I think they either huddled next to or under or something, a haystack. The story goes that they told each other, okay, or they prayed together or something, and they said, okay, God, if we make it through this thunderstorm, we will dedicate our lives to you. And that's it. Like that's the story, right? So they survived. And then when you hear about them, that these individuals would go to places in South Asia or Southeast Asia, and the Pacific—places like Hawai'i—and certain parts of the continent of Africa, and would carry out Christian missions which is connected to and might be a more polite way of saying, you know, carrying out colonialism and imperialism, and violent erasures of culture, and people, and sovereignty, and whole generations of work, and thousands of years of living and caring, and . . . just like a whole people. You wonder, I wonder what was the intention of building this monument? The people who wanted to dedicate this monument, what exactly did they want to commemorate and honor, and what were they thinking about? What experiences were they centering and whose stories were they centering, and what did they value as success, and what did they value as important?

**Speaker 3:** My thinking is not fixed. I don't pretend to have any answers around this. I want to approach something because I'm a Christian and the tale of Christianity and missions is a part of my heritage. My Dad is a minister and was a missionary and I went to a school for missionary kids, so I have both some positive and, many negative experiences about that. But how do you honor the complexity? And how do you know when a monument is serving oppression and when it is serving both good and telling a story of the past that is contested? I don't know the answer. The question of Christianity and race and mission and colonialism is all in it together, and for some people there are parts of that for whom that is really life giving and the source of their faith and their joy. And for other people, as we've said, that's

the source of destruction and, and death, and, and despair. So I, I do not know. But when we talk about this question of monuments, it's not lost on me that monuments were erected in this country in specific racist circumstances. So I am holding that question of race and racism and structural racism as a query to myself to think about the racial implications of my own faith, because you can't talk about Christianity and whiteness in America . . .the Puritans came over, they view the native Americans as pagans, heathens. Then we have 1806: those who would be missionaries are called to the heathen lands. So the race question is, it's inherent, and how do we tell the truth about that and honor the complexity of the question?

**Speaker 5:** I don't know if we've ever talked about the word "mission," but it's really a weird word. You know, what does "mission" mean? Like, what was trying to be accomplished? You know, the language can really paint over and make it seem simple and easy, but it's so complicated and violent. And. . . if someone would have ever asked me, what's your mission, that would make me feel really uncomfortable.

**Speaker 3:** Whenever we talk about the Bible, especially in an American context, an imperial context or colonial context, I think it's always important to remember that the Bible is written by the oppressed and not by the people in power, not by the oppressor, not by the empire. So this is an, this is an underground movement in Matthew's Gospel that is happening on the fringes of the Roman Empire. Of course, several centuries later, Christianity will become the official religion of the empire. But before all that happens, Christianity is a persecuted, a movement among the oppressed. So when we think about what early mission, for those first disciples of Jesus, these first followers of Jesus would have looked like almost nothing that we could associate with mission and colonialism.

**Speaker 4 :** So the version I was told when I came here was that it was four or five students who were studying theology at the College, who were fleeing a lightning storm and hid under this haystack, which doesn't really make sense because those are flammable, but somehow miraculously survived the lightning. And because they survived, they decided to spread their faith around the world, because their faith is allegedly what saved them. And then I sort of found that that was a very bare bones version of what happened. It kind of glossed over a lot of the history and the reality of what their mission was. That's mostly what I found in my research, but that was the sort of bare bones version I received when I first came here, at orientation. That

was from a student tour in which we passed by the monument and they pointed it out. But I remember some other freshmen students were asking some follow-up questions to our J.A.s [Junior Advisors] and our J.A.s were the ones who express the most uncertainty about what it was supposed to represent. I think there is a vast majority of the campus who really has no idea what it commemorates at all. You do find a smaller group of students who care a lot about what those things represent, mostly because they're from countries or places that were colonized or they are immigrants, or there's some relationship there between the United States and this institution and their home countries. Those are the students who you find actually seem to know the most about it because they care about histories being passed down, where they stand in history, how that history is being told through which narratives, and those students are the ones who have done the theses and the history projects on the monument.

**Speaker 5:** I had a class once where the professor asked me to explain to the whole class what the Haystack Monument was, [laugh] and why Mission is called mission, and kind of just assumed that I would do it because I was from Hawai'i, I guess.

**Speaker 3:** This is Matthew 13, it looks like. This is a parable that Jesus is telling to his largely rural, poor, occupied-by-Roman-Empire followers, in rural Palestine at that time. So Jesus is telling, "The Field is The World." That's going to be very different than American Christians saying "The Field is The World," you know, 2000 years later or 1800 years later. I'm going back to that Matthew verse of "The Field is The World," and, so there is something in the essence of the Christian religion that is a movement. It's not at first an imperial colonialist movement, but it's a movement that says, you know, something has happened, and we want to tell people about it. And we've experienced something that's good, and that is just, and that is beautiful, and we want to tell people about it. And it doesn't all have to be oppression, I guess.

**Speaker 6:** It doesn't for anything for me in the sense that I have no missionary aspirations of my own, nor am I committed to the attitudes that it represents from a certain point in the past. It is a vital monument now. People continue to visit the campus, to connect with that history by coming close to that stone thing in a field. And the missionary group whose identity it anchors, the missionary group, the American Board of Foreign Missions has tendrils in lots of different directions. We're really talking about a monument that anchors a global phenomenon. I come at

that, you know, from the vantage point of missionaries to the Middle East, people going there with the intention of converting the benighted heathen to a loftier religious orientation, and they come back with other stone monuments and put them in museums. That's a circle of production. That's a circle of creating the world by travelling the world and appropriating what you find and bringing it back and, enshrining it in museums and then attaching other stories to it.

