

A Guide to
The Colonel Harold Winfield Kent Papers



March 29, 1900-June 5, 1990

President of Kamehameha Schools, 1946-1962

by

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Photo by Luryier Diamond. Kamehameha Schools Photo Archives.

Col. Kent celebrating his 54th birthday in the office.

Mrs. Kent is standing to his right and Dr. Pauline Frederick, KSG principal, is standing next to Mrs. Kent.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Pages</u>
<u>Harold Winfield Kent, a Biography</u>	<u>1</u>
The Harold Winfield Kent Papers	
<u>Boxed Items</u>	<u>20</u>
<u>Hardbound Books</u>	<u>21</u>
<u>Letters</u>	<u>23</u>
<u>Loose-leaf Binders</u>	<u>24</u>
<u>Other Items</u>	<u>25</u>

Harold Winfield Kent, a Biography

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Kamehameha Schools Archives
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The opening of the Preparatory Department (Elementary School) in 1943 precipitated an expansion of the Kamehameha Schools that continues to the present. The Department reopened as a co-educational day school after being closed since 1932. The Board of Trustees recognized the demand for a Kamehameha Schools education when 752 eligible admissions applications were received for 315 openings in kindergarten through 7th grade.¹

The trustees hired Dr. S.M. Brownell of Yale University as their advisor ² and Harold W. Kent of Chicago in 1946 as the President of Kamehameha Schools, a newly created position.



Kamehameha Schools
March 18, 1948

Kamehameha Schools Photo
Archives.

An increase in the student population meant an increase in construction for educational facilities. During Kent's 16-year tenure as President, approximately 8 million dollars were spent on construction. Some of the larger projects constructed, or planned were:

- tennis courts (7) and building
- Konia classrooms
- Kekuhaupi'o gym and facilities
- new campus for the Preparatory Department
- Paki classrooms
- duplex buildings for staff housing
- bus shelter and bus terminal on School Street
- 4 dormitories for the Preparatory Department
- widening and lighting of the main road
- swimming pool and gym
- new administration building plan.³



Construction of the lower campus. No date given.

Kamehameha Schools Photo Archives

The appointment of Kent as President indicated a commitment to expansion through administrative reorganization.

With the assignment of a full-time principal to the School for Boys, Kamehameha Schools may be said to have reached the administrative setup that the Trustees had determined upon in 1945. It should be stated here that this is a reorganization that probably is essential to the continued and ultimate success of the Schools. All of the school divisions require impartial supervision and administration. The School for Boys has been neglected for several years in that the person who was both the School for Boys' principal and the principal-in-charge did not have the real time to discharge both jobs and therefore did the top job of the two...⁴

At a November 1946 P.T.A. meeting, Kent revealed that future enrollment should reach 2000 students. He asked parents of day students to make it their duty to ensure that their sons wore their uniforms at all times because the uniform signified that the boy was one of high scholastic standing and was a person who did the right thing at all times. He asked parents to supervise their student's study and to ensure that they had a quiet place to study. He encouraged frequent parental visits to the schools.⁵

During his first year as President, the Schools enrolled 142 day students in Kamehameha School for Boys, and 76 day students in Kamehameha School for Girls for a total including the Preparatory Department of 543 day students and 373 boarders.⁶ With this beginning, Kent would be President of Kamehameha Schools for 16 years from 1946 to 1962.

Harold Winfield Kent, his background and personal life⁷

Harold W. Kent was born on March 29, 1900 in Oskaloosa, Iowa to Charles Almet and Lena Brown Kent.⁸ He was the middle of three brothers. His family moved to Rogers Park in north Chicago when he was 10. His father became principal of Eugene Field Public School, the school he attended until eighth grade. For high school, he followed his older brother to Evanston Academy, the preparatory school for Northwestern University. He said he had the best of his education there and was the only graduating boy to receive a *cum laude* pin. When he was in the 10th or 11th grade, he hitchhiked to Colorado and worked in sugar, hay and soybean fields. His farm experience served him well when he dropped out of Northwestern University during his freshman year to help the WWI effort by working on an Illinois farm. After 3 months, he joined the Student Army Training Corps in Urbana, Illinois, but the war ended a few months later on January 19. In February, he returned to Northwestern University for his second semester and received credit for his wartime military participation. Joining the R.O.T.C. program, he graduated as captain of their only two battalions. He joined a fraternity, Lambda Chi Alpha (Λ XA), during his sophomore year in college.⁹ He completed his bachelor's degree in Commerce in 1921. Kent also obtained a master's degree and completed course work in a doctorate program.¹⁰ He was an active member of Phi Delta Kappa, the professional educators' organization.

Kent became a Chicago elementary school teacher. At age 26, he was the youngest Chicago elementary school principal. His father, Charles, was also an elementary school principal at the same time. Harold became principal of Prussing Elementary School for 9 years, principal of Lake View Evening High School for 2 years, principal of Camp Roosevelt Summer High School for 5 years, and director of the Prussing Community Center for 4 years.¹¹



Photo courtesy of Darlene Mahelona

Ethel Elmer Kent



Photo by Luryier Diamond, Kamehameha Schools Photo Archives.

Colonel Kent, 1953.

On December 21, 1929, Kent married Ethel Elmer in Chicago. She was a high school English teacher in Chicago when they met.¹² Their honeymoon was in Havana, Cuba. Ethel's parents were Swedish immigrants and Swedish was spoken at home. She used her language skills to become an official translator of Swedish documents while living in Honolulu.

She was a tall attractive woman with an excellent mind and an understanding of her husband. He confided in her and respected her opinions. He was proud to have this gracious woman as his companion. In private, she addressed her husband affectionately as "Huck." Ethel was not only a perfect hostess, but also a natural politician. She personified the military officer's wife by always saying and doing the right thing. She was the 'gentle' woman after which the girls at Kamehameha could model themselves.¹³

Ethel almost succumbed to scarlet fever as a child

and thereafter, was always in delicate health. Unable to have children of their own, she and Harold adopted a son they named Thomas Richard Kent probably after Harold's ancestor who immigrated from Londonderry, Ireland in 1732. This great-great-great-grandfather fought with the Continental Army in the Revolutionary War. Thomas inherited a proud legacy. He was born on October 14, 1935 in the Swedish Hospital in Chicago where Ethel's brother, Ray Elmer, was chief surgeon.

