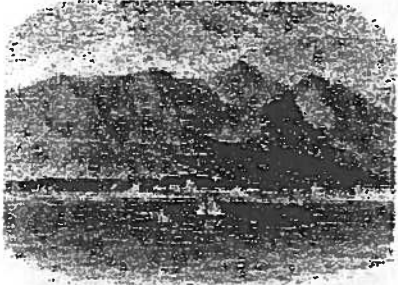
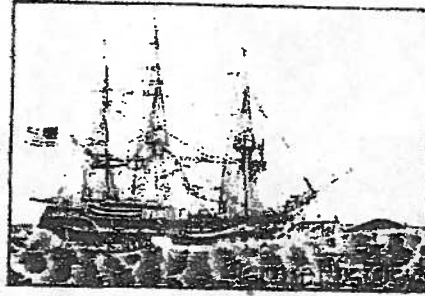


The Story of Sugar in Hawaii

The growing of sugar in Hawaii became an important industry as another industry, whaling, saw its end. From 1819, American whaling ships would stop in the Hawaiian Islands to refit and restock their ships. Eventually, seaport cities like Lahaina, Maui and Honolulu, Hawaii, lined with shops and businesses, grew up around the harbors where these ships docked. However, by the 1860s, the number of whaling ships stopping in Hawaii decreased, and business dropped in the Hawaiian Islands. Looking for new sources of income, businessmen in Hawaii experimented with producing silk, cotton, rice, sugar and coffee. Only the last two would prove to be important in the local economy.

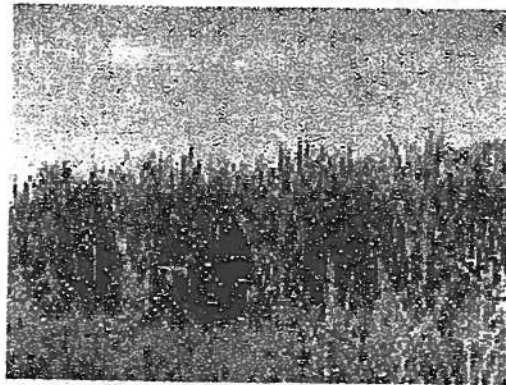


Lahaina town



Whaling ships

The first successful sugarcane plantation was in Koloa, Kauai. In 1837, three businessmen from New England – Peter Brinsmade, William Ladd, and William Hooper – rented 980 acres of land from Kamehameha III. On their plantation, the men had 25 acres of sugar cane, thousands of coffee and other trees and 48 taro patches. Eventually the men also had a warehouse and 20 adobe houses for their workers built on the land. Hooper agreed to manage the plantation even though he had little experience in agriculture and could not speak Hawaiian.



Sugar cane fields

Soon after the Koloa Plantation began operating, sugar mills and small plantations appeared on Maui, Hawaii, and Oahu. However, a few events helped the new sugar industry in Hawaii. First, the California Gold Rush of 1849 created a demand for sugar and other crops from Hawaii. Thousands had poured into California hoping to find gold. Without enough food to feed the ballooning population, California imported food from the Islands during this period. Second, the Civil War, in the 1860s, led to an even greater demand for Hawaii sugar since Northerners were no longer buying sugar from Southern plantations. Therefore, United States became one of the main markets for Hawaii sugar.

With the increasing demand for Hawaii sugar, more capital was needed to start and maintain more plantations, more land was needed to grow the crop, and more workers were needed to plant and harvest. To get the money and supplies for their plantations, owners began turning to factors (businesses they paid to perform services for them). These foreigner-owned factors, which became known as "The Big Five," bought milling equipment, found markets and handled financing for the plantations. One factor, Alexander & Baldwin, dug 17 miles of ditches and tunnels to irrigate sugar cane plantations in central Maui. Theo H. Davies ran a shipping company. Castle & Cooke, which was started by sons of missionaries, bought stock in sugar plantations. C. Brewer & Company was a successful trading company. Finally, Hackfeld & Company sold dry goods and general merchandise. In time, The Big Five would also help start smaller construction, shipping and repair companies that supported Hawaii's sugar industry.



Samuel N. Castle



C. Brewer & Company warehouse

To secure land, foreign businessmen went to the government to demand the right to own land in Hawaii. At this time, Hawaiians did not understand the idea of private property because they believed the land belonged to the gods. However, in 1848, Kamehameha III signed the first Mahele, which divided the lands between the king, chiefs and government and allowed commoners and foreigners to own land. For many reasons, many Hawaiians lost their land. When this happened, foreigners swept in to buy and sell these lands for personal or business purposes.



Though sugar owners had capital and land, they still needed new sources of labor to work their fields. By the mid-1800s thousands of Hawaiians had died from diseases. Since the sugar industry brought in money for Hawaii's economy, the government encouraged the immigration of contract laborers from China, Japan, Portugal, Korea, Puerto Rico, Okinawa and the Philippines. Under their contract, these laborers agreed to work for a plantation for five years for about \$3 a day. In return, the plantation would provide them transportation to Hawaii, food, clothing and housing. Workers would be punished if they broke their contract and plantation owners were supposed to be punished if they treated their workers cruelly or unfairly. The thousands who immigrated to Hawaii as laborers not only helped grow Hawaii's economy, but their cultural influence would also change the people of Hawaii forever.