**Speaker 3:** I think one of the phrases that one of the men used, from the Haystack first meeting in 1806, was the moral darkness of Asia. You know, so it really, it was a part of the Christian colonial assumption that whole countries, whole continents are at stake here because of the Gospel and, and they'll risk anything. That's how fervently they believed it.

**Speaker 7:** Where does our history come from? The history of our students versus administrative history of what happens here at the college? Is it about the culture that sort of forms here, and the people who come here? Because we have several generations of Williams students coming from Hawai'i. So once we have missionaries who go to Hawai'i, they send their sons back because it's all boys, so we have multiple generations. So where do we write this history of the colleges? Is it one that's written from here at the college, or is it a sort of network of circuits that cycle in and out?

**Speaker 1:** There's such a religious fervor in some ways in New England for missionaries, and Hawai'i being one of those places to go. So I think it's part of the mission experience, or the desires of missionaries to be in Hawai'i. I also think that probably more of the US government acknowledges this and sees this rather than individual colleges as far as their policy. Williams College is probably the most famous of American liberal arts colleges that have direct links to Hawai'i, but all the schools in this area, whether it be the schools in Maine, whether it be Harvard, Yale, they would all produce missionaries at some point. And Hawai'i was simply one of those places that God's work could be done. And also because the money, you know, these people are intertwined with the church and the plantation system.

# AUDIO TRANSCRIPT

## IMAGING HAWAI'I TO THE WORLD

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**Speaker 1:** So photographs like this of hula dancers became really popular. There was an economic viability to this type of image, and in some cases the sitters or the individuals in the photographs were not themselves hula dancers. What I also find really interesting about this photograph is the silhouettes that are formed, so like the pa'u skirts which would have been originally made in kapa, would have created these large billowing skirts and then they're paired with these really large billowing sleeved shirts in cotton and they're buttoned all the way up with these high collars. I think that combination is very interesting.

**Speaker 2:** The photo studios had backdrops that they could turn to different ends that they could orchestrate and kind of curate what they wanted to show. That's what's going on in this photograph. It's people wearing very carefully chosen clothes, but you can see a backdrop back here on the left side of the photograph. In the rest of the background, it's blank, so you have a sense of a commissioned image to document a particular thing labeled with a generic title, Hawaiian "Hula" Dancers.

**Speaker 3:** There seems to be a very clear sense, particularly with that caption, Hawaiian "Hula" Dancers, of trying to define a typology, trying to say, here are the types of folk you would meet should you come to Hawai'i and one of the big things is Hula and what is Hula? Here are people who do it. It means that there is a whole not just kind of a capitalist project of producing something and being paid for it, but there's an audience and this social desire for images of Hawai'i. One of the things in photography that is debated, I would say from the beginning of photography in 1839 through to the 1920s is this sense that, is it a science? Is it an art form? And where do what we now know as these branches of anthropology come in to play and where does anthropology fit as science/art form?

**Speaker 4:** One of the most captivating objects that we came across in the archives, and that we've pulled together here, is this incredible red photo album that's embossed with the simple words, Hawaiian Photographs. And I actually really love that there's a period after photographs. And this as an object is so evocative to me. It's thick, it's sort of crumbling, it's massive, and if you flip through it, there's

such an eclectic mix of photographs. On one page you'll see a view of the changing skyline in Honolulu. On the next page you see a royal portrait of the Kamehameha family and everything in between. And this, as an object really speaks volumes to the relationship between Williams and Hawai'i because the possessor of this object, Samuel Chapman Armstrong of the class of 1867, whose papers we found this album among, possessed not only this collection of views of Hawai'i when it was rapidly changing. It serves as a marker of his ability to control it and to gather it and to really have a handle on all the ways in which this place was changing and all the ways in which that change was beginning to circulate around the world, and to gather it all into one place and sort of name it. patly, Hawaiian Photographs. I'm really strikes me as an object that really evokes this deep relationship between these two places.

**Speaker 2:** If you look at this book, a leather bound volume labeled Hawaiian photographs, you can appreciate its production values—binding paper, the substance—and you haven't experienced by virtue of the sequence of things that you're looking at. I'm looking at portraits, individual people who I could stop and engage with and stare at and try and intuit individual personalities, but then I also get to landscape like the Kapina Falls in Honolulu, and I get a picture of the mausoleum of a king, and a prison, and a hotel, and a US Marine hospital. And begin to get a sense of colliding cultures and how incredibly diverse the community is there, were missionaries first landed. Right after a native church. I start to wonder about the stories encoded here about what spirituality look like before the missionaries got there. What an enticing artifact to explore.

**Speaker 2:** The album has clearly been found and deployed for a particular purpose and the finder has an attitude, an ethos, a set of spiritual convictions, whatever driving the assembling of an album that can be looked at, then, you know on multiple occasions by different people, so it becomes pedagogically significant because you can look at it more than one time because it can be used to sustain other stories in palimpsestic ways, and I think when that happens, worlds emerge according to individuals. We think about what the past is. It's us telling stories about the material evidence that remains. The material evidence has outlived the people that used it. The material evidence encodes attitudes and events, but we have to resuscitate those things. We have to figure out what they are on the basis of what the material evidence looks like now. Sometimes that's really hard to do and sometimes people disagree on what they're seeing and are prone to telling



different stories to explain what they're looking at. When you get all those things in conjunction with each other, then you start to have a kind of a richer collage to consider. Finding it in an album is not the same as finding a miscellaneous piece of paper in a drawer. There's less evidence, you know, offered by that piece of paper in the drawer than an album provides you.