Kent was an ambitious, hardworking man. He was the head of a real estate firm in Chicago for a year and a Civilian Conservation Corps director in 1933-1934.¹⁴ He was the principal of a Chicago high school when a polio epidemic forced schools to close in 1937. A pioneering visionary, he initiated the use of the radio to educate one million children at home. Twelve Chicago radio stations cooperated with the Board of Education delivering a daily class curriculum that began the day with setting up exercises at 6 a.m. Instruction included reading, writing, arithmetic, and music. After the epidemic passed, he became the founder and first president of the Association for Education by Radio and director of Chicago's radio education station, WBEZ¹⁵.

During WWII, Kent, a captain in the Reserve Corp, was called to active duty and became director of the editorial section for the War Department's Bureau of Public Relations. He helped develop radio regulations for all U.S. Army installations. He also helped develop the *Army Hour*, the nation's No. 1 government radio program. Kent was also a member of the army general staff corps in Washington D.C. where he was in charge of a plan for universal military training.¹⁶ He proposed a Reserved Officer Training Corps program for high schools. He worked closely with President Dwight D. Eisenhower. Other personal friends included General Douglas MacArthur.¹⁷



Photo courtesy of Darlene Mahelona
Tommy Kent

Kent's son, Tommy, with his bright blue eyes, blond hair with a distinctive widow's peak, and beguiling smile charmed heroes and gentlemen. The halls of the Pentagon were his playground as would be the campus of Kamehameha Schools when he was older.¹⁸

Kent was close to his brothers, Forrest and Leslie. Leslie, the youngest, was a successful physician in Wisconsin. Married to Dorothea, they had two children, Dorothy and Leslie. Forrest, the eldest, married Martha and their only child, Cory, had a spastic condition. Surviving his parents and living in a Boston group home, Uncle Harold became his guardian. Kent's two charities were Cory and the Kent Mausoleum in Oskaloosa, Iowa.¹⁹ By this time in his life, Kent was a Mason, Methodist, and American Legion member.²⁰

Colonel Harold Kent, tall and energetic, arrived in Hawai'i for the first time on May 26, 1946 for a 10-day survey of the Kamehameha Schools. He returned on August 1 to begin his presidency of Kamehameha Schools on September 1. He said, "My wife will bring 5000 lbs. of baggage with her..."²¹ His wife and Tommy arrived in Honolulu on October 17, 1946.



A FAREWELL TEA - Mrs. Harold W. Kent (wearing carnation lei), being entertained at a farewell tea in Evanston, Ill., prior to her departure for the West Coast en route to Honolulu to take up residence at Kamehameha Schools where her husband, Col. Kent, is the newly appointed president. Traveling westward by car, accompanied by Tommy Kent, 11, and his nurse, Mrs. Kent plans to visit Col. Kent's parents in Oskaloosa, Iowa, and the Edward Thorsons in Denver, Colo., Mrs. Thorson being Mrs. Kent's sister. The party will visit Mrs. Angus Mackaye, an old friend of the family, in Phoenix,

Ariz. Mrs. Kent and Tommy plan to arrive in Los Angeles Oct.10 and proceed from there to Honolulu on the October sailing on the Matsonia. Tommy will probably enter Punahou...The lei which Mrs. Kent is shown wearing was sent by Col. Kent by air from Honolulu. *Advertiser*, September 24, 1946.

Ethel Kent was perfectly suited to the life of the President's wife. Fashionable, she enjoyed entertaining. According to Luryier Diamond,²² she was a "real haole" and cultivated her group of like-minded friends.



Photo by Luryier Diamond. Kamehameha Schools Photo Archives.

Col. Harold Kent, Mrs. Ethel Kent, Thomas Kent.

According to Diamond, Thomas Kent preferred the outdoors and was a rascal. The family had a lakeside home in Land O' Lakes, Wisconsin where Tom enjoyed fishing and hunting during his summer vacations He attended Punahou School, but not for long.

A teacher made a derogatory remark about his father, and Tommy 'told him off' and refused to go back to class. Col. Kent convinced the Trustees that the children of faculty be allowed the option of attending Kamehameha. The Kents invited two other classmates, Ed Keli'ikoa and Henry Mahi , to live in their home as companions for Tom. The Kent's home became a mini-dormitory and the boys had all the same responsibilities as the other boarders in the regular dorms. The Kents were never aware of the pressure and taunts Tom had to endure from the other students. Tom was never a tattler, so he tolerated the prejudice at the Boys School in preference to the pressure at Punahou. He became the first 'haole' to graduate from Kamehameha, followed by a few others.²³

Tom graduated with the Kamehameha School for Boys, Class of 1954.

Kent, Thomas

How can anyone sleep with this live alarm clock?

Ka Moi 12; Church Choir 12; ROTC SFC11, M. Sgt. 12; OTS 12; Football 10, 11; Tennis 9,10,11; Stu. Coun. Rep. 11, VP 12.

1954 *Ka Nai Aupuni*



CLASS PRESIDENT

MAHELONA, DARLENE

'Tis good will makes intelligence

Choir 10, 11, 12; Glee Club 11, 12; Stu. Coun. 10, Treas. 11, 12; Natl. Hon. Soc. 11, 12; Hui Kumulipo 11, 12; Jr. Haw'n Club 10; Mixed Chorus 9, 10, 11; Gold Pins 9,10, 11; Silver Pins 9, 10, 11; Special Choir 11.



According to Darlene Mahelona Baines, "through years of trial, Tommy Kent had gained the respect of the boys in his class and the entire school. He was elected Student Body Vice President at the Boys School."²⁴ Thomas Kent and Darlene Mahelona dated throughout high school. She said, "most couples who dated during high school got married."²⁵

Darlene was popular and smart. As the senior class president and the person with the highest GPA at the Girls' School, she was the graduation Salutatorian. The 13th of 15 children of a part-Hawaiian father and Chinese mother from Kahului, Maui, she wanted to attend Oregon State University in pharmacy, but lacked the tuition money. She was resigned to accepting a scholarship at Maunaolu Community College in Paia, Maui. She would live at home. Tommy decided to attend the Wisconsin State Teacher's College.



