PREFACE

In this book the authors endeavor to provide the people of the State of Hawai'i with a glossary of important place names in the State, including names of valleys, streams, mountains, land sections, surfing areas, towns, villages, and Honolulu streets and buildings.

The first edition of *Place Names of Hawaii* contained only 1,125 entries. The coverage is expanded in the present edition to include about 4,000 entries, including names in English. Individual entries have been lengthened, especially for important places or those rich in legendary or historical associations, for example, 'Io-lani, Ka-huku, Ka-lihi, Ka-wai-a-Ha'o, Moana-lua, and La Pérouse. As in the earlier volume, meanings of the Hawaiian names are given when possible, as well as background information and, in some instances, references that may be consulted for verification and further information.

Approximately 800 more names are included in this volume than appear in the *Atlas of Hawaii* (see References). The difference is due to the inclusion here of names of surfing areas, streets, and buildings, and of rocks and spots for which legends exist.

The names in the Glossary are arranged in alphabetical order and, except for well-known towns, are located by quadrangles on Hawai'i, Maui, Moloka'i, and O'ahu, and by districts on Kaua'i. The quadrangles and districts are shown on maps 2, 3, 4, and 5. Honolulu streets are located by sections of the city (map 6).

Following the Glossary is an Appendix containing an analysis of the place names.

A major endeavor of the compilers has been to record the pronunciation of the place names as spoken by elderly Hawaiians who are fluent in the language. For this purpose the traditional orthography has serious limitations. For example, 'Alae (as in Wai-'alae) and 'Ala-'ē (a place on the Kona coast of Hawai'i) are both commonly written Alae, but one is the word for a mud-

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hen and the other, for a sweet smell. It is easy, however, to indicate the approximate pronunciation used by knowledgeable Hawaiians if three modifications are made in the traditional spelling: a reversed apostrophe for the glottal stop, a macron over vowels that are long and stressed regardless of position in the word, and hyphens or spaces (as in Ka-lihi Uka) separating individual words that make up many of the names.

How many place names are there or were there in the Hawaiian Islands? Even a rough estimate is impossible: a hundred thousand? a million? Hawaiians named taro patches, rocks and trees that represented deities and ancestors, sites of houses and *heiau* (places of worship), canoe landings, fishing stations in the sea, resting places in the forests, and the tiniest spots where miraculous or interesting events are believed to have taken place. And an important element—one virtually unknown in Euro-American culture—that added zest to the use of place names and encouraged their proliferation is the pleasure they provided the poet and the jokester, as discussed in section 8 of the Appendix.

Place names are far from static, and their numbers increase more rapidly than most parts of an individual's total lexicon. Names are constantly being given to new houses and buildings, land holdings, airstrips, streets, and towns, and old names are replaced by new ones. The change from rural to urban living in Hawai'i, the rapid increase in population by birth and immigration, the development of new towns and the expansion of old ones, with attendant obliteration of natural landmarks, and the gradual disappearance of the Hawaiian language, have brought many additions and changes in the names of places, as well as changes in other aspects of island life.

It is all the more essential, then, to record the names and the lore associated with them now, while Hawaiians, such as the senior compiler, are here to lend us their knowledge. And, whatever the fate of the Hawaiian language, the place names will endure, in some shape or form, as a part of the English language.

Faced with an ever-increasing body of names, compilers of gazetteers are forced to choose the names to be included. They may decide to list all the names on certain maps, or only those of towns of a certain size, or of land areas of a specified magnitude, or those names deriving from a given language, or those

containing words of particular semantic areas, or those deemed romantic, poetic, or picturesque.

Early in this study we decided not to focus in any such way, but rather to list samples of all sorts of names: small places and large ones, high mountains and tiny valleys, Honolulu streets and buildings, surfing areas, and even stones. We have attempted to show what places the Hawaiians, both early and contemporary, considered worthy of naming—by no means everything in a given category, but the most often heard representatives of all the categories.

Hundreds of names mentioned in published legends and chants cannot be found on maps. These were excluded unless they were well known to one of the compilers. Also excluded were alternate spellings used by explorers and others before the present orthography was adopted in 1826. Cook, for example, wrote Hawai'i as Owy-hee (the Tahitian pronunciation today is Vaihi), Maui as Mowee, O'ahu as O-ahoo, Kaua'i as Atowai, and Ni'ihau as Neehau. Vancouver in 1794 wrote the same names Owhyee, Mowee, Woahoo, Attowai, and Onehow. Such spellings are of historic and linguistic interest, but the present study focuses on today's usages. In a few instances, however, outmoded forms are given, as Lā-hainā for the present Lahaina.

Names of winds and rains were not included, nor those of streets outside Honolulu unless they seemed of special interest or importance. In general only those Honolulu street names were included that have meanings not easily discoverable in the *Hawaiian Dictionary*.

The important difference between place names in Hawai'i and those on the United States mainland is that in Hawai'i about 86 percent of the names are in the language of the aboriginal population—a single language that is phonetically simple and easily identifiable by the paucity of sounds and the lack of closed syllables and consonant clusters. On the Mainland, place names have been taken from a great many languages—some of them European—but a large proportion are from the languages of the first inhabitants, the American Indians. These languages, some of which are extinct, number many dozens, and some of them are of a bewildering phonetic complexity that is not revealed in the spelling. The place names are in daily use, but their meanings are known only to experts and in many cases not

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even to them. Furthermore, most of the stories behind the names have been lost, distorted, and sentimentalized.

The Hawaiian names, in contrast, usually have understandable meanings, and the stories illustrating many of the place names are well known and appreciated. Pele, the volcano goddess who turned so many luckless people into stones, is still feared and revered; sharks are sometimes considered protective; and the mischievous, sexually insatiable pig-man, Kama-pua'a, delights and amuses. Most places on the Mainland seem, by comparison, barren and bereft of traditions older than those introduced by the European and African immigrants. Whereas the Indians were considered savages and were slaughtered for their land, the Hawaiians were respected as people. Hawaiian kings and queens maintained their sovereignty almost until the present century. Inter-marriage was and is extremely common. Not only does the Hawaiian past still live, it dates back a thousand years or more, whereas on most of the Mainland, traditions go back only a few centuries or even less. The land there seems lacking in history. Who were the Indians? What was their culture? Most persons do not know.

One of the pleasures of living in Hawai'i is the presence of Hawaiians, with their ancient language and traditions. The place names provide a living and largely intelligible history.

The Hawaiian world extended from Nihoa Island beyond Kaua'i to South Point at the farthest tip of Hawai'i. This study covers a somewhat wider area, including all the Northwest (Leeward) Hawaiian Islands as far west as Midway.

Uniform coverage of all the islands was not possible. Areas in which the compilers had special interest or knowledge, and for which adequate published sources are available, are covered in more detail than other places. Moloka'i, for example, is extremely well treated, Kaua'i least well.

The Hawaiians, like Polynesians in other areas, considered themselves very much a unified whole, and they loved to express in sayings the eastern and western limits (never the northern and southern) of their domain, usually with reference to the passage of the sun:

Mai ka lā 'ō'ili i Ha'eha'e ā hālī'i i ka mole o Lehua. From the sun's appearance at Ha'eha'e until [it] lies spread forth at the roots of Lehua.

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*Mai ke kai kuwā e nū ana i ka ulu hala o Kea'au ā ka 'āina
kā'ili lā o lalo o Wai-kū'au-hoe.* From the noisy sea murmuring
to the pandanus groves of Kea'au to the land that snatches away
the sun at Wai-kū'au-hoe.

Samuel H. Elbert