**Speaker 3:** I'm loving these photographs' ability to not flatten the moment. Often we think, as we move throughout the 19th century and when people start having cartes de visite—these smaller images that stand in for the person, that stand in for, "oh, you were out running errands. I came in, here's this little 4 x 5 of me." So in the 19th century we actually, from like 1870/1890, don't see many images of group portraits anymore. We might get one or two people; we don't see large groups. Everyone's got these cartes de visite.

**Speaker 5:** The photographs and documents in this section, Imaging Hawai'i to a Broader World, are to me, indicative of the extent to which Samuel Chapman Armstrong and his family are intertwined into Hawaiian society in the 19th century. We see that he's even invited to the palace; there's an invitation and a menu on display here. And this is also reflected in Chapman's extensive collection of photographic portraits of the Hawaiian royal families. He's even such a "completist" that we see cartes de visite, or small photographic representations, of painted portraits in those circumstances where no photographic portraits exist, or were not possible. So for example, the small image of Kamehameha I, where he's wearing his famous 'ahu'ula, or feather cloak.

**Speaker 5:** Another of these small photographs of non-photographic work—So this is likely a photograph of a watercolor or perhaps a lithograph—it shows a seated woman holding a feather standard, so to you that might look like a stick with a cluster of feathers emerging from the top, and seated behind her is a smaller male figure. And this woman at the center of the composition is Queen Ka'ahumanu, the famous and favored wife of Kamehameha I, and who then became Regent or kuhina nui under the reigns of her stepsons Kamehameha II and Kamehameha III. And this again is a graphic work that was made of her in 1816, and we have it here, still circulating in a photographic form, perhaps as many as 50 years later, maybe more. So we see how the Monarchy in photographs isn't just a self-fashioning that happens in a photographic studio, but we also need these other representations. So we end up having photographs of painted or printed works.

**Speaker 1:** During Kalākaua's reign of course he was really interested in self-representation and so he utilized that aspect of the photograph to circulate images of Hawai'i that he wanted to endorse. And there was incredible potential with photography in that way because people were rabidly consuming them, acquiring them, putting them into photo albums. And there was a celebrity attached to foreign figures. So Kalākaua himself became a celebrity. And all of these photographers were buying each other's studios and each other's negatives, and so they were all reprinting and reprinting images because there was a market there they could resell earlier images. I think photography was a very accessible medium, and so people were acquiring them and because he was a government leader, there was an amount of popularity. And it cannot be said that that dampened the racism around it because most certainly, um, he did experience racism, which he often negotiated brilliantly by demonstrating his multilingual knowledge, and his extensive knowledge of literature, international literature, and his ability to communicate both poetically and very accurately and astutely when talking about government issues. So even in instances where he encountered racism, people would often have to sort of say like, 'oh yeah, okay, I can see you're a pretty brilliant person.' So I guess I share that simply to say that even though somebody may have operated within colonial frameworks, I don't think that would have prohibited them from collecting images of people that they held racist assumptions against.

**Speaker 1:** Kalākaua was very savvy when it came to self-imaging, not only of himself and the Hawaiian kingdom, but also have ali'i in general, Hawaiian people in general. And so when he would go to another city, you know, he embarked on a world tour, the first head of state to ever undertake a world tour. He would arrive in a city and go straight to a photographer's studio, and photographers knew this about him. He would wear these royal orders to demonstrate Hawai'i's international engagement. He would posture himself in a similar way to other government leaders where there's a turned head, you know, his eyes are looking away. He's not necessarily looking straight on, in the same way that a lot of the anthropological photographs of members of foreign places were being photographed. And part of that was the technology of, of like the early, you know, 1850s; people had to remain very still. But by the 1870s, Kalākaua assumes the throne in 1874. He knew and understood very well how to engage the camera and how to utilize photography for its positives.

**Speaker 3:** These are extraordinary. They raise so many questions, questions of the lived experience of these figures, particularly in looking at the men, first. One is drawn to them because they're wearing clothing that's very au courant with very particular branches of the European aristocracy. Just incredibly formal. Here we see self-fashioning at its height with, this is how I want to be represented. For me, this is how I want to be represented as both the person and an institution and this is how I want my person, my family, my nation, and my sovereignty to be read.

# AUDIO TRANSCRIPT

## THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE

Please use in the galleries and leave behind for other visitors.

**Speaker 1:** My heart is pumping right now. . . [audible swallow] I can feel the tears in my eyes looking at this picture of the First Mission Building in Honolulu because I grew up listening to this narrative of . . . the treasures and tools that these people from this cold land brought. You know, the light that is painted around their narrative: bringing education; bringing writing; bringing civilization, in their words. And why I'm moved is, because in this moment, seeing this picture, I feel everything that was, that is lost through these coercive forms of assimilation. You know, this is the missionary school. This was a missionary building. These are Hawaiians that were taken to this place, dressed in all white. Let's wear all white. Yeah. Let's paint blank the thousands and thousands of years that our culture was built upon, you know. And it's so intergenerational, this picture. You see the adults. You see the children sitting on the side. But what's even more startling is . . . I don't know who this character standing on the left hand side in a black suit, with a reed-like hat, and a dog on his left hand side is. But my best guess would be that they're a missionary. And they're standing in a very . . . the picture is strange because all the Hawaiians are in focus and yet this individual standing on the left hand side, so displaced from the central group, is blurred and disfigured in a way that you can't make out. And the features are elusive, almost like standing on the side saying, look what we've brought. Look what we created. And all of these Hawaiians physically behind this picket fence and barred in.