Photo courtesy of Darlene Mahelona
The two Mrs. Kents

They lost contact for a year because Tom was not a writer and college life was not for him. He joined the Navy and was shipped to Japan on the carrier U.S.S. Bennington. In the meanwhile, Darlene transferred to the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and was living in Honolulu. When the Bennington docked at Pearl Harbor, Tom and Darlene decided to marry. He had just turned 21 and she was 20.

The Kents were less than thrilled saying that they preferred a mainland-born Protestant girl with a good social standing. They knew better than to argue with Tom. They gave the couple a quiet wedding with the proper newspaper publicity, and paid for their honeymoon at the Princess Kaiulani Hotel. This was Darlene's first time as a hotel guest. Tom deployed immediately for Japan and Darlene worked at the

telephone company while attending school. Col. Kent used his friendship with the Admiral of the Pacific and had Tom relocated 6 months later to the Waikele Ammunition Depot as lifeguard for the swimming pool used by Navy personnel.²⁶ Tom and Darlene had three children, James H. Kent, Harold Roy W. Kent, and Mary Sherne P. Kent.



Photo courtesy of Darlene Mahelona
James, Darlene, Mary Sherne, and Roy

Colonel Kent, the financial administrator

Col. Kent was responsible for the Schools budget. During his first year, total Bishop Estate income including tuition from the Schools was \$1,008,320.13. Total expenses were \$1,057,810.90. This included the operating expenses of KSB, KSG and the Preparatory Department as well as other costs. The "Excess of Expense over Revenue" was \$18,926.44.²⁷ A net loss was not uncommon.²⁸

At the end of his 16-year tenure in 1962, total revenue for the Estate and Schools was \$3,223,360.16 and total expenses were \$3,240,844.41 for a net operating loss of \$17,486.25.²⁹ Programs had greatly expanded. The principals of the 3 schools and the following programs submitted annual reports: Director of Instruction, Hawaiian Language, Music, Radio, Speech Therapy, Director of Guidance, Chaplain, Health, Director of Summer School, Dining Halls.

Col. Kent's 1962 annual report provided statistics from 1935-1962 on the operating cost per pupil for all 3 Schools combined. Looking at Col. Kent's tenure, his first year was not reported. During his second year as President, the combined cost per pupil was \$876.36. This figure fell to \$739.93 in 1949-50, rose to \$958.75 in 1959-60 and increased to \$1185.99 during his last year, while enrollment and capital expenditure continuously increased.³⁰

Colonel Kent, the admissions director

During his first year, Col. Kent asked the alumni whether they wanted Kamehameha to be an outstanding institution. He asked them to let him select the students. If they had any grievances, he wanted them to come directly to him rather than first going to the press.³¹

The subsequent admissions policy reflected an ambivalent understanding of the intent of Princess Bernice Pauahi. Did she intend the schools to be the place where intelligent, outstanding leaders would be educated to bring academic recognition to the Schools, or did she mean to make it an institution that would help the needy who might not necessarily be academically gifted? In some years, the trustees decided that the former would be emphasized, while in other years, the latter was emphasized. Sometimes both were emphasized. Their primary goal during these years was to ensure that Kamehameha Schools graduates entered competitive, professional, and semi-professional occupations.³²

Colonel Kent, the educator

Col. Kent was a strong academic leader. As President of Kamehameha Schools, one of his early policies was increasing the hiring of local teachers, especially qualified graduates. Mr. Walter Mo'okini, KSB Class of 1935 was the first Hawaiian faculty member hired in many years. A chemistry teacher, he and his wife lived on campus.³³

Col. Kent stated his educational philosophy in his book, *The Kamehameha Schools, 1946-1962*.³⁴

One of the outstanding attributes of the Kamehameha story consists in its adherence to students' needs. Schools can have beautiful equipment, well trained teachers and students screened on the basis of intellectual ability--and such

schools can still fail to contribute to the welfare and well-being of the students in the community and nation in which they are being trained to live and serve.

It is then attention to standards of many kinds which distinguishes the Kamehameha type of training: standards of academic and moral values; standards of thinking; standards of conduct in social and spiritual affairs; and standards of

conduct in manners, poise and self-discipline.

Training in personal and citizenship attitudes develops the student as a strong individual. It shuns the popular desire to be one like everyone else and thus avoids the label of uniformity. In the doing, it supports the important elements that make up the American character and way of life, and achieves this with intelligence and understanding.

We do not stress intellectual treatment of our youngsters at the expense of other aspects of their training. We need athletic instruction. We need dining hall instructions. We need the disciplines of the Military. We need good speech, and good writing, good manners, good poise, good study habits, good self-discipline, good conduct--and a belief in God. When we deal with children in their growing years, we offer them the precept and example of leadership.

Students need to be taught leadership.

We hear much about the pursuit of excellence, and generally speaking this reduces itself to excellence of intellectuality. Actually, it should be an excellence of well-rounded citizenship and ability. We need to place the stress on attitude; we need to press for good character...³⁵



Photo by Luryier Diamond. Kamehameha Schools Photo Archives.

Final Parade, 1954.

Academic and Vocational programs beginning in 1946³⁶

- The supervisory model for instruction was used to facilitate teacher development in the classroom. This method included continuous observation of the teacher with feedback by the director of instruction.
- The guidance department was continued and expanded.
- Trustees paid teachers for curriculum work for the first time.
- A remedial reading teacher was supplied for each School to encourage free reading.
- Clear proficiency in English speech was emphasized as important to employment success although pidgin would not be abolished.
- Debate tournaments and interpretive speech were instituted as motivation to excel in the use of proper English.
- The final essay exam during the last two days of school was instituted to give students time and opportunity to thoughtfully and cogently express knowledge gained from their year of school work.
- The report card contained letter grades. Promptness, courtesy, effort and speech received marks.
- The honor societies were continued.

