

Albert Edward Kauikeaouli Kaleiopāpā a Kamehameha



On May 20, 1858, King Kamehameha IV and his wife, Queen Emma, welcomed a son into the world and named him Albert Edward, after the husband of Queen Victoria of England, and Kauikeaouli Kaleiopāpā, after his hānai grandfather, Kamehameha III. With the approval of the Privy Council, Albert was granted the title of “His Royal Highness the Prince of Hawai‘i.” However, the Hawaiian people affectionately called him “Ka Haku O Hawai‘i.” He was officially named the heir of his father in 1859.

The young lad was the pride of his parents. The town of Princeville on Kaua‘i was named after him, and many chants were written in his honor. He was also made an honorary member of Fire Engine Company Number Four in Honolulu and was given his own Company Four red uniform.

The little prince lived happily with his parents for four years. Sadly, however, he was not to live a very long life. On August 27, 1862, after a brief illness, he died. The actual cause is not really known. At the time of his death, he was thought to have “brain fever,” now known as meningitis, an inflammation of the brain caused by a bacteria or virus. Others believe he may have died from appendicitis. The king believed that he was the cause for the death of his son. To stop the young prince from a temper tantrum, the king placed his son under a cold-water faucet. Soon, the child became sick with a high fever. The doctors in Honolulu were unable to help him. Ten days later, the prince died. Liholiho especially seemed unable to survive his sadness, although a sermon he preached after his son’s death expressed a hope and faith that was eloquent and profound. Overcome with grief and guilt, the king became a recluse and withdrew from public life.

The king and queen had plans to have Albert baptized by the Right Reverend Thomas N. Staley, the first Anglican Bishop from the Church of England, who was to arrive in Hawai‘i at the invitation of the king and queen to establish the Anglican Church of Hawai‘i. However, Staley did not arrive until October 1862. As Albert became more ill, the American minister from Kawaiaha‘o Church was summoned and christened the child. Queen Victoria and her husband, Prince Albert, of England were named as godparents.

Kamehameha IV took his grief to heart and blamed himself for the death of his son. He died the following year. To express her grief, Queen Emma took the name Kaleleonālani, “Flight of the Chiefs,” to symbolize her double loss. Both son and father were interred at Mauna ‘Ala, the Royal Mausoleum, in Nu‘uanu, O‘ahu.

These events foreshadowed a crisis in the succession of the monarchy. Lot Kapuaīwa, Kamehameha V, brother of Alexander, reigned for 9 years and died. With three deaths in the ruling family, the Kamehameha line came to an end in 1872.