**Speaker 2:** I am now looking at a photograph of the first mission building in Honolulu. There are some sort of entertaining details, like a dog with a head that so blurred that you can't see it. But again, it's posed to document something that is really a formative presence in Hawai'i. The role of the missionaries in both the history of Hawai'i and the experience of the place is deterministic. They were powerful. They had an agenda, and they changed the society that they entered from the ground up, and from the top down. I think it's evident in this photograph, in the way the children are seated, and the way people are on both sides of the fence. It's a going concern, this institution. But again, the dress seems to distinguish people: hats, for example, are prominently worn by several of the individuals in the photograph, making them stand out and look different than some of the other individuals. Again, you have the sensation of, hmmm, the power of the photographer in these images,

the power of the photographer to really orchestrate how a people and a place are rendered. He's saying, "you three people stand there right in the middle." He's saying, "please children, sit down in a row over there." He's saying, "all of you behind the fence, hold still for a moment." And the result is a particular kind of rendering of something that can be labeled "Mission Building." It is very much . . .there's power encoded here in that ability to arrange people—a lot of people—in rows, places, against trees, quietly . . . but not self-effacingly.

**Speaker 2:** Well, it's not about its physical location, it's about an institution: First Mission Building in Honolulu. And the first mission building in Honolulu has cascading ramifications in terms of power, in terms of how institutions and histories evolved from this particular moment. I would also call attention to the relationship between image and caption, which is a powerful, powerful site where meaning is made. The caption and the image change with every iteration; a photograph can be printed more than once, and it can be labeled differently every time. Those images with different labels can then be disseminated widely.

**Speaker 3:** I'm looking at a photograph of the first mission building in Honolulu. I remember going to the Mission Houses as a kid, and those are where they still stand today, and being taught specific things—very filtered, through a specific lens—about these houses that we're looking at right now. It's funny because I drove past it when I went home for spring break. I drive past a lot, actually, to go to downtown and all that. I remember, being in maybe first or second grade. . .some kind of elementary school year. . . and going there, and it was all framed in this very weird specific way, where it was like, 'these people must have been so brave to live in these conditions and to have come here,' and you know, I remember that as a kid being like, 'wow.' You know, you're six, seven, eight years old and so you're being told this, you think, 'wow, that must have been a very bold, brave thing to do.' And that's because I was getting a very specific lens of Hawaiian history. Even growing up there, you're getting a very specific lens. And now, it's coming all the way here to the . . .you know. . .literally furthest part of the country that you can, or quote unquote "country," right? And learning about these things now and having a different understanding and lens of it. But we're not . . . home and we're learning about this. And there's all these resources, but it's not in Hawai'i. And how did it get here? Why did it get here? Who brought it here? I don't know. So it'll be interesting to go back there now as an adult to those mission houses and ask questions.

**Speaker 2:** So we're starting here. I am looking at a photograph labeled Hawaiian Grass House. It's very striking. It's very engaging because of the people sitting in front of this modest shack with towering palm trees around. It enables the person looking at it to engage with people and setting simultaneously. These people are looking at us. There is a dog and, and there is cloudy sky that takes up most of the image. But even so, because the house is silhouetted against this guy, there's no doubt about what we're intended to look at. It is a modest site. It is an ethnographic feeling that I get from this image, a kind of documentarian attitude encoded in what I'm looking at. And I think I can learn a lot from it even though I had not been there. That's of course the joy of photography: that it brings you close to things that you're actually quite far away from. Conceptually, intellectually, psychologically, experientially.

**Speaker 4:** There is a dwelling directly in the center, and the doorway of the dwelling lines up almost directly dead center with the image. To the right of the dwelling are about six very tall, very thin palms that seem to just rise in ether from the air. To the left of the dwelling are about the same number of palms, many of which are much further in the background, and there's a kind of either smoke or mist. And running all along the lower fourth of the image is a long, white fence. And in front of the dwelling directly in front of us are about five people seated. This image is fascinating. On one part, one could read it against . . . kind of a mythos of Hawai'i as being this monotonous, continuous, lush landscape, where, to a 19th-century American or British or European sense, it's just all jungle. One sees here the boundaries of homesteads, and particularly with the fence, one thinks, fences are for delineating space and keeping some things in and some things out, both people and perhaps livestock . . . which means that there is already in this location a sense of proprietary claim to land as well as a sense of grazing and animal husbandry consistent with the European mindset. And so what I see here is an image that shows what one could read as folk in this dwelling, who called this home, at ease. What I also see is perhaps a European eye, in thinking, why is this moment important? It proves that there's already a system of understanding of natural resources, and an understanding and a larger communal conversation about who owns those resources.