- New academic and citizenship awards were created. The highest honor went to the student who was best in both academics and citizenship. The second award was for academic work only; the third award was for citizenship only and the fourth award went to someone with a good, but not top, record in academics. The last was honorable mention. There were many other awards.
- Summer school was started in 1947.
- Students with high mental ability were identified and given special classes.
- A half-day work experience program was initiated for 11th graders on both campuses.
- Respect for classroom instructional time was maintained.
- Expanded programs in printing and bookbinding under expert teachers made students readily employable.
- Students worked at the Bishop Museum on carpentry projects, classification of insects, scientific sketching, and other museum projects.
- Student volunteers learned about the dominant tourist service industry.
- Kamehameha Schools received Military Institute status.
- Leadership opportunities were available in the annual Officer's School for new seniors.
- The first driver education program in the islands was begun.
- Senior Practice Cottage experiences in infant care and domestic skills were expanded.
- Choral music, especially Hawaiian choral music, was continued. The music class was a daily required course. An orchestra and a concert band were begun. Arts and crafts in many forms were encouraged.
- A faculty children's play area was constructed. General student recreation programs were continued.
- Bus services were expanded from 2 buses to 11 buses and a new terminal was constructed at the corner of School and Kapalama Streets.
- A Deputation Teams of 2 seniors, boy and girl, and 2 juniors, boy and girl presented a complete Kamehameha church service to Hawaiian churches on the outer islands of Hawai'i, Maui, Moloka'i, and Kaua'i.
- A religious fellowship was granted to a senior interested in some kind of religious training with duties at Kamehameha Schools in addition to education at the University of Hawai'i.

Beginning in 1948

- Students had access to 2-5 government, business, or industry leaders in their Community Shop Committee.

Beginning in 1957

- Radio station KVOK was the first FM station in Hawai'i.

By 1960

- Students were required to handwrite a weekly essay.

During the 1960s

- Advance placement attracted more students in the 1960s.
- Co-educational classes began in 1961.

- In 1961, the University of Hawai'i awarded modern language credit for a 3-year Hawaiian language sequence course created by Mrs. Dorothy Kahananui for the Schools.

Student life, the boarding school experience³⁷

Boarders comprised less than half of the school population during the 1946-1947 school year. As Col. Kent says, "it meant a schedule of home life activities on a mass basis."³⁸ The Schools did this by hiring the best possible staff, housemothers at the Girls School and teachers as dorm masters for the Boys School. Every teacher was a counselor. Study hall was from 7-9 p.m. six nights a week beginning on Sunday in the dormitories. Girls and boys did their personal laundry using old-fashioned crank-wringer washing machines and hanging clothes to dry on lines. Uniforms and bed linens were professionally laundered weekly at no additional cost to students. Work squads for both campuses cleaned and maintained the dormitory buildings and all campus structures. They also policed the grounds. A full-time physician and nurse who had campus housing provided limited medical services at the dispensary, Hale Ola.

Recreation planned by student and staff committees centered on Saturday evening play nights," occasional dances, movies, outside presentations, school-wide events such as debates, song contests, and plays...Recreational events away from the campus were frequent and involved chaperones and buses. On Sunday morning the Bishop Memorial Church held its regular service for the entire boarding population."³⁹

Luryier Diamond⁴⁰ remembered the dinner hours at Kamehameha School for Boys. A faculty couple sat at each table to model expected table manners and dining behavior. Diamond always dressed in a coat and tie, and his wife, Lillian, wore a nice dress. A senior was the table host and freshmen served the meal. The boys were always in uniform. As Col. Kent described it,

There were opportunities for visits at both campuses by relatives and friends. The evening and Sunday noon dinners were special attractions to visitors with the students comfortably relaxed in their dresses and uniforms, with excellent table manners, a student host and waiter (ress) at each table and good conversation. A student would give a grace or the entire dining hall would sing the Doxology in Hawaiian. There was time at meal's end for Hawaiian singing which brought an unforgettable and sentimental close to a great experience.⁴¹

Students were given instruction in ballroom dancing and etiquette at formal dances. They learned the etiquette of exchange dinners, the opera, the symphony and the theater. The dress code was a means to train students in self-discipline derived from the preparation of their attire and the dignity and confidence from good manners that emerged when one was well dressed. Luryier Diamond remembered that the boys were always to be in uniform when on campus. He remembered that Dr. Frederick, Principal of the Girls School, personally measured the length of girls' skirts during the school day as well as at dances.⁴² The Student Code of Obligation was created from meetings of all students in grades 6-12. A copy can be found in the appendix of Kent's book about the Schools.

Because teachers were vitally important to the operation of the Schools, Col. Kent personally interviewed and hired them on frequent trips to the mainland. He clearly

outlined policies and procedures concerning teachers and teacher-led committees. In his book about his tenure at the Schools, he also elaborated on alumni and parent activities.

A strong leader, Mr. Kent's achievements were highlighted in *Ka Mo'i*.

Mr. Kent originated the junior work experience program...the theme-a-week and remedial speech programs. He pushed for enrollment expansion...stressed the academic fields, but did not allow the vocational aspects of training at Kamehameha to suffer as a result...Mr. Kent always encouraged a close relationship between the school and the community. The public was always free to come up and observe the students on many occasions. Many community groups were invited to lunch with the students and look around the campus, observe classes and even attend church services...⁴³

Guests and campus visitors included not only the prominent residents of the islands, but also respected alumni and kupuna. All high-ranking military visitors managed to place a Kamehameha Schools visit on their itineraries. Kent was acquainted with Prince Phillip of England, having met him at the Royal Palace in Tonga. While still the Crown Prince, King Tupou IV welcomed Kent to the Palace and Kent reciprocated with an invitation to King Tupou to visit the campus in 1962.

Colonel Kent, the President

Harold Kent was the sole chief administrator of the Schools. He hired and fired all personnel, prepared and presented the budgets, supervised the curriculum and educational philosophy on all campuses, and interviewed every student applicant. He continued his public relations campaign and maintained scrapbooks of every Kamehameha-Bishop Estate item from the Advertiser and Star-Bulletin, which he personally clipped and pasted. ROTC was a favored program and he ran the Schools like a military institution. When he retired, the Schools had grown to capacity and no one man could continue as Col. Kent had.⁴⁴

As president, Col. Kent received non-monetary privileges especially housing at Hale Pelekikena, which was heavily used for entertaining. "Late in his regime,"⁴⁵ his wife, Ethel, suggested that Hale Pelekikena be opened to 10th grade parents for a social dinner, and a question and answer seminar. Parents felt well acquainted with the Schools and questions and concerns were answered. He convinced the trustees to build housing to attract quality faculty and staff from the mainland. The Chaplain and school Principals had cottages. Faculty with supervisory duties lived rent-free in the dormitory apartments and others lived in apartments on the Bishop Museum grounds for \$50 per month. Meals were free, or at a reduced rate for upper campus faculty. These privileges ensured retention and most stayed until retirement.⁴⁶



Photo by Luryier Diamond. Kamehameha Schools Photo Archives..

Hale Pelekikena

Frugality was a result of the Kents' Depression era experience and they were as



Photo by Luryier Diamond, Kamehameha Schools Photo Archives.

Standing: Bailey (Principal of KSB), Col. Kent, Trustees Midkiff, Murray, Collins and Moore.

Seated: Dr. Frederick (Principal of KSB), Brewer (Principal of the Preparatory Department).

thrifty with their household budget as Col. Kent was with the Schools finances. Tom reacted to this parsimony by being generous to a fault. When a motorist needed to change a flat tire on Kailua Highway and lacked a car jack, he gave him his mother's. When a friend wanted to borrow his brand new \$200 rifle, Tom told his friend to keep it. His parents loved and valued antiques and anything of good quality, but he disdained material possessions. Tom rebelled because he felt that he could not measure up to his parents' high expectations. His parents loved him regardless.

Rank, social status, and morality were important values to the Kents. Their private lives were public. Yet, Tom thought his parents

pretentious. Because public relations and making Kamehameha Schools nationally and internationally known was the early objective of his career, Col. Kent endlessly promoted the Schools and expected that the highest political office holders and powerful community leaders attend Kamehameha School affairs. Diamond remembered that the governor was usually at ROTC dress parades. The Kents were members of O'ahu Country Club where the Trustees were also members.

On the job, Col. Kent could be a considerate colleague. Luryier Diamond, hired by Col. Kent in 1953, remembered him well. Col. Kent, as he preferred to be called, knew every employee's name as well as spouse and children's names. When driving around campus, if he saw a yard worker by the side of the road, he would stop and talk, inquiring about him and his family by name.

Col. Kent had a redness on the right side of his face, a birthmark of sorts. According to Darlene Baines, when he was angry, or upset, the redness became prominent and everyone knew to avoid confronting him.

The faculty were divided in their opinions of the man. As Diamond stated, "Half of them liked him and half of them didn't."⁴⁷ Tall and strict, he could be intimidating, but to Diamond, he was not. Diamond had an office in the administration building and regularly socialized over morning coffee and cake with Col. Kent and other staff members.

Pidgin English was commonly spoken in the islands during that time and the use of proper English had to be encouraged. Diamond recalled that Col. Kent had a personal interview with graduating seniors and if they could not speak proper English, they did not receive their diplomas until they learned to do so.

Hawaiian language and culture interested the Colonel as a result of his friendship with *Kahu* Stephen Desha, Jr. As he states in his own book, *The Kamehameha Schools, 1946-1962*,

One unforgettable association for me in the admission process was the friendship built up between the chaplain, Stephen L. Desha, Jr., and myself. I made these admission rounds in the early years and this good man accompanied me. He was a guide and a docent. He knew every road and lane, where the special land features and formations would be encountered and it seemed every Hawaiian in the islands--village, town or city. And his delight in my interest in the Hawaiian language was endless. He talked and he sang as we drove. His deepest love was the Kamehameha Schools. I herein acknowledge my debt to this extraordinary human being.⁴⁸

Col. Kent wanted the children of Ni'ihau to benefit from the Schools. Jean Kelley and her cousin, Hi'ilei Niau, were the first even though they were in their late teens. Jean eventually became the trained teacher that Ni'ihau needed. After Jean married, she introduced her family to the Kents. Ethel said that she wished she had a daughter like Ilei. Jean thought Ethel desired to *hanai* (Hawaiian-style adoption) Ilei. Jean and her husband, John Keale, returned the next day and offered their daughter to the Kents. Ethel explained that she could not accept and had not intended her remarks to be seriously considered. That matter cleared, the Keales happily returned to Ni'ihau with Ilei. This endeared Jean to the Kents and Col. Kent visited her on Ni'ihau several times as a guest of Aylmer Robinson. Mrs. Kent wanted to make the trip on the cattle barge, but Aylmer would not condone or approve the indignity of these accommodations to a woman of such respect.⁴⁹



Photo by Luryier Diamond. Kamehameha Schools Photo Archives.

Jean Kelly's 1952 graduation shown with her mother.

The Kents attended Central Union Church as well as the non-denominational Bishop Memorial Church, which held a service in the Auditorium every Sunday. Sometimes, Col. Kent would deliver the sermon partly in the Hawaiian language. Because the Hawaiian language was not a part of the curriculum until the 1960s, most of the students did not understand Hawaiian. Hymns and *The Lord's Prayer*, however, were always sung in Hawaiian.⁵⁰



Photo by Luryier Diamond. Kamehameha Schools Photo Archives.

Bishop Memorial Church in The Auditorium.

Religious affiliation was an important part of the Kents' life. He was a Methodist and she a Lutheran. However, they were members of the Congregational Central Union Church because it was the church attended by prestigious community leaders.