**Speaker 5:** One of the fascinating things to me about Kawaiaha'o Church, the church that has that colonnaded front, is that this is the church almost all of the Hawaiian monarchs, after the arrival of the Congregationalist missionaries, this is

the church that they attended. There are six Williams alumni buried in the cemetery behind Kawaiaha'o church. Among them is Sanford B. Dole, alum of the class of 1867 here at Williams. He is well known in Hawai'i one of the primary actors in the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy, and he became the president of the provisional government in 1893.

**Speaker 6:** I'm taken in particular with the image here of the grass building, which we came to find out, by reading a letter in the Archives, in Samuel Chapman Armstrong's papers, from his mother. It's a letter that she wrote to him in 1872. And the letter is actually about the making of that drawing of the grass structure that predates Kawaiaha'o Church. So she says, Dear Sam, I called at the artist's for a photograph which he had prepared for me, from a sketch which I took soon after our arrival in the islands. I took this and several other sketches so that my friends could see them. Time and handling have defaced the white background. This picture of the grass church where Mr. Bingham preached many years contrasted with the present stone church, they show the changes which have come over things here. I'm not aware that anyone else has a picture of the famous grass church.

# AUDIO TRANSCRIPT

## FACING THE OVERTHROW

Please use in the galleries and leave behind for other visitors.

**Speaker 1:** I'm looking at a torn piece of paper from September of 1887, and it's general election? I don't know if these are results, or whether they're tallies of population. But you can see that the highest number of those counted would be native Hawaiians, at 2104. The next column are Hawaiian-born foreigners, which I'm assuming, then, would be probably American missionary children or business people's children. Then you have American and British at 832, almost half, again, is the Portuguese at 423. So you could see the impact already in 1887 of importing the Portuguese to work on plantations. Often the overseers, or the luna, would be Portuguese, and they would oversee the work of imported Asian workers or Puerto Rican workers. But the Portuguese would maintain the sort of high-on-the-hierarchy of non-Asians and non-Hawaiians. 1887, you see an administrative state taking place in Hawai'i that is going to replace the monarchy. And this administrative state keeping records of people by race or ethnicity or national origins.

**Speaker 2:** This collection of photographs, documents, even a small ribbon from Punahou in 1891, is a really poignant collection for me. I'm looking right now at a group of photographs depicting a meal. We see people seated around long horizontal tables and rows. You might notice pineapples on the table or watermelon cut in the shape of opening flowers. It's a striking scene to say the least, and I should mention that this meal in 1891 was to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Punahou and Samuel Chapman, Armstrong Williams, class of 1862 whose archives yielded the finds that you see in this show; he spoke at this lu'au, to commemorate the 50 years of Punahou. But the first time I looked at this group, there was a photograph that had a funny blur on the left-hand side near the top corner. And that blur indicates that something is moving. And when you look closely at what it is that's moving, you see that it is a young woman holding a feather standard and that denotes that a royal person is present. Someone of the ali'i. And below her, you see a woman in a sedate, black dress, her head bowed in prayer before the meal, and that woman is Queen Lili'uokalani, the last reigning monarch of the Hawaiian Kingdom. This is an 1891. This is after she is crowned Queen, after the death of her brother. She seeks in her time to create a new constitution for her people. And when I saw this photograph, it was in striking contrast to other images that were more familiar to me of Lili'uokalani



from actually 1893 when the Overthrow took place. And those images often relied on racial stereotypes to cast native Hawaiians as savages. Even though Hawai'i had one of the highest literacy rates in the world at that time, in fact, higher than that of the United States, it was common to see in the United States texts and images in the press that suggested that Lili'uokalani in her indigenous body was incapable of ruling responsibly, intelligently, justly. To be clear, I didn't find any of those images amongst Samuel Chapman Armstrong's papers. Instead, I found in his letters and publications many suggestions that the United States would better govern Hawai'i than its Monarchy because in his judgment, Hawaiians required external guidance in their moral and civil formation. But it was poignant for me, both intellectually and emotionally, to see this photograph of Lili'uokalani, because there she was sitting amongst the children of missionaries in her conservative dress, saying grace before a meal, doing everything that they do and expect as proper comportment. Here she is doing all of these things, and yet because of her genealogy, when it becomes politically expedient, she will be portrayed as an uncultured savage.

**Speaker 3:** The ali'i [chiefly classes] were incredibly self-aware. They managed the photographs. So even in group photographs, the ali'i had a way of centering themselves within the group, and they took control of that positionality and of their responsibility. And in this photograph she's looking down, almost, you know. It's a very candid photograph, catching her at a moment where she's not doing that. But even in candid photographs, like of ali'i when they were young, you see them in groups with other children and they are very assertive with the camera. They're aware of where that camera is, they know who they are in that group, and they position themselves direct with the camera. Even in candid photographs you see that. That's not happening in this photograph at all. It's a very rare moment.