The Protestant ethic of Princess Bernice Pauahi was compatible with the Kents' values. They advocated honest hard work because it was good for the soul. "...upper middle class standards of behavior and comportment were applied to the education of children at the Kamehameha Schools."⁵¹

From an enrollment of 916 day and boarding students in 1946 when Col. Kent began his tenure as President, the Schools grew to an enrollment of 2,097 students when he resigned in 1962. Underlying Col. Kent's educational philosophy was his firm commitment to the educational terms of Pauahi's Will. The Schools encouraged leadership by providing a challenging academic program with career explorations and work experience for its students. He used island community resources to enrich student experiences. Col. Kent personally modeled and upheld the high standards he expected of faculty, staff, and students of the Kamehameha Schools.

Colonel Kent, the scholar and author

Col. Kent was a meticulous, exacting scholar. An example of his thorough research methodology was described in his own words in the Foreword to *Charles Reed Bishop, Man of Hawaii* published in 1965. He did research in the archives and libraries where Charles Reed Bishop lived including the Archives of Hawai'i, Hawaiian Historical Society, Hawaiian Mission Children's Society, the Bishop Museum, and Glen Falls Public Library. He searched for information in places associated with Bishop's story like the Essex Museum and Newburyport Public Library. He used the Library of Congress and the National Archives in Washington D.C. He read minute books and correspondence files at Alexander and Baldwin, First National Bank of Hawai'i, Lihue Plantation, Bank of California in San Francisco and other commercial companies. His investigations took him to community institutions supported by Bishop including Central Union Church, Hilo Boys' Boarding School, Social Science Association of Honolulu, Leahi Hospital, Punahou School, The Kamehameha Schools, Queen's Hospital, Starr King Library of Berkeley and others. Col. Kent interviewed Bishop's family and friends especially Annie Smith Bishop, wife of Charles Reed Bishop's cousin, E. Faxon Bishop. In addition, many notable, knowledgeable people read his manuscript. He gave generous acknowledgement to them for their help.

Research took time and opportunity. Col. Kent used frequent mainland trips to further his research. A December 19, 1958 article of the *Ka Moi*, stated

Mr. Harold W. Kent, President of The Kamehameha Schools, furthered his knowledge of Charles Reed Bishop during a recent two-week vacation on the mainland.

Mr. Kent visited some of Mr. Bishop's relatives on the West Coast. He visited Mrs. Ethel Bishop Bettis, distant cousin of Mr. Bishop, and Mrs. Lucile McCaffery, grandniece of Mr. Bishop.

Among the things acquired on his trip was a typewritten genealogy of the Bishop family and pictures of Mr. and Mrs. Bishop.

Mr. Kent also visited the Alameda County Court House in Oakland, where he got a photostatic copy of Mr. Bishop's will.

Other places he visited were the Bank of California, which handled Mr. Bishop's banking business; and the First Unitarian church in Berkeley, where Mr. Bishop was a member.⁵²

Six years passed between the research described in the 1958 *Ka Mo'i* article and the 1964 Foreword in the Charles Reed book marking the completion of the writing. The book was published the following year.

Col. Kent's many publications reflected his interest in Kamehameha Schools, Charles Reed Bishop, the Shriners (freemasonry), and Hawaiian language and culture. The essays and books include:

- *Album of Likenesses: Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop, benefactress of the*
- *Charles Reed Bishop: an address at the 72nd Convocation of the Kamehameha Schools, September 7, 1958.*
- *Charles Reed Bishop Genealogy* compiled in 1959.
- *Charles Reed Bishop: Letter File*, published in 1972.
- *Charles Reed Bishop, Man of Hawaii*, published in 1965.
- *Dr. Hyde and Mr. Stevenson: the life of the Rev. Dr. Charles McEwen Hyde* including a discussion of the open letter to Robert Louis Stevenson, published in 1973.
- *Handbook of celebration of the sesquicentennial birthday of Charles Reed Bishop, January 25, 1972*
- *"I must go, I must go to the Shrine..." A memorial to Shrinedom's only king, David Kalakaua Rex, 1836-1891*, published in 1966.
- *Kamehameha Schools and Charles Reed Bishop, Man of Hawaii*, published in 1972.
- *Kamehameha Schools, 1946-1962*, published in 1976.
- *Masonry and Royalty in Hawaii*, a magazine article reprint.
- *One hundred years of Scottish Rite Masonry in Hawaii, 1874-1974*, published in 1974.
- *Significant dates in the history of the Kamehameha Schools*, published in 1964.
- *Story of pharalogy: speech delivered to the Social Science Association*, published in 1950.
- *Treasury of Hawaiian Words in One Hundred and One Categories*, published in 1986.

Colonel Kent, Community Leader

A proud alumnus, Col. Kent was active in the Northwestern University Alumni Association and a one-time President of the Hawai'i chapter. He joined business leaders from Standard Oil, Hawaiian Trust, Kodak Hawaii, and others in advertising and radio to promote Hawaii tourism in the first post-war Hawai'i Visitors Bureau (HVB) campaign.⁵³ He was a life-long Mason and was active in the Aloha Temple of the Shrine with other civic leaders.

1962, President to President Emeritus

Although Col. Kent planned to retire in 1965, he stepped down three years early.⁵⁴ According to *Ka Mo'i*, Friday, September 14, 1962 headlines, "Col. Kent to Assume New Position as Consultant to Estate Trustees Oct.1."

President Harold Kent will assume the position of Consultant to Bishop Estate Trustees beginning October 1...This new arrangement, giving Dr. Bushong the power to run The Kamehameha Schools and Mr. Kent assisting with

his counsel whenever the need arises, was formed with the 'understanding and appreciation of Dr. Bushong and the blessing of the Trustees....' Said Mr. Kent, 'Mrs. Kent and I are both happy about this opportunity to continue to be of service to Kamehameha, which is so much a part of our lives.'⁵⁵

The trustees created a new position of Vice-President in charge of administration and hired Dr. William Force from the mainland. Dr. Force would administer the food service department, transportation, building, and accounting. His position was created upon the recommendation of the Booz, Allen and Hamilton survey team the previous year.⁵⁶



Photo Courtesy of Darlene Mahelona.

Aloha Temple of the Shrine. Center: Colonel Harold Kent.

A farewell dinner was held on September 22, 1962 in Col. Kent's honor on the Schools' campus with over 450 people in attendance. Guests included Bishop Estate trustees and members of the staff of the Schools and their spouses.⁵⁷

On October 7, Col. Kent began a tour of Asia and the Pacific as Potentate of the Aloha Temple of the Shrine.⁵⁸ His first trip to Asia had occurred about the same time the year before and established two sister school relationships in Hiroshima.⁵⁹

In his farewell address, Col. Kent asked the students to uphold the high ideals of the Schools and to uphold the image of the Schools in the community.

Retirement

Public life was over. After retirement, he became known simply as Mr. Kent. He and his wife moved to Waiialae Iki and bought a car.

In 1968, Darlene and Tom's ten-year marriage ended. During that time, Tom had become alcoholic, abusive, and schizophrenic. "When Tom was released from the Navy, he had difficulty finding a job and eventually became a furniture mover."⁶⁰ Over 6 feet tall and thin, he became muscular as a mover, but the drinking increased. All the while, Darlene worked full-time and studied for her Master's Degree in Education. After the divorce, Darlene moved to California with her children where she found a better paying teaching position. The Kents visited their grandchildren annually and were warm, loving grandparents.

Kent's propensity for scholarship and membership in the Social Science Association of Honolulu, an exclusive, male only, group composed of one scholar from each occupation, compelled him to publish prolifically. While doing research for his book on Reverend Hyde and Robert Louis Stevenson, he came across a shoebox of Hawaiian words and phrases on index cards by Reverend Hyde at the Bishop Museum. This inspired him to organize his Hawaiian language knowledge learned over decades. Five boxes of indexed cards became the basis for *Treasury of Hawaiian Words in One Hundred and One Categories* published in 1986 during his early stages of senile dementia, a scholar's ultimate insult. He was the only son to inherit the disease from his father. In distress, he asked Darlene Mahelona to edit and help him complete his final book. Darlene's father and his relatives spoke Hawaiian fluently. Her Maui community of

about 300 families had a small, tightly knit group of Hawaiians fluent in their language. She used her familiarity with the Hawaiian language to help him.

Darlene remarried Arnold Baines in 1974 and had 4 more children by him. They retired to Kahului, Maui. Meanwhile, Tom Kent remarried and quickly divorced. By 1985, he was bald and ill with heart disease and diabetes. An unofficial counselor to wayward boys in Pulaski, New York, he died of pulmonary complications on December 18, 1991. The last time Darlene saw him was at his father's funeral on June 5, 1990. His mother had died in June 17, 1985 and he had not attended their funeral.

Frugality, thrift and wise investing earned the Kents a multi-million dollar estate. Tom received a trust of \$600,000 to be allotted at \$1000 per month. Cousin Cory received the same amount in trust. Upon the death of Tom or Cory, the remaining amounts reverted to the sole beneficiary of Kent's Will. In the last years of his life, Kent who was deeply demented, surrendered the bulk of his estate to an organization in which he was deeply involved. Tommy was too ill to contest the will and Darlene would not. The grandchildren's only legacy would be the memories of annual visits to California by loving grandparents, and some family photographs and some correspondence.

With the passing of time, colleagues, family and friends, Harold Winfield Kent's name would primarily be remembered as the author of books on Charles Reed Bishop and for his useful publication of Hawaiian words. Social changes and years of expansion at Kamehameha Schools almost obliterated the memory of the disciplined, principled educator who was once the sole chief administrator of the Kamehameha Schools after WWII.

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- ¹ *Annual Report of the Principal-in-Charge of Kamehameha Schools, 1943-1944* to the Trustees of the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Estate, by Charles T. Parrent, Acting Principal-in-Charge, p. 1.
- ² "Kamehameha Trustees Announce Plans for Day School And Appointment of Col. H.W. Kent as New President, Honolulu Star-Bulletin, Wednesday, June 19, 1946.
- ³ *The Kamehameha Schools, 1946-1962* by Harold W. Kent (Honolulu, Hawaii: Masonic Public Library, 1976) p. 96.
- ⁴ *Annual Report of the President of Kamehameha Schools to the Trustees of the Bernice P. Bishop Estate for the School Year 1946-1947*, p. 11.
- ⁵ "Col. Kent Speaker for PTA Meeting," *Ka Moi*, Friday, November 8, 1946, p. 4.
- ⁶ *Annual Report, 1946-1947* p.2.
- ⁷ Darlene Mahelona, *Insights of Colonel Harold Winfield Kent*, June 2003, pp. 1-4. These are informal insights into the life of Col. Kent and his family
- ⁸ Mahelona, *Insights*, p. 3.
- ⁹ "Interview with Colonel Harold Kent on April 13, 1985 at his residence in Honolulu, Hawaii." *Harold W. Kent, Col. (Ret.) U.S. Army*. Transcript of interviewed by Gael Mustapha.
- ¹⁰ "Col. Kent and Wife Struggle With Baggage Problem For Island Trip," *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, Monday, August 5, 1946.
- ¹¹ "Harold W. Kent Chosen President of Honolulu School," *Cross and Crescent* (Lambda Chi Alpha Fraternity, Fall 1946)..
- ¹² Mahelona, *Insights*, p. 2.
- ¹³ Mahelona, *Insights*, p. 2.
- ¹⁴ "Col. Kent Comes as K.S. President," *Ka Moi*, Friday, November 8, 1946.
- ¹⁵ *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, Monday, August 5, 1946.
- ¹⁶ *The Honolulu Advertiser*, Thursday, August 15, 1946.
- ¹⁷ Mahelona, *Insights*, p. 4.
- ¹⁸ Mahelona, *Insights*, p. 3.
- ¹⁹ Mahelona, *Insights*, p. 3.
- ²⁰ *Cross & Crescent* magazine.
- ²¹ *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, Monday, August 5, 1946.
- ²² Interview with Luryier Diamond, May 6, 2003. Luryier "Pop" Diamond was hired by Harold W. Kent on January 1, 1953 as Coordinator of Information. He also taught photography until his retirement in 1984. "The job was to do publicity--write stories--and photography," Diamond explained. 'Col. Kent didn't know if I could write or not, so he asked me to cover a ROTC parade that Sunday. So I came up and took pictures, got the prints out right away, wrote up a story and got it to the newspaper. I knew the guys down at the city desk, so the story came out in the Monday paper. Col. Kent was happy with it, and he hired me.' ("Diamond Jubilee," *Imua*, December 2002, p. 16)
- ²³ Mahelona, *Insights*, p. 6-7.
- ²⁴ Darlene Mahelona, *Memories of Kamehameha*, June 2003, p. 15.
- ²⁵ Mahelona, *Memories*, p. 15.
- ²⁶ Mahelona, *Memories*, p. 16, 17.
- ²⁷ *Annual Report, 1946-1947*, Index, p. 33.
- ²⁸ *Annual Report, 1946-1947*, p. 1.
- ²⁹ *Annual Report of The Accountant of The Kamehameha Schools for The Fiscal Period, July 1, 1961 to June 30, 1962*, p. 3.
- ³⁰ *Seventy-Fifth Annual Report of the President of The Kamehameha Schools to the Trustees of the Bernice P. Bishop Estate for the school year 1961-1962*, Operating Expenses and Average Cost Per Pupil (continued), p. 56.
- ³¹ "New Kam Head Warns Alumni 'Trouble Ahead' \$45,000 Due on Club House Site", *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, November 19, 1946.
- ³² Mahelona, *Insights*, p. 5.
- ³³ "The Native Son: President Kent Starts Something New At Kam," *Honolulu Advertiser*, Friday, Sept. 27, 1946.
- ³⁴ Harold W. Kent, *The Kamehameha Schools, 1946-1962*, (Honolulu, Hawaii: Masonic Public Library, 1976), p. 16.