**Speaker 1:** Well, this lu'au is fascinating. You have pineapples, you have these watermelons that are cut open in ways that look like flowers. And then, when you see the people, you get this mix who appeared to be, I'm assuming white American women, either missionaries, or married to businessmen, or married to missionaries. The Queen is here, so she's obviously Hawaiian. I'm also amazed at the scale of this, the amount of people and the amount of tables and food that has set out. 1891. We're on the verge of taking Hawai'i, right? I mean we've. . .the U.S. has been in Hawai'i since the 1830s with sugarcane plantations. So they begin to import workers mostly first from China. And the Chinese had already been to Hawai'i, cultivating

sugarcane on their own, but in small batches and not in a plantation system. But eventually, the U.S. will either take or they will purchase or they will convince the Monarchy to give them land. And then they convinced the Monarchy that foreigners could own land. So the U.S. begins to buy up or seize large tracts of land, mostly to grow sugarcane. And they need workers. So they go to China to, to recruit workers. At the same time, China, Japan, and Korea are facing their own issues in terms of U.S. imperialism or internal discord. So there's a lot of, some people would call surplus labor in both China, Japan and Korea. So the Hawaiian sugar planters association, which are Americans, began to recruit people from China, Japan by the late 1860s because of the Meiji Restoration, which emphasizes modernization, new land-tenure agreements, so there is surplus labor there. For a brief moment of time, Americans go to Korea to recruit Koreans to come to Hawai'i to work on the sugarcane plantations, emphasizing that they could practice Christianity in Hawaii. So then there's a large number of Koreans who then go to Hawai'i to work on the plantations when the first things they do is build a church. Of course, once the Japanese take full control of Korea by 1905 I think, then they stopped Korean immigration to Hawai'i, or anywhere for that matter, because they want Korean workers to stay in Korea. So by 1891, we're just about to take over the island through the threat of military force and then eventually 1898 would lead to the Spanish American War, and the U.S. would use Hawai'i as a place from which to stage ships for battle and so on. And it would also just be a place that they could go to from the Philippines.

**Speaker 4:** I'm looking at a program that was kept in the Armstrong family papers. The program is in celebration of the dedication of a plinth, a special memorial to Samuel Chapman Armstrong at the Punahou School in Hawai'i. There's writing on this plinth as well as a very interesting but somewhat conventional portrait of a 19th-century missionary. The writing gives textual understanding for a missionary, an alum of Williams College, a founder of the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute, because the language details the things that Armstrong wanted to be remembered for. And those things are his leadership of a colored troop during the Civil War, his founding of the Hampton Institute, and quote "uplifting a race." In this last phrasing, "uplifting a race" incredibly poignant, viscerally so, as we think that his brand of "uplifting a race" is not to put African Americans in the contiguous U.S. on the same level, equal before the law, with Anglo and other white Americans, but to give them credibility in the eyes of the state for performing the same menial labor that they had done under slavery. For the Charter of the Hampton Institute says nothing about

the intellectual or spiritual development of the colored race, but says everything about how labor creates character for black men.

**Speaker 5:** Samuel Chapman Armstrong graduated from Williams in 1862. He was the son of Richard Armstrong, who was among the first missionaries to Hawai'i who set up Punahou School, where Samuel Chapman and probably 10 to 12 other Williams grads, were students in the mid 19th century. Armstrong went on after Williams to be a General in the Civil War and then to found the Hampton Institute in Virginia, which was a school for recently freed enslaved people as well as Native Americans. And the pedagogy of the school and the ethos was very much connected to that of Punahou, where his father was the first principal and essentially one of the founders of that school.

**Speaker 6:** I'm looking at a stamp. It's a Hawai'i postage, 2-cent stamp with Queen Lili'uokalani's picture on it, with the words PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT 1893 stamped over her image. The photograph of Queen Lili'uokalani shows her wearing her butterfly pin. That butterfly pin was a piece of jewelry that she acquired when she went to London. She accompanied Queen Kapi'olani; at that time, Queen Lili'uokalani was the princess. She accompanied her to London to participate in Queen Victoria's Jubilee. While they were there, they were photographed at a photography studio, and the photographs that they took there include then Princess Lili'uokalani wearing that pin in her hair. Later, Queen Lili'uokalani, after she's overthrown, and in 1895 when she's imprisoned in the palace, she sews her protest quilt, what's always referred to as her protest quilt. That quilt is really an assertion, not of protest against anything, but an assertion of a Hawaiian national consciousness. And in that quilt, her butterfly pin appears as an embroidered butterfly. And I always thought that her reference to that butterfly was in reference to her trip to London, where she and Queen Kapi'olani were treated as among the highest-ranking monarchs of the world. There are stories that document their trip, including a story about Queen Kapi'olani and then Princess Lili'uokalani attending an event in London. And when Queen Kapi'olani entered the room, everybody stood up. And somebody whispered to Princess Lili'uokalani, along the lines of, why won't your Queen be seated so that we all may sit as well? And then Princess Lili'uokalani whispered to Queen Kapi'olani in Hawaiian saying, it's time for you to have a seat, or along those lines, you know, asking Queen Kapi'olani to please be seated. And after Queen Kapi'olani sat down, the others in the room then were able to sit. And

that is because her genealogy, Queen Kapi'olani's genealogy was respected among those who were in attendance. And so I always thought that Queen Liliu'okalani's reference to that butterfly pin was a reference to national equity, where Hawai'i was considered a country, and independent country, and is acknowledged as such among other countries. And so to see this stamp with the PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT marked across her chest and part of her face, with that butterfly pin, that. . . I don't know, it's very moving. It's very saddening. It almost doesn't make sense to see the butterfly and that stamp together. I suppose it just . . . gets at the idea that in the end, the international community did nothing when the provisional government overthrew the constitutional monarchy of Hawai'i. It's very sad.

# AUDIO TRANSCRIPT

## A WRITTEN LANGUAGE

Please use in the galleries and leave behind for other visitors.