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- ³⁵ Quotation from the *Seventy-fifth Annual Report of the President*, Honolulu, Kamehameha Schools Press, June 30, 1962. See Appendix 14 found in *The Kamehameha Schools: 1946-1962* by Harold W. Kent, President-Emeritus, The Kamehameha Schools, Honolulu, Hawaii, 1976, p. 16.
- ³⁶ Selections summarized from *The Kamehameha Schools, 1946-1962* by Harold W. Kent, pp. 21-44.
- ³⁷ Selections summarized from *The Kamehameha Schools*, pp. 47-60.
- ³⁸ Kent, p. 57.
- ³⁹ Kent, p. 58.
- ⁴⁰ Diamond.
- ⁴¹ Kent, p. 58.
- ⁴² Diamond.
- ⁴³ "Sixteen Years of Achievement," *Ka Moi*, Friday, September 28, 1962.
- ⁴⁴ Mahelona, *Insights*, p. 7.
- ⁴⁵ "Interview with Colonel Harold Kent on April 20, 1985 at his residence in Honolulu, Hawaii." *Harold W. Kent, Col. (Ret.) U. S. Army*. Transcript of an interview with Gael Mustapha, p. 10.
- ⁴⁶ Mahelona, *Insights*, p. 7.
- ⁴⁷ Diamond.
- ⁴⁸ Kent, p. 49.
- ⁴⁹ Mahelona, *Insights*, p. 6.
- ⁵⁰ Mahelona, *Insights*, p. 9.
- ⁵¹ Mahelona, *Insights*, p. 9.
- ⁵² "Mr. Kent Collects Further Information On Charles R. Bishop," *Ka Moi*, Friday, December 19, 1958.
- ⁵³ "Launch First Postwar HVB Campaign," photo and caption, newspaper, February 3.
- ⁵⁴ "Kent to Quit As Kam Head This October," *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, July 7, 1962.
- ⁵⁵ "Col. Kent to Assume New Position as Consultant to Estate Trustees Oct. 1," *Ka Moi*, Friday, September 14, 1962.
- ⁵⁶ "Dr. William Force Joins Kamehameha In New Position of Vice President," *Ka Moi*, Friday, September 14, 1962.
- ⁵⁷ "450 Pay Tribute to Mr. Harold Kent At Recent Dinner Held In His Honor," *Ka Moi*, Friday, September 28, 1962.
- ⁵⁸ "Potentate H. Kent Travels to Japan," *Ka Moi*, Friday, October 12, 1962.
- ⁵⁹ "Mr. Kent Returns From Trip to Orient; Accomplishes 'Sister-Schools' with KS," *Ka Moi*, Wednesday, November 22, 1961.
- ⁶⁰ Mahelona, *Memories*, p. 18.

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The Harold Winfield Kent Papers

BOXED ITEMS

Booklet of Holiday Greetings sent by Col. Kent and his wife, Ethel from 1930-1967.
Illustrations of Kamehameha Schools and Hawaii are featured from 1946

Compendium of Hawaiian Words (unpublished manuscript).

Kamehameha Schools, 1946-1962, Complete Manuscript and Master Copy of Published Book.

1961-1962 Report

Notebook of Hawaiian Words and Phrases, 1973-1978, Dorothy Kahananui, Box 1

Notebook of Hawaiian Words and Phrases, 1978. Box 2.

Notes on Hawaiian concepts, ideas, words, phrases stored in 2 shoeboxes and 3 file boxes.

#1 Hyde Notes, New England Era

#2 Hyde Notes, RLS Era.

#3 Hyde Notes, RLS Era, Hyde MS, Bibliography

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Selected Letters to the President (Col. Harold Kent as President Emeritus) 1963-1976 with Index.

Selected Correspondence Vol. 1, 1897-1903 with Index.

Selected Correspondence Vol. 2, 1904-1909 with Index.

Selected Correspondence Vol. 3, 1910-1915 with Index

LOOSE LEAF BINDERS

Founder's Day Broadcast Script. December 19, 1957, December 19, 1961, December 19, 1962.

Manual of Policies and Regulations. Kamehameha Schools. Serial Number 12. For Dr. Pauline Frederick.

Miscellaneous music and jokes unnamed and assumed to be collected by Col. Kent.

OTHER ITEMS

Order of Ke Ali'i Pauahi. Medal in the blue box.

2 First Day covers. 1959. Kamehameha Stamp.