**Speaker 1:** These letters that are displayed here are letters that actually we discovered in the Samuel Chapman Armstrong Papers in the Archives, because of a discovery that a graduate intern made: Tom Price. He was doing some research in these files, and. . . I was just looking back at his notes and he just made a note: there's a bunch of letters in Hawaiian in here, and they seem to be about songs. And that's all it said. So he and I went back over to the Archives and pull them out, and indeed, there were 11 letters in Hawaiian in this certain folder. Among the letters that we're looking at here, the one that struck me most is the one in front of us with brown ink on blue paper that starts with a salutation Aloha 'oe. You'll see that on the back of this letter, the sender addressed it to an SC Limaikaika. And since we were looking in the papers of S C Armstrong, we immediately looked up this name, and found out that Limaikaika is a literal translation of Arm-strong: lima means arm, and ikaika means strong. So this Williams student, before he was a Williams student, when he was still finishing high school in Hawai'i, was the editor of a Hawaiian language newspaper called Ka Hae Hawai'i. And indeed he put out a call in 1860. I'll read Samuel Chapman Armstrong's call for these letters in translation. Oh, people that know fine mele and the old mele: I want you all to send those in and some will be published in the Hae or Ka Hae Hawai'i, the name of the newspaper, and some will be kept for these things are valuable. And this is signed S C Limaikaika, editor of the Hae.

**Speaker 2:** I'm not sure of the process of how or why this particular set got to Williams, but they include a number of very important, particularly important poems. There's a poem by Ka'ahumanu, who was the single most important person in the adoption of Christianity in Hawai'i. There are a number of mele, poems, in honor of Kamehameha III and IV. There is a poem in honor of the canoe of a famous voyager. There are poems called kanikau. A kanikau is a poem of mourning. On the whole, it's quite a significant trove of poems. Most of them were not printed in the newspaper. So, until the Williams Archive materials were discovered, they really were unknown. I've never seen it before by Ka'ahumanu, so that alone is significant.

**Speaker 3:** Old Hawaiian letters written . . . and found in this strange new college that I had no idea was so connected to me as a person? What . . .? You have to go, you have to go: that's just what the voice and my head was saying. You have to go, you have to go read them. This is who you are, this is your story. Go on and read them. So I did. And in that moment, seeing these letters was . . . there were two things going on. One: just this moment, of . . .like . . . Oh wow . . .just, wow, wow, wow, wow, wow, wow, ahhhhhhhhhh. What is this? What are these stories? What is being told? Samuel Armstrong had put out, from the newspaper, as the editor of Ka Hae Hawai'i, a call saying that we are looking to have letters sent in to us that share, old Hawaiian stories, chants, songs . . .And knowing that that information was embedded within these letters, fostered this moment of overwhelming joy, knowing that I am a product of this history. And then the things settled and we began to read, and transcribe. And then there were tears, too. And I think that came from the fact that, all three of us were sitting in this room and yet we couldn't fully comprehend what was being shared with us, through time. And that brought a deep sorrow, you know . . .but also tears of joy when you get small snippets, and I'm like, oh my goodness, this is coming from this person and this is coming from this person. And I know that this is a victory chant for Kamehameha I. And I know that this is a chant for this wa'a or sailing canoe, from Maui. . .but what is the chant getting at? I know what it's about, but I don't know the poetics, the words themselves have been lost . . . and the more and more I sat with these letters, looking at them in the Archives seeing if these had been published, I saw them in a completely new light, you know. I saw them as not only these time capsules, that saved and have perpetuated these songs and chants and stories, but also as written forms of resistance. And that kupuna [ancestors] said No, this is important. In a time and place where I'm denied my indigeneity and connection to my ancestral being. I will write and transcribe these epics of mine.

**Speaker 3:** This letter written on light blue paper, written by an individual by the name of Makali'i, says Aloha 'oe e Ka Hae Hawai'i, to you, the newspaper of Ka Hae Hawai'i. Eia malalo iho keia wahi mele kahiko hakuia e Ka'ahumanu. I am sending to you, outlined below, a letter, a mele, written about Ka'ahumanu. And it's saying that, 'I'm sending it to you because the poe opiopio, the youth, next generations, should be able to listen and hear about ia mau hana a na alii i hala aku, the works and doings of the chiefs and chiefesses that have passed. Ina he kaponu e hookomo.' He says, ' if it is a right thing to do, then enter it into the newspaper.' And what's written below is this very elaborate and poetic mele for Ka'ahumanu.

**Speaker 2:** It's a wonderful discovery but in the end it's not really that surprising. I think that there must be boxes of these kinds of documents in lots of places and people . . . because so few people know Hawaiian; they don't know what they are and what they're dealing with. And it's hard to find somebody who can really identify them. The Smithsonian has several of the most important early Hawaiian documents and they can't even find them anymore. So we know it's there. This is, as I said, this is particularly wonderful because it deals with poetry still within the timeframe that people were in a position to be composing this kind of poetry, and to have memorized it. So it's a wonderful find and I really hope it's the first fruits of many more to come.

**Speaker 2:** This is an edition of the New Testament that was finished in the early 1830s, just in time, in fact, the first binding of the entire New Testament in Hawaiian was placed on the body of the dying Ka'ahumanu so she could see it was all there before she died. One of the major duties of the mission was to . . . and maybe it's most important duty, was to translate the Bible into good Hawaiian. When the missionaries landed in 1820, none of them could speak Hawaiian. And so they began an arduous study, which was very difficult for them, but was not moving along very successfully for a number of years. The final strategy was, they who are very well trained in biblical languages—Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic—would make rough drafts of the Hawaiian and it would be a group of Hawaiian chiefs and orators and poets who would frame the actual Hawaiian part of it.

Probably the single most important translator was Reverend Richards from Williams College. He translated probably over one third, together with his collaborator David Malo, one of the most important of Hawaiians of his age, a commoner who was raised to be an advisor to the very highest chiefs. Malo and Richards would sit, and Richard would look at his Greek text, say it in rudimentary Hawaiian, and Malo would polish it off. And then these drafts would be handed around to other teams of missionaries. It took really about 12 years for the project to be finished. And it remains the most important, perhaps the most time consuming, anyway, literary project in Hawaiian literature.

**Speaker 3:** Richards is a remarkable, remarkable man. He had a good liberal education, came to Hawai'i. He had gone to seminary. His teacher for biblical languages was the most important voice in bringing modern European scholarship

into the study of ancient languages. Richards had also had an interest in philosophy. And when he came to Hawai'i, he was immediately sent to Lahaina to wait on the dying Queen Keōpūolani, of who held the highest taboo status in all of Hawai'i. He was with her and with several of the other Hawaiian chiefs, and slowly built a very strong knowledge of the Hawaiian language, and strong bonds with the number of Hawaiians, including the man I mentioned before, Davida Malo. He was committed both to the spread of Christianity, but he was also strongly committed to the Hawaiian nation and its status and sovereignty. He went on to become a teacher of the chiefs. When the chiefs realized that, that Hawai'i was a really just a small nation and a very large world, they wanted to know, how should they behave in relationship to the onslaught of so many predatory nations? And they asked Richards to resign from the mission and to become their teacher for politics. And he actually translated and adapted a famous book on political economy, a kind of text that had never existed in Hawaiian before. And his very last task, or one of his very last tasks, was to be sent on a mission to Europe, England, France, and America, in order to negotiate treaties of Hawaiian sovereignty, a mission that was successful, and Hawai'i was recognized as independent and sovereign nation by America, Britain, and France.

**Speaker 4:** In the glass case right next to us, we are looking at a first edition copy of the complete translation of the New Testament into Hawaiian. It was published in 1835, and according to the inscription just inside the front cover, it was sent by Williams alum Dwight Baldwin, who was living in Lahaina, Maui, at the time, to his friend and Williams classmate, Dorrance Gardner of Sunderland, Massachusetts. Over time, it was bequeathed to the Williams College Special Collections and made its way here to the Williams campus. And for me, this is just another indicator of these circuits that continue to connect Williams and Hawaii. I also wonder about what it must've felt like for Dorrance Gardener to receive a book entirely in a language that ostensibly he cannot read. What exactly is it a token of?

**Speaker 2:** Baldwin himself was not involved in the Bible translation. He got there just a little bit too late for it. Most of the work had been done by the time he arrived. But the Hawaiian Bible was really something to be proud of. As Bible translations go, especially 19th-century Bible translations go, it is one of the very best. It is translated according to the latest, best standards of scholarship coming out of Germany and the continent. The knowledge of Greek and Hebrew that was possessed by the American missionaries was really quite wonderful. The knowledge of Hawaiian,



of course, by the orators, poets, and statesmen who framed the final form of the Hawaiian, it simply couldn't be done; a team like that has never existed and probably will never exist again. The Bible became the textbooks, in a sense, for the nation. Hawaiians very much appreciated the language, slept with a Bible under their pillows, sold their goods in order to get a copy when it was available for money, traded food and crops in order to get it, read in every church, read in many of the families. Large sections memorized . . . in every district there were competitions including the chiefs, where people would come in their greatest finery. Chiefs would bring their followers and in a sense they would give a performance of their knowledge of the Bible, recite Bible verses in unison, chant long passages, and I mean quite long passages, chapters upon chapters. It was printed more than any book has ever been printed in Hawaiian; it continues to be in print to this day. And as I said, if you had to pick a book more read than the Bible, I think you'd be pretty hard pressed.

**Speaker 4:** One of the Hawaiian language texts that we came across in the papers of Samuel Chapman Armstrong was actually in the collection of his father, Richard Armstrong, who was among the earliest missionaries to Hawai'i. And this document was particularly intriguing. Again, it's in Hawaiian, but at the top, as you can see in front of you, are the words Preached at the Palace. May 20, 1849, gave great offense to the king.

**Speaker 2:** This is Armstrong's own personal note. So he preached the sermon and it begins with the lines just below that. Then at the top, after he preached a sermon, he wrote this note: Preached at the Palace, May 20, 1849, gave great offense to the king, which I think is probably quite an understatement. And we have very few examples of this kind of thing. The actual sermons preached. We have sermons that ministers preached, and then wrote up formally for publication. And the truth is we don't know if they were ever preached in that form or not. These are the, these are the actual notes that Armstrong had sitting in front of him and used to preach this sermon. I haven't seen many examples of that. Richard Armstrong was one of the earlier missionaries, came in the 1830s to Hawai'i, and received the normal, standard seminary training that focused on biblical scholarship, and then came to Hawai'i and worked as a pastor for many years. And as he says in the sermon itself, that he is also now an employee of the government. He worked for quite a long time as the Minister of Education. In some ways it was sort of the beginning of the end for

Hawaiian medium schools. All education was in Hawaiian and Richards began a slow movement towards converting it all towards English language, so that by the 1880 while still under the Hawaiian government, schools were converted to